

Winners of the “Wales Volunteer of the Year 2008”



Through this award, an opportunity is provided annually to acknowledge and appreciate committed volunteers who have made a difference in their communities. The Award is administered by the Wales Council of Voluntary Associations, and in December, each year, a challenge is set to people across Wales to nominate someone special who has inspired them by what they do as a volunteer.

There are five different categories:-

- young person under 25
- Adult
- groups (consisting of two or more people).
- Trustee
- green volunteer,

Throughout Wales, 198 nominations were received, nine of them from Gwynedd. The judging panel has selected Mr James Hewett, who volunteers as a trustee with the Welsh Highland Railway, to be among the national winners.

Trustee Category

1. James Hewett who volunteers with the Welsh Highland Railway Ltd.



James Hewett is the Chairman of the Welsh Highland Railway Ltd, and is at the office almost every day sorting out the paperwork, organising volunteer working parties, looking after visitors, making sure that tools and equipment are available for the job in hand. His central role in managing and co-ordinating has helped the organization to grow and create a number of paid jobs, play a more positive role in the local community and contribute to the tourist industry in North Wales. His work with young volunteers stands out as he's known to spend hours supporting and showing younger members what to do – from railway models to maths homework! During the five years that he has been involved with the organization, his enthusiasm and his amazing ability to motivate others has made a huge difference to the charity's work.

***Nominated by Chris Dearden – colleague.**

Young People Category (under 25 years).

1. Ffion Parker who volunteers with South Gwynedd Women's Aid.



Ffion comes from Ffestiniog, and started to volunteer with South Gwynedd Women's Aid in 2006. Although she is working full-time, she manages to find time for volunteering in the evenings and at weekends. Her tasks as a volunteer includes supporting women and children in various ways eg transporting them to appointments, being on duty in the shelter, attending meetings. She is a very conscientious young person and always ready to lend a helping hand.

***Nominated by Gwenan Paewai – Volunteer Officer with South Gwynedd Women's Aid.**

Adult Category (over 25 years).

1. John Boulter who volunteers with the 'Tywyn Freewheelers Club'

John Boulter has dedicated himself to the 'Freewheelers Club' in Tywyn for over 10 years. The Club provides transport to local disabled people – an essential service in a rural area, and John has given freely of his time - driving, maintaining and cleaning the mini-bus, as well as being treasurer of the group. John has tirelessly provided himself voluntarily for the benefit of others – he is a worthy recipient of this award.

*** Nominated by Mr Stan Diston – Chair of the Club**



2. Cheryl Dobson who volunteers at Ysgol Nefyn.

Cheryl has been helping out in the classroom in Nefyn Primary school **every** day for over three years. 'Auntie Cheryl' accompanies the children to their swimming lessons, takes part in community studies, helps with reading groups and with the younger children. She is in the school before 9.00 every day, and never leaves before 3.15pm. In addition to her daily contribution, she also helps out with evening activities such as the Summer Fair, sponsored walks etc. The children simply adore 'Auntie Cheryl' – who always has a kind word, and a smile on her face. The school is glad of an opportunity to acknowledge their debt to her loyal commitment.

***Nominated by Glenys Williams - Head of Ysgol Nefyn.**



3. Philip Horwood is a volunteer treasurer for 5 organisations in the Pwllheli area.

Philip Horwood is an accountant working in Pwllheli, and he acts as a treasurer to the CAB Gwynedd branch, Alzheimer's NW branch, Pwllheli Rotary Club, Pwllheli Sailing Club and NSPCC Dwyfor. He freely provides professional advice, guidance and support to these organizations on a continuing monthly basis, and is always at the end of the 'phone. He is a prime example of a professional individual contributing his skills and expertise to the voluntary sector, and does so quietly and consistently.

*** Nominated by Siân Williams –Business Partner.**

4. Mrs Peggy Millard volunteers with the 'The Over 60s Club' Tywyn.

When Peggy Millard came to live in Tywyn in 1984, she played a key role in forming a Darby and Joan club for the older people in the area. Under Peggy's leadership, the Club has thrived over the years, and has changed its name to the 'Over 60's Club'. The Club meets every other Friday afternoon where a speaker, a quiz or some form of entertainment will have been arranged by Peggy. Peggy also organizes a week's holiday at some seaside resort each year – and without this arrangement many of the members (who are aged between 60 and 90) would never go on holiday. Everyone in Tywyn knows Peggy, and if they have a problem, they know where to go!

*** Nominated by Mr E S Harris - Tywyn Probus Club, and a member's husband.**



5. Sara Roberts yn gwirfoddoli gyda Chymorth i Ferched De Gwynedd

Sara comes from Penrhyndeudraeth, and started to volunteer with South Gwynedd Women's Aid in February 2006. The organization has benefited from Sara's contribution as a volunteer in that she supports women in the community, helps out with administration tasks, accompanies clients to appointments as well as organize and run "Drop in" sessions. She is a good ambassador for the organization, and is an inspiration for others to volunteer! ***Nominated by Gwenan Paewai – Volunteer Officer with South Gwynedd Women's Aid.**



Group Category

1. Cyfeillion Plas Glyn y Weddw

Plas Glyn y Weddw is an Arts' Gallery in the centre of the Llyn community. It is an important asset to the area, and the contribution of the "friends of Glyn y Weddw" – 68 in total - is crucial to its success. Without the commitment of the loyal volunteers, the Gallery would not be able to continue. The list of tasks that these volunteers perform is long and varied, and includes reception duties, serving in the shop, helping out in the garden, renovating the building (including sanding, painting, and cleaning), helping out during open evenings, organising training and outings, organizing the volunteers' duty-rota, updating the data-base, fundraising and much more.....

*** Nominated by Mr Gwyn Jones- Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw,**



2. Y Ffynnon

Y Ffynnon consists of a group of four inspirational young people from the Bangor area who are campaigning for more education and awareness of Aids and HIV issues throughout Britain and worldwide. After receiving training on HIV issues through Christian Aid and Dr Olwen Williams, they have since been running workshops and information sessions for other young people. They target deprived areas, and they organized, and collected 5000 names on a petition. In February 2008, they visited Sierra Leone to work in partnership with young people from the poorest country in the world, and raise awareness amongst their peers about HIV issues. Volunteering has enabled members of the group to develop more self-confidence, and to learn new skills – from leading workshops and fundraising, to speaking to the media.

*** Nominated by Mr Hywel Williams MP.**

