

Mantell Gwynedd win BEST VOLUNTARY SECTOR stall at Y Bala National Eisteddfod 2009.

Mantell Gwynedd have , for the second time , won the Challenge Prize for the Best Stall (voluntary sector) on the National Eisteddfod field. This is awarded annually at the National Eisteddfod by the Women's Institute, for the best and most innovative display stand within the Voluntary Sector.

Mantell Gwynedd first won this prestigious award in 2005 at the Eryri National Eisteddfod.

Mantell Gwynedd's Chief Officer, Bethan Russell Owen, said "We were really chuffed when we were first awarded this prize in 2005 at the Faynol Eisteddfod but winning it for a second time at Y Bala has left my staff thrilled to bits. They have all worked incredibly hard to pull this together . This prize is recognition for their hard work and dedication."

She added "There are many voluntary groups and organisations who simply cannot afford a stall on the Eisteddfod field due to prohibitive costs. Mantell Gwynedd came to an arrangement to lease five standard units within the eisteddfod field which opened up as one large stall. We then offered a small space to local voluntary groups to display their goods and services. Doing this cut the cost to groups who would not otherwise have been able to afford a space on the Eisteddfod field."

Following an invite 18 groups shared the stand with Mantell Gwynedd and the Volunteer Bureau, they were:

CAIS , GISDA, Women's Aid, Cymdeithas Ted Breeze, Meirionnydd Young Farmers, NYAS, Plas Glyn Y Weddw, Bardsey Island Trust, Blaenau Ffestiniog Communities First Partnership, Crossroads, Conwy Volunteer Council, Cae'r Gors, Arthritis Care, SNAP, Gwynedd Arts Forum, Marie Curie, and The Friends of the Glaslyn Ospreys. There was a programme of daily events on the stall which was officially opened by TV personality Bethan Gwanas on the first Monday of the eisteddfod. It closed with an amazing performance by Samba Stiniog on the final Saturday.

"This year, 2009, Mantell Gwynedd have really arranged some great events for the voluntary sector in Gwynedd. In June we took several trainloads of volunteers up to the summit of Snowdon to celebrate Volunteers Week. In August we had this great display at the National Eisteddfod. In October we host a major Third Sector Conference for Gwynedd at the Electric Mountain in Llanberis. It doesn't get much better does it!" said Bethan Russell Owen.

Mantell Gwynedd were presented with a fine glass trophy in an official ceremony at the Eisteddfod Pavillion on the Tuesday. This will remain with Mantell Gwynedd for the next 12 months and will then be returned to the Eisteddfod.

GISDA staff with the Womens Institute Trophy



Workshop for children arranged by CAIS



Activity at the Stand



The official opening by Bethan Gwanas



Samba Stiniog performing on the last Saturday



The Stand



Some of the groups who shared the stand



Plenty to do!

