

Volunteering Week

1st - 7th June 2007



The first week in June is well established as Volunteers' Week, as 2007 is the 23rd year since it has been celebrated nationally. The three 'Rs' summarises the aims of the week in that it hopes to Recognise, Reward and Recruit Volunteers.

In Gwynedd, the Volunteer Centre decided to mark this annual event by organising two main activities:

Travelling Information Stall

The stall visited Dolgellau, Bangor and Pwllheli during the week. This is seen as an opportunity to promote volunteering, recruit new volunteers, as well as raising awareness of the services of the Volunteer Centre. Representatives from many organisations looking to recruit volunteers accompanied the Gwynedd Volunteer Centre staff on the stall during the week - many thanks for their support.

Dolgellau - 1st June '07



Mirain setting up the stall.



Representatives from Meirionnydd MS, and the Riding for the Disabled Groups.



Giving information to a potential volunteer.

Bangor - 5th June '07



Lynne Parry from Gwynedd Hospice at Home giving information to two volunteers.



Representatives from SOVA Cymru and Alzheimer's Society.



Representatives from The Expert Patient Programme with Mirain

Pwllheli - 6th June '07



Iola and Margaret - a member of the Volunteer Centre sub-committee

Dafydd from Menter Felin Uchaf playing the Harp with Helena from Gwynedd Hospice at Home

Celebration and Thank you Tea

The 'Celebration and Thank you Tea' at Plas Glyn y Weddw Gallery in Llanbedrog on 7th June. With the sun shining, the weather provided an opportunity to enjoy this glorious venue at its best. Councillor Dafydd Iwan was the guest speaker, and in his speech he referred to his role as a volunteer in setting up an initiative to help young people on to affordable housing in early 1970s with 'Cymdeithas Tai Gwynedd'. This event is a chance to acknowledge the valuable contribution made by volunteers throughout Gwynedd. During the afternoon, certificates were presented to a number of committed volunteers from Gwynedd - some had been nominated for the 'Wales Volunteer of the Year 2007' Awards, and others were young people who were worthy of certificates under the Millennium Volunteer programme.



Plas Glyn y Weddw volunteers enjoying the tea!

Chairing the event - Margaret Griffith - member of Mantell Gwynedd Governing Board.

Councillor Dafydd Iwan - the guest speaker.

Wales Volunteer of the Year 2007 - Winners of 'Highly Commended' Certificates from Gwynedd.

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. This year, there were five categories: young person under 25, adult, green volunteer, trustee, and groups. Throughout Wales, 208 nominations were received, seven of them from Gwynedd - each of them worthy of a 'Highly Commended Certificate' to mark their contributions.

Adult Category

1) Manon Evans - volunteering with Cymdeithas Tai Eryri.

For the past 4 years, Manon has chaired the Tenants' Association in Tan-y-Grisiau, and her contribution has been the key driving force behind numerous initiatives. She has taken part in fund-raising and community activities; contributed to Cymdeithas Tai Eryri's anti-poverty strategy, and been part of procuring a community flat on the estate. Currently, she is taking the lead on the development of children's play area adjacent to the flat. Through her input, she has succeeded in bringing various factions together, create a sense of community and raise the profile of the estate. Her determination and enthusiasm deserve to be recognised.



2) Laurence Charles Mort - volunteering with Meirionnydd Sports Council.

Laurence is involved with many voluntary organisations in Meirionnydd including Fairbourne Golf Club, Dolgellau Healing and Peace group, Mawddach Rotary Club as well as the Meirionnydd Sports Council. Since 1994, he has held many posts, and is currently the chair of two organisations, and secretary to another. Laurence is the sort of person who promises a lot, and achieves what he has promised. He deserves to be recognised for all the hard work he has done over the last few years, and for his readiness to carry on.

3) Griff Roberts - volunteering with Gwynedd Hospice at Home.

Griff undertakes a wide range of voluntary tasks with the Hospice including fund-raising, raising awareness of the charity, help with administrative tasks, and gardening. He willingly carries out his roles tirelessly - no task too big or too small.

Although he has been nominated by a staff member of the Hospice at Home, he also volunteers for other organisations in Gwynedd - Barnardos, and Air Ambulance Cymru to name but two. Indeed, all organisations could well do with a hundred like Griff !!!



4) Harold Toone - volunteering with Community Advocacy Service.

Community Advocacy Service helps people resolve problems in many ways, and the contribution made by Harold Toone has been crucial to the development of the organisation. He is a caring person, who assists a number of organisations in his community namely the Meirionnydd MS Society, Llechen Credit Union, Co-operative Committee and the CAB.

Young People Category

1) Xanthe Larcombe - volunteering with Student Volunteering Bangor.

Xanthe is the chairperson of Student Volunteering Bangor this year, and she has encouraged more students to volunteer in the community - which of course has resulted in more members of the community benefiting from the services of SVB. She has set up and co-ordinated a very successful beach clean project and the regular clean-ups have made a tremendous difference to beaches in Gwynedd such as Dinas Dinlle, Cricieth and Porth Neigwl. She also volunteers with Nightline - the students' 24 hour helpline, is a member of the Union Council, and went to volunteer to Thailand following the tsunami.



Trustees' Category

1) Gwenfor Roberts - volunteering with Carers Outreach Service.

Having been a carer herself, Gwenfor started to volunteer with Carers Outreach service in 1992. Currently she is the chairperson for the Carers Outreach Service Board of Trustees. She is also part of the organisation's quality control group, management advisory group, and is always ready to attend meetings where she represents the organisation. Gwenfor is always ready to help others and is respected by staff, fellow trustees and carers. Having recently undergone surgery, she was back in her role as chair in no time, in her usual cheerful manner despite having to struggle in on public transport.



Congratulations to all six individuals, and it is good to see that their time and commitment to the various organisations is acknowledged.

Group Category

1) Cyswllt - Deaf Children's Society.

Cyswllt is a charity providing services and support to deaf children and their families. Eighteen months ago, it appeared that the organisation was about to close due to funding problems. In such a short space of time, thanks to the dedication and perseverance of the Trustees, funding has been secured, new premises have been found, and the organisation is now flourishing. Cyswllt was nominated by a parent of one of the children who benefits from the service that the organisation provides. Congratulations to all members involved with the group.



Judith Eastwood receiving the certificate on behalf of 'Cyswllt'

It is vital that the people who took the time and trouble to nominate these dedicated volunteers are not forgotten - without their efforts it would not be possible to sing the praises of these special people this year. So a big thanks to all the nominators - and remember there will be an opportunity for YOU to nominate at the beginning of next year!!