



# NEWSLETTER



SOCIETY FOUNDERS

Joy Austin  
J Arthur George

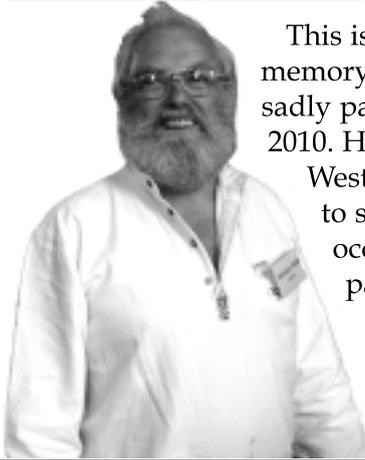
WEST WALES DOWSERS SOCIETY

CYMDEITHAS DAROGANWYR GORLLEWIN CYMRU

*Affiliated to the British Society of Dowsers*

HON LIFE PATRONS

Arthur Bebbington  
Mike Owen



This issue is dedicated to the memory of Hamish Miller, who sadly passed away January 25th, 2010. He was a good friend to West Wales Dowsers and came to speak to us on several occasions. Hamish and his partner Ba started a 'Parallel Community' to bring together like-minded people.

Hamish's vision was "for everyone to come together, envision and build a kinder world based on mutual trust, respect and love for each other and our beautiful planet". You can visit their website at:

[www.parallelcommunity.com](http://www.parallelcommunity.com) and if you haven't already, we recommend that you read his wonderful books including his sterling work with Paul Broadhurst, in dowsing the Michael and Mary lines and of course, his invaluable advice for all beginners in 'The Definitive Wee Book on Dowsing'.

*Rest in peace Hamish, you will be sadly missed!*

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 25TH 2009

Unfortunately, Robin Heath was unable to speak and apologies to all those who made a special journey to see him.

Despite this setback, Ros and Linda demonstrated dowsing skills (*with help from Rob Hemming who reminded Ros and Linda not to stand on the energy line that runs across the hall while they were working!*). Soon the whole room was buzzing as everyone paired up and dowsed chakras and auras.

This was a wonderful opportunity for new dowsers to learn this fascinating craft. Later, Linda conducted a 'treasure hunt' to find some coins hidden in the room behind the stage. No prizes were awarded but it enabled practice of dowsing skills, with most people successfully finding some, if not all, of the coins. So well done Linda and Ros for some quick-thinking and nimble footwork - once you got off the energy line that is!

PHILIP COPE: HOLY WELLS

*By Linda Griffiths*

Phil described the research that led to his book 'Holy Wells of Wales, A Photographic Journey' which includes 42 of the 200 wells he has located, explored.

He described how Holy Wells (wellsprings) have certain attributes, most never freeze over, some ebb and flow, some make strange noises or are bottomless. Most are believed to predict the future and grant wishes or offer cures or even curses. Some have abilities to turn objects into stone, others to erupt with milk or blood.

Some are said to be haunted by ghosts and guarded by monsters and fairies, or are doorways into underground dwellings and borderland places where this world and the hidden underworld meet. He told us how the legends of the Holy Wells were the spiritual storybook of the old traditions.

Ownership of the water in the well (spring) and the meaning of the well (spring) changed with times and beliefs. In pre-Christian times, water appearing naturally out of the earth had magical significance for our ancestors. They were places where nature spirits resided and dialogue with other realities was possible.

They were centres for elaborate ceremonies, storytelling and the presenting of gifts. In return for the often complex rituals associated with successfully receiving cures or messages, the well waters offered claims of good health, love and fertility. Some wells 'specialized' on cures for warts, blindness, jaundice, leprosy, epilepsy, indigestion, baldness and many other diseases and problems. Bits of rag or flowers were left on trees and bushes near Holy Wells as proof that cures have been successful.

For some the movement of fish or eels in the water were omens and the movement of a handkerchief on the water's surface was believed to foretell a relationship's faithfulness and fertility.

Christianity spread across Wales in the 3rd Century onwards, and missionaries were instructed to destroy all pagan wells and reminders of their 'hydrolotrist' beliefs (Phil's very descriptive word). But because of the strength of popular imagination, this was rarely successful.

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The Christians realizing an alternative strategy was needed set about converting pagan sites and ceremonies into Christian usage. It was at this time that the predominately female well spirit 'became' masculine. The druid and the bard became the monk and the priest, and pagan magic of springs became Christian Holy Wells.

The sites developed usually through a saint's visit or a miracle happening. The healing properties remained but were attributed to the new religious master, for instance the red water in some wells now being Christ's blood and not that of the menstruating goddess.

The second threat to Holy Wells came through the Protestant Reformation in the second half of the 16th century. Henry VIII's break with Rome signalled suppression of all activities considered idolatrous, but despite prohibitions the natives were reluctant to 'roll-over' for their new masters. In 1590 it was reported that 'the Welsh do still go in heaps on pilgrimages to the wanton wells and places of superstition', so the tension between the pagan tradition and new imposed faiths continued.

Prospects for Holy Wells improved in the 18th century when the craze for spas gave them a new lease of life as 'taking the waters' became popular. Science was recognizing the beneficial properties of natural mineral springs and people flocked in their thousands to Llandrindod Wells, Llanwrtyd Wells, Builth, Aberystwyth, Llandudno etc. to drink the waters and immerse themselves in the various mineral waters, such as sulphur, saline, iodine and magnesium.

In time however these spa treatments were replaced by new 'hydrotherapy' available at seaside resorts with saltier immersions and the added benefit of sunlight, bracing sea air and aromatic pines. In addition local authorities were beginning to provide more easily accessible and cheaper alternatives in municipal baths and swimming pools. With advances in medical knowledge and the arrival of the NHS in 1948, effective treatments were found and offered for most of the ailments claimed to be cured by the wells, resulting in the closure of many establishments.

Phil's extensive research included delving into books, listening to hints and suggestions from other well seekers, and checking place names and old map references. From a book written in 1954 'Holy Wells, Wales' by Francis Jones, Phil noted that '1179 wells existed in Wales' and that '.....hundreds more that had been totally destroyed'. Today only a small percentage of those mentioned in 1954 still exist.

Phil spoke about various traditions and ceremonies concerning well water - for instance how water collected during the last hour of New Years Eve or Easter Eve would turn into wine, and how children in Pembrokeshire would sprinkle the

first water drawn on New Years Day over people and their homes using fresh sprigs of holly and singing a song to let the New Year in.

He talked of St Winifred's Well in North Wales, a well of Christian origin, and told us of its beginnings through the story of the 7th century virgin being pursued by Caradoc, and how the icy waters of the well are braved by many each year. He described the 3 wells at Gumfreston near Tenby one shaped like an eye, another like an arm and the third like a leg, and how they each contained different water intended for different purposes.

He recommended going to Gumfreston on Easter Sunday when nails are thrown into the wells to symbolize Jesus' crucifixion. He described the history of Taffs Well near Cardiff, and how, over the years, it had fallen victim to vandals and graffiti artists, and was now closed to visitors and bathers alike. He commented that as the only constantly hot spring in Wales, we'd clearly missed a trick - if it had been in France, Spain or Germany, Taffs Well would be a major tourist attraction, that could be reached by boat from Cardiff Bay. If the once proud buildings could be appropriately restored, the waters would be accessible again.

Unfortunately though it seems, with a notable few exceptions, this deterioration is the story of wells and fountains in the 21st century and most of the once treasured sites are being lost through damage or simple neglect. He compared this decay to places abroad e.g. Portugal where every village has fountains offering clean refreshing water to the traveller, and asked if we knew of any fountains in Wales, none of us could, but Ros and others remembered a story in the news a short while ago of a new drinking fountain being put in one of the London parks.

Phil recounted how on regular occasions, after fighting through brambles, nettles and undergrowth and sometimes being ankle deep in mud, being chased by bulls and sometimes farmers, he has been inspired to find a totally neglected, but intact, well with its prize of pure clean water. And he reflected on the contact there with long forgotten people and beings, and that the wealth of poetry that had come out of such places showed others had been inspired too. *(Due to lack of space, it's not been possible to share with you everything Phil had to say about Water and Water Poverty but a fuller transcript is available to those who wish it - Ed)*

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## ISABELLA COPELAND: HEALING LOTIONS

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Isabella, a qualified aromatherapist, treated us to an interesting and 'smelly' afternoon learning about the properties and consistencies of a variety of aqueous emulsions and oils.

She stressed that although the oils were natural

and organic it was very important not to be fooled into thinking that they were perfectly safe. Some oils could be extremely toxic if ingested and others could burn if applied in an undiluted form. She felt that people must ensure they were properly informed before attempting to administer them.

She then went on to describe how to make healing creams using a variety of bases to which a few drops of aromatherapy oil could be added. These bases included olive oil, almond oil, honey, peach kernel oil and even lard. She explained that the process of melting the base to the proper consistency involved a great deal of time-consuming stirring and it was important to get the temperature just right to ensure the correct result. Isabella suggested to start with 1 Tablespoon (about 5-10 mls) of the base to 2 drops (5 maximum) of oil. Start slowly and build up to receive the adequate effect.

Describing her work, she highlighted the importance of letting her client smell the products before applying them. She felt that those the client did not like should not be used because the body possessed its own defence mechanism and this was a good indicator. The perfume of oils could also trigger unpleasant associations and there use could cause unhelpful psychological reactions. Isabella said that she did not approve of 'snake oils' professing to cure everything from ingrowing toenails to warts.

There were now many regulations and laws restricting how she described her work but she would never say she could 'cure' something, even though she had witnessed 'cures', she preferred to stress the importance of using the oils and creams to stimulate the body's own healing mechanisms.

Following tea, members were invited to dowse the properties of the various oils and unguents, to decide which would be suitable for themselves. Others relied on their intuition and highly developed noses to achieve the same result. On being asked about the best oils, Isabella recommended Tisserand, Fragrant Earth in Devon and our very own, Cariad products in Lampeter. For those interested in training as an aromatherapist, Isabella went to college and did an NVQ 3 in Anatomy and Physiology, then worked in various salons before setting up her own business. She still attends refresher courses to ensure her work remains up to date.

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**AGM SUNDAY MARCH 28TH:  
YOUR CLUB NEEDS YOU!!!**

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Every successful club needs an active committee running things behind the scenes. Unfortunately your committee members are only human and there is only so much we can do.

We need NEW MEMBERS to bring in fresh ideas and help us with providing you, our members, with

the very best of events, speakers and training.

The Committee only meet once a month to discuss business and fully understand if you occasionally have personal commitments on the night, other than that, help with making tea, washing up and clearing chairs etc. is always very welcome so that it's possible to get a break to socialise.

Perhaps you're a dab hand at photography?

The editors are always on the lookout for suitable photos for the newsletter or annual calendar. Maybe you have a leaning towards teaching or think you know someone who can give us a talk? Or you'd like to talk about something yourself? Let us know. Get in touch and get involved!

Everybody is urged to come to the AGM but we stress although we welcome your help, no-one needs to feel pressurised. After the official bits there will be an opportunity to enjoy a Dowsing Treasure hunt and who knows what you might find?

*NB: Sadly, to date, one of our Founders and much loved member, Rob Hemmings is still in hospital. However, we are pleased to hear that he is still active giving healing to family members of other patients! That's our Rob! Get well soon Rob, we miss you.*

**FORTHCOMING EVENTS FOR 2010**

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Sunday March 28th     | AGM   |
| Sunday April 25th     | Megan Wingfield - <i>The Welsh Chakra System</i> *              |
| Sunday May 9th        | Field Trip - <i>Holy Wells in Carmarthenshire</i>               |
| Sunday May 23rd       | John Seward - <i>Dowsing for Health</i>                         |
| Sunday June 13th      | Field Trip - <i>Peter Hill's Farm in Brecon</i>                 |
| Sunday June 27th      | Peter Golding - <i>Experiences of a Lifetime Dowser</i>         |
| Sunday July 11th      | Field Trip <i>The Abbey at St. Dogmaels</i>                     |
| Sunday July 25th      | Peter Hill - <i>Different Dowsing Tools</i>                     |
| Sunday August 8th     | Field Trip- <i>Gower</i>  |
| Sunday September 26th | Karl-James Langford - <i>Prehistoric Facts from Legends</i>     |
| Sunday October 24th   | Dowsing Practice  |
| Sunday November 28th  | Ros Briagha - <i>Astronomy &amp; Astrology of Stone Circles</i> |

*\*Please note that owing to Megan's illness it is unlikely she will appear. The committee will give you further information as it arises.*

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## INDOOR MEETINGS

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Due to the slight increase in the cost of hiring the hall, indoor meetings will be slightly shorter than before. As a rough guide, the structure of the meetings will be as follows:

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| 1:45pm          | Doors open  |
| 2pm - 3pm       | Talk by speaker                                     |
| 3pm - 3:30pm    | Tea break   |
| 3:30pm - 4pm    | Questions for the speaker                           |
| 4pm - 4:30pm    | Practice dowsing & healing,<br>as and when required |
| 4:30pm - 4:45pm | Put chairs and tables away                          |
| 4:45pm          | Meeting ends  |

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## SUBMITTING ARTICLES

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Please send all submissions for future Newsletters to: Sandy Mather, Gwelfryn, Llanpumsaint, Carmarthen, Carmarthenshire, SA33 6BP, or via e-mail to: [sandymather@gmail.com](mailto:sandymather@gmail.com)

If e-mailing an article, please use RTF or Microsoft Word .DOC format, whichever results in the smaller file-size, and if possible please scan the file for computer viruses. E-mail submissions are preferable to typed or hand-written articles. Articles should be kept fairly short.

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## E-MAIL ADDRESSES

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We are trying to build up a list of members' e-mail addresses so that in future, members who wish to receive newsletters and other communications

## SOCIETY CONTACTS

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**Chairman** *John Seward*

01834 814278/07974 105425

**Treasurer** *Jennifer Forrest*

01437 890257/07890 586305

**Secretary** *Ros Briagha*

01269 870175

**Newsletter Co-Editors** *Sandy Mather*

01267 253547/07974 120922

*Linda Griffiths*

01267 281348/07900 564478

**PR & Press Officer** *Jennifer Forrest*

01437 890257

**Water Divining & Site Works Group Leader**

*Rob Hemming*

01554 811369

**Healing Group Leader** *John Seward*

01834 814278

**Website** *John Seward*

01834 814278

**General Officer** *George Cooke*

01269 860830

**General Officer** *John Taylor*

01267 281706

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electronically will be able to do so. If you wish to opt in, please send Sandy Mather your e-mail address, and state whether you would like to receive the full version (with pictures) or the reduced version (without pictures) [sandymather@gmail.com](mailto:sandymather@gmail.com)

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## CODE OF ETHICS

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Members shall be expected to abide by the following Code of Ethics:

\* In relation with clients, patients and others, they shall act in good faith in accordance with the highest standards of personal integrity and uphold the good name of the Society. \*Being mindful of their responsibilities to others they shall avoid and discourage sensationalism, exaggeration and misleading statements.\*They shall not use their membership of the Society as evidence of their qualifications or abilities as dowsers.

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## DISCLAIMER

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*The views expressed by the Editor and other contributors to this Newsletter are their own and are not necessarily those of the West Wales Dowsers Society. The Editor maintains full discretion and power in respect of material to be published in this Newsletter. The Editor's decision will be final unless a dispute concerning a specific item is referred for arbitration to the Committee.*

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## OTHER GROUPS

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Stone Circle Creation, Rune & Tarot Readings, Birth Chart Interpretations, Astrology, (Carmarthen / Ammanford): For enquiries, contact Ros Briagha on 01269 870175 or e-mail: [rosbriagha@hotmail.com](mailto:rosbriagha@hotmail.com)

## DOWSING SERVICES

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NAME:

TELEPHONE:

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**Arthur Bebbington** 01646 600394

Site Works (drains, pipes and cables)

**Robert Hemming** 01554 811369

Dowsing Services: Water, Minerals, All Site Works, Geopathic Stress etc.

**John Seward** 01834 814278

Healing

**Mark Lange** 01239 614442

Feng Shui, Bowen Techniques, Allergy Testing

**Ian Pegler** 01970 623695

Wood-turned pendulums & L-rod handles

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This list of service providers is given without prejudice. In providing this list, the West Wales Dowsers Society makes no claim as to the abilities of the dowsers concerned. The Society will not accept liability of any kind, nor does it act as an Agent for any of the dowsers listed.

It is the Enquirer's responsibility to enter into any contact direct with the dowser. The dowser is to be employed on a purely personal basis. The West Wales Dowsers Society is a Society affiliated to the British Society of Dowsers. It is not a requirement of either Society that members of the West Wales Dowsers Society providing these services become individual members of the British Society of Dowsers.

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