

- SOCIETY OF THE YEAR 2013 -

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COMIC CON WALES



Students in a flutter

■ Pigeons interrupt exams causing resit concerns

by LJ TAYLOR

The School of Law was last week forced to apologise to and re-schedule the exams of hundreds of students.

This comes after two law exams had to be abandoned forty minutes in, due to the noise being created by two pigeons.

"They were on top of the organs in the back of the room and would not just shut up. I guess a few people complained and then they ended the exam" said Kyle Gauvin, an Exchange Student from the University of Maine, who was there for the International Law of Human Rights exam.

It is believed that the pigeons got into PJ Hall through two missing window panes.

"Knowing that I am leaving tomorrow morning and am not sure or even if I will be able to sit the exam makes it worse. It would make sense to try and stay for the exam, but not at the cost of making completely new arrangements for flights and trains for tomorrow. Hopefully there will be some way that I can take it when I get back state side, but as long as there is no extra cost to me" worried Kyle at the time.

The University was quite quick to respond, releasing a statement to Seren:

"First year and third year students following modules in Public Law and International Law were those mainly affected. Bangor University have apologised to the students concerned and in addition to rescheduling the exams, have assured students that they will not be disadvantaged as a result of this disruption" it said.

Bangor Students' Union worked closely with the university to ensure that minimum disruption was caused and played a part in confirming arrangements. A rescheduled exam will take place on 30th May and will use a 'seen' paper format.

"The School of Law is aware that



there have been some rumours that the papers will be marked more 'harshly,' but we can confirm that this is not the case. In addition, the School of Law Examination Board will fully take all the relevant circumstances into account in its deliberations following the end of the examination period" said Dr Osian Rees, Examinations Officer for the School of Law.

224 students were affected by the cancellation, including some from the School of Modern Languages, who were able to be moved to MALT to continue their exam. Some of those affected include international students who expressed worries resitting the exam due to prescheduled flights home.

One student, Varun Hariharun, emailed Seren expressing his concern.

"Knowing the fact that the university is in the examination season, they should take precautions in case such events occur. They have still not decided when the exams are going to be rescheduled, which is a paramount factor for many internationals like us, who have booked their flights to go back home" he said.

The Law School and the university have since proposed solutions to these issues.

"I am very happy with the university's response to this problem. The fact that the university considered the problems of international students as a main priority, and have come up with various alternatives for the convenience of students. The university and law school has taken all possible steps for the benefit of students"

Varun stated.

For those unable to attend the resit on 30th May, the School of Law is prepared to make alternative arrangements;

"Students have been informed that if they cannot sit the rescheduled examination, they should contact the School of Law as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made. The School will endeavour to be as flexible as possible in this respect, and options include sitting the paper on a different date, or making arrangements for students to sit the paper at an alternative venue, for example at an institution in their home country" said Dr Rees.

The School of Law have also confirmed arrangements for those who weren't able to complete the exam due

to being in different locations, such as the sick bay students and those with special circumstances.

"In order to ensure fairness, those students have also been offered the opportunity to retake the examination should they so wish. Where students do choose to retake the examination, both papers will be marked, and the best mark will be used" explained Dr Rees.

Whilst a serious issue for those involved, some have seen a funny side to it, with a Bangor Pigeon Twitter account appearing after the news first broke. In the last week not only has the pigeon story been picked up by news publications such as The Independent and The Huffington Post, but now the story has gone international, appearing on French news site 20 Minutes.

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Beth ydi Gwobr Cyflogadwyedd Bangor (GCB)?

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Mae GCB yn gynllun sy'n cynnig gweithgareddau i ehangu dy gyflogadwyedd a chydabyddiaeth ffurfiol o dy lwyddiannau all-gysiol.

Beth sydd gan GCB i'w gynnig i ti?

- Gweithdai a help i ysgrifennu dy CV, gwneud ceisiadau am swyddi, a darparu ar gyfer cyfweiliadau lefel graddedig
- Cyfleoedd i gael interniaeth broffesiynol (gyda chyflog) o fewn y Brifysgol
- Gweithdai hyfforddiant proffesiynol rhad ac am ddim yn cael eu harwain gan arbenigwyr yn eu maes
- Mynediad rhad ac am ddim i feddalwedd proffilio personoliaeth, meddalwedd proffilio gyrfa ac ymarferion profion dawn
- A llawer mwy...

Pam fod GCB yn werthfawr i ti?

Oherwydd ei fod yn werthfawr i gyflogwyr!
Pwy fyddai ddim eisiau ymgeisydd sydd: -

- Yn arddangos ymrwymiad i'w datblygiad personol a phroffesiynol?
- Yn gallu dangos **tystiolaeth** o sgiliau lefel uwch a sut y datblygwyd y rhain?
- Wedi cael eu gweithgareddau wedi eu gwirio gan sefydliad swyddogol, felly does dim angen iddynt gadarnhau dy CV?
- Efo CV rhagorol, portffolio eang o sgiliau, a sgiliau cyflwyno?

Pa weithgareddau sy'n rhan o GCB?

- Gwaith Rhan Amser
- Cynrychiolwyr Cwrs
- Arweinwyr Cyfoed
- Gwirfoddoli
- Swyddi Haf
- Lleoliadau/Interniaethau
- Clybiau a Chymdeithasau
- Hyfforddiant Proffesiynol
- Darlithoedd Gwadd
- Trwydded Yrru
- A llawer mwy...

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Rwyt angen mewngofnodi i "Hwb GCB" i ddechrau recordio dy weithgareddau, neu cysyllta' efo ni ar **CYFLOGADWYEDD@BANGOR.AC.UK** am fwy o wybodaeth!

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www.bangor.ac.uk/cyflogadwyedd
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Tîm GCB
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Prifysgol Bangor | Bangor University, 2il Lawr Neuadd Rathbone | 2nd Floor Rathbone Hall
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BECKI WATSON
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It feels incredibly surreal to be writing this Editorial; firstly, because I can't believe how fast this year has flown by, but also because I can't quite come to terms with the fact that this is my final issue of Seren as Editor. We've had a great last few weeks, from our fantastic coverage of Varsity, to the election of our new committee, and winning a Wild Card award at the Society Awards! It's hard to believe it's all coming to an end, but I think we've gone out with a bang; even though at times during the making of this issue we definitely wanted to be enjoying this gorgeous weather with a pint rather than stuck in the SU till 3am, I'm still really proud of how this edition's turned out.

We've got some great features for you to check out this issue; like our review of the Wales Comic Con on page 26, as well as our breakdown of the Summer Ball with a chance for you to win a free ticket! We also ended up going slightly World Cup crazy and decided to make a sweepstake kit for you guys, as well as taking our very own team photo (which definitely didn't end up with us kicking a football round the Media Room, or us forming our own team called the Seren Pigeons...)

As well as all that, Film has a review of Godzilla on page 25, Food has an interview with the owners of Bangor's newest cafe, and News has a special tribute to Bangor's favourite feline, Security Cat (RIP).

Finally, all that's left to say is thank you; thanks to Becci, LJ, Nicola, Dan and all the team who've made Seren fantastic this year, thanks to everyone at the SU who've supported us, and thanks to everyone who's read Seren this year. Good luck to everyone in their final assignments and to the students leaving this summer, and good luck to Amy and her new Seren team for next year!

The views presented hereinafter do not represent the views of Seren Bangor, Bangor Students' Union or Bangor University.

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In Brief

Bangor in top 20 for student satisfaction

BANGOR University has been placed in the top 20 in the UK for student satisfaction.

This comes after the Times Higher Education's Student Experience Survey.

Vice-chancellor John G. Hughes said: "The great experience the students have, along with the care they receive at Bangor have been key attractions to the University for generations, and it's clear that our current students appreciate the whole, rounded experience of studying here".

The survey shows that Bangor students highly rate the "helpful and interested" staff, the high quality of courses and community atmosphere, as well as the high standard of societies and extracurricular activities.

Pet Shop Boys at Portmeirion

THE Pet Shop Boys have been announced to perform at this summer's Festival No.6 in Portmeirion.

They will be joined by recording artist and DJ Laurent Garnier and Norwegian disco king Todd Terje. Previously announced headliners included London Grammar and Beck.

Festival director Bradley Thompson said: "We are hugely excited to have such a truly iconic act as the Pet Shop Boys playing No.6 this year. "They're one of Britain's biggest ever bands, but remain a brilliant, groundbreaking live act, and their headline slot is going to be incredible."

BAFTA-winning actor Rhys Ifans will also perform at Festival No.6.



University invests in future of football

■ Bangor University and Bangor City FC team up to construct 3G pitch



by LJ TAYLOR

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An all weather, third-generation artificial pitch will be available for the university football teams by the start of the 2014/15 season.

The 3G pitch, which is currently under construction at Bangor City's Nantporth ground, is the start of a partnership between the club and the university's teams. It will also benefit a number of other local clubs.

"With all parties working together we can now expand our junior and women's football schemes as well as providing a training facility for a range of local clubs" said Dilwyn Jones, Bangor City's Chairman.

Having access to the facility will mean that the university teams will have another option besides Treborth where the weather often leaves the pitches difficult to play on or even means matches or training has to be cancelled.

"The 3G pitch will be a great opportunity to train and play football at a high standard on a weekly basis. As both the men's and women's team advance to a higher league next year, there is no doubt that the pitch will be of great significance and will have a striking impact on football in Bangor" said Jemma Parfitt, the women's team captain for next year.

The team committees are currently working closely with Will Baxter at Maes Glas to make decisions on just how much access they will have to the pitch and whether it will be used for both training and matches.

It is a significant investment of £150,000 from the University that has allowed the club to receive a further £350,000 from FA Wales to begin work on the pitch which is just a part of the improvements in the pipeline for Bangor City.

Other plans include extending the ground's main stand, building a supporter's terrace and creating an education suite within the clubhouse which will allow the club to work closely with the university's School of Sport and Health Science.

Being able to form links with the university is also something that Bangor City manager, Nev Powell, is very keen on.

"The 3G pitch is setting up links with the university and we're hoping to maybe get some scholarships going" he told Seren, whilst discussing Bangor City's future and the prospects of their young players.

"From my point of view as a manager there's a lot of talented young

players coming to the universities and maybe we can look at getting some of them over to us. Give them the chance to come and play for us. We do have a couple of names who are at the university and we'd like to be able to give them the chance to play" he said.

How far the links between the university and Bangor City will go within the next few years are not yet certain, but current women's captain, Dee Gilbert, is certain that the new facility is a huge step forward for the university teams.

"I've said that football within Bangor has improved drastically over the past few years, with success for both the women's and men's team, and these facilities will help the success to develop as well as improve the standards of professionalism within the team" she said.

Bangor welcomes new mayor

CLLR Jean Forsyth has been installed as the new mayor of Bangor, at Bangor City Council's Annual General Meeting. This is the second time she has had the chance to serve as mayor; the first regime was in 2009/10.

She said: "I promise to do my utmost to promote Bangor as a worthwhile city to live, work and invest in." She joined the city council back in 2004 and also represents Hirael ward on Gwynedd Council. The outgoing mayor cllr Madge thanked his wife Doreen for her support as well as paying tribute to the Trinity Foundation for its work with Japanese students and the Military Preparation College.

Bangor Mooting Champions

■ Bangor Law School are victorious at the Welsh Mooting Competition

by MEDWYN ROBERTS
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Bangor have been crowned champions for the first time in the prestigious history of the Welsh National Mooting Competition.

A team of students from Bangor Law School defeated the likes of Swansea and Cardiff University, taking on Aberystwyth in the final, hosted by 2013 champions the Open University at Chester's University of Law.

This nail biting win from is the latest in a line of mooting success, as Bangor Law School students became not only the first team ever

to represent Wales in the Telders International Law Moot Court Competition, but also the first Welsh law school to be invited to moot before the Supreme Court in London.

Mooting is the closest experience students get to presenting a case in court. It tests not only an individual's knowledge on legal matters but also the behaviour and etiquette required in the courtroom for embarking on a career in law.

The final case under contention at this year's Welsh National Mooting Competition was a rape case which included both an appeal and a cross appeal.

The appeal concerned whether or not

the complainant had been deceived as to the 'nature or purpose' of the act pursuant to section 76(2)(a) of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, and the cross appeal examined whether or not pretending to be a famous sports star could constitute someone 'known personally' to the complainant pursuant to section 76(2)(b) of the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Aaron Clegg and Adam Gulliver, both 21, who won the Welsh National Mooting Competition's dragon trophy, sponsored by LexisNexis, were delighted to win and remain extremely thankful to Bangor University in preparing them for their first ever external mooting competi-

tion.

Aaron, from Oldham, had this to say about the team's victory:

"Winning the competition was utterly surreal, to sit there in front of all the other competitors and hear the judge say "the winners are Bangor" was a moment I'm sure I'll never forget.

It's the first ever win for the law school and hopefully it will help to put Bangor on the map. The legal advocacy society will continue into the next academic year and hopefully this win will serve as the foundations for other students to keep the winning tradition up!"



In Brief

Care home abuse inquiry continues

RICHARD Dafydd Vear, 62, from Wrexham, is accused of assaulting a teenage boy, according to the National Crime Agency.

These offences are part of a series of investigations, Operation Pallial, into historical child abuse in North Wales care system from between 1953 and 1995.

Mr Vear will appear before Dolgellau Magistrates Court on June 2nd.

He is the second man to be charged in the operation. Ever since it began in November 2012, twenty people have been arrested.

In addition, John Allen, 72, has been charged with a series of child sex offences. He awaits trial later this year.

Students Mourn Security Cat



by WYATT WARNER

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The icon of the security office and unofficial mascot of Ffriddoedd halls site, known by many names to many students but universally as Security Cat, has died.

A surrogate pet for those missing

their own, and a calming influence on stressed students, he could often be seen lying in the box for maintenance request forms, or, on sunny days, on the pavement outside.

He was found as a kitten seventeen years ago by a night security guard in the bushes just outside the security lodge. The security guards adopted him and he stayed there ever since. Soon after his adoption, he fell ill, and students raised money for a veterinary visit. The amount raised exceeded what was necessary and since then Security Cat had an account with

the halls office, containing money that was to be used for future vet visits. The responsibility for buying his food was shared among some of the guards, cleaners, and halls office workers (many of whom in later years had known him for their entire time working for Halls). According to the guards, he used to follow them on their visits to halls buildings and would wait outside for their return. They buried him under a cross memorial marker beside the security lodge and inside they still keep a photo of him donated by a student.

He died gently at a very old age after a short illness, and the news was announced by the official Bangor University Facebook page, on which hundreds commented with their own stories of how Security Cat helped them with homesickness or exam stress. One former student, Jo, wrote: "the positive effect he had on so many homesick students - me included at times - is beyond quantifiable measure. I will remember Security Cat very fondly!" Shortly afterward, a memorial Facebook page, titled "RIP Security Cat," received almost 1350 likes.

Butcher Bikes for MS Society

BANGOR University's Students' Union president Antony Butcher is planning a 1,000 mile cycle from Land's End to John O'Groats to raise money for the MS society.

After having already raised £5,000 for the society, which supports those who have multiple sclerosis, he is planning on raising another £5,000 by July, in time to meet his target of raising a total of £10,000 by his 25th birthday.

Antony explained his motivation for completing the challenge: "About ten years ago my mum was diagnosed with MS. . . As humans we all want to make things better - and I know I can't do that. Raising money to go towards research and support is the best I can do."

This is Antony's second and last year as SU president.

For those wishing to donate to the MS Society, Antony has set up a Just-Giving page at: <http://www.justgiving.com/antonybutcher> and for those that want to find out more about the project and Antony's story, they are welcome to go to his blog at: <http://antonyjcbutcher.wordpress.com>

Paralysed Pensioner Dies

Hospital Assistants fail to check patients notes

A paralysed pensioner has died after healthcare assistants made her stand at Ysbyty Gwynedd, Bangor.

Elsie Ridgeway suffered a fractured femur when two hospital workers lifted her on to her legs. She died two days later of cardiac failure.

The health care assistants were unaware that the woman was paralysed and unable to stand, an inquest heard.

The 82-year-old from Felinheli had been living in a Nursing Home before being taken into hospital in August 2011.

Although North Wales Coroner Dewi Pritchard Jones concluded Mrs. Ridgeway's death was accidental, the fall was said to have contributed to her passing.

During this hearing, the coroner added his concerns as to why the previous one had been adjourned due to insufficient evidence.

"It proved very difficult to get information from the hospital. I said I would serve penal notices - essentially saying, 'tell me what you know or I will fine you'. Fortunately I did not have to serve them as the threat of them led to information required being provided."

Dwynwen Jones and Sylvia Marshall were the health workers who went to

assist Mrs. Ridgeway. They said they were unaware of her disability when they lifted her onto her legs.

Ms Jones describes how Mrs. Ridgeway fell, insisting that her fall was not severe.

"There was no thud and she was let down gently onto the floor," she said.

During the hearing, the coroner asked Mrs. Marshall if Mrs. Ridgeway had passed comment on not being able to stand, Mrs. Marshall answered that "she couldn't remember".

Mrs. Ridgeway's family had said they wanted to take the matter further after the previous hearing.

Jackie Porter, a daughter of Mrs. Ridgeway insisted that she had left a note with the hospital explaining that her Mother was 'completely dependent on others'.

Mrs. Ridgeway was left paralysed after suffering a stroke in 2006.

Another daughter, Erica Lindley, described how her mother was initially admitted to hospital with a chest infection.

The night before the fall, Mrs. Ridgeway had been told she would be discharged the next day. Ms. Lindley knew of her mother's excitement to return home.

"I took clothes for mum and when

I got to the ward I found the curtains were drawn.

"A nurse said she had had a fall. I went to see her and found her in pain. She said she had told them (staff) she had not used her legs for five years. 'They dropped me' she told me. It was awful, just awful."

Mrs Ridgeway died two days later.

"I was concerned to see her in such a state and tried to speak to a nurse about it but she was very abrupt. I wanted answers but I wasn't getting any," said Mrs Lindley.

Director of Nursing at Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board, Angela Hopkins said:

"I would like to offer my sincere apologies to Mrs Ridgeway's family for any distress caused.

"An investigation was undertaken at the time by the Primary, Community and Specialist Medicine Clinical Programme Group. This included a review of staff training and of the manual handling assessment documentation for patients used at that time."



Mum threatens woman with hammer

NIA Wynne from Llandudno Junction faced trial in Llandudno for threatening another mother on the school playground, with a hammer.

Wynne claims she was merely holding the hammer after picking it up off the ground and did not intend to use it against the other woman.

She did however admit threatening behaviour and was fined £80 for assaulting a police officer. When the police arrived the two women had been tussling over payment for a tumble drier.

In Brief

Primary school child accused of rape

A 10 year old school boy has been accused of raping a classmate at a Primary School in Colwyn Bay. He is facing two charges, a charge of rape and a second charge of inciting his classmate to engage in sexual activity.

After class the defendant is alleged to have grabbed the boy, pushed him over the sink in the toilets and raped him. After the victim pleaded for him to stop the attacker did so after ten seconds and said 'Oh come on, the party's just starting.'

It is alleged that both pupils had been watching pornography and the prosecution believed that was the reason behind the attack. This has further raised people's concerns about under 18's viewing pornography.

The second charge relates to another incident, in which the defendant and another boy were allegedly kissing and exposing themselves before telling the victim to perform a sex act on the one he preferred. He said he was then grabbed by the other boy but broke free and ran off. The other boy was not in court.

There was also another alleged incident in which the defendant tried to engage in sexual activity with the victim.

The defendant denied that anything sexual had ever happened between them.

Student Volunteering takes to the land

DURING the Easter break Bangor students spent a week working at Felin Uchaf centre near Aberdaron on the Llŷn Peninsula. Felin Uchaf is a local social land based enterprise which works to promote living in creative partnership and harmony with the environment.

The students assisted with the development of a new timber structure which is soon to be a new visitors' centre. The students also took part in other tasks such as planting, traditional cooking and dry stone walling.

This is Bangor's second residential volunteering excursion, the first happening at the same time last year.

Volunteering officer Sion Rowland said "There were students from different schools, different countries and different stages in their university education all coming together to work towards a very worthy cause. I can't wait to go back again!"



Boxed Off

Widow told her flower boxes are breaking health and safety regulations



by **CHARLOTTE PARKER**
news@seren.bangor.ac.uk

A 98-year-old widow has been ordered to remove her window boxes outside her retirement flat because they are a health and safety risk.

Housing bosses have told Jean Ston-

er that the plants she keeps outside her flat would pose a hazard if there was a fire in the block.

Mrs. Stoner has lived in her first-floor flat in Bangor for several years. She is deeply upset by the order from Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd Housing Association.

Her son, Joe, said: "When my mum first moved into Craig Menai, she was on the ground floor and had a garden. "She lived there for several years but then she moved to flats across the road and her garden was grassed over. "She now lives on the first floor and

has window boxes and planters in an alcove in the corridor but the tenants were told in April that they had to clear everything from communal areas."

He added: "My mum has had plants here since she moved in. It's heartless, cruel and unnecessary. They're not rubbish - these are the possessions of residents."

"They're not in the way and don't stick out into common areas."

Mrs. Stoner has always enjoyed the flowers and has never received problems or complaints about them

before.

The housing association said: "We understand Mrs Stoner's disappointment at having to remove the plants."

"But, as a responsible landlord, we are obliged to make tenants' and residents' safety our priority."

It's new policy, approved by the local fire service, includes keeping communal areas clear of any obstruction in case of fire.

"We can't make any exceptions to this," they said.

Repeat Offender Gets 8 Years

22 year old attacks 14 and 12 year old girls

Forced to register as a sex offender

by **CALLUM HULME**
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A 22 year old man from Old Colwyn has been jailed for eight and a half years after being found guilty of sexual offences against two underage girls.

Wesley David Roberts was given the sentence at Mold Crown Court after raping a twelve-year-old girl while awaiting trial for a similar offence with a fourteen-year-old.

Judge Niclas Parry has ordered Roberts to register with the Police as a sex offender for life after pleading guilty to both offences.

Judge Parry later told Roberts he was 'a high risk of harm to children in the form of sexual offences and rape.'

In the summer of 2012, Roberts, then aged 20, contacted and befriended the fourteen-year-old over facebook.

She had registered with a false date of birth - claiming to be in her thirties - but upon meeting her it would have become obvious that she was a young teenage girl.

When Roberts first met the girl's mother, she introduced him as a seventeen-year-old, which, judging by his looks, she found believable.

As the relationship developed between Roberts and the girl, so too did their sexual activity. Roberts used protection on none of the five or six times that intercourse took place, but the girl had been using the contraceptive pill.

Oliver King, the barrister for the prosecution, said that the fourteen-year-old had consented to the sexual activity but was uncomfortable with the pace at which the events had taken place.

When the girl eventually told her

mother that the two had had intercourse, she immediately rang the police.

While he was awaiting trial, Roberts then contacted the twelve-year-old girl - unable to consent due to her age.

Roberts had put her under pressure to meet up, to which she eventually agreed. She fabricated a story about going out to play with some friends and met the defendant in a nearby park.

He joked around with her, got her to sit on his knee, and then took off her trousers and had intercourse with her. They were disturbed by people leaving the nearby community centre, allowing the girl the opportunity to pull her trousers up.

Her mother came looking for her and it wasn't until some time later that the girl, traumatised, wrote her mother a letter explaining everything that had

happened. The victim later told of how Roberts had rushed her into it and that it had 'hurt.'

The police were called in but, as was the case with the fourteen-year-old, Roberts refused to answer any questions.

The defendant already had a poor criminal record, with 57 previous non-sexual convictions.

When the Judge said the sentence would not reach double figures, the defending barrister, Simon Mintz, declined to mitigate.

Roberts pleaded guilty to sexual activity with a child and received two and a half years, before pleading guilty to rape and assault by penetration on the twelve-year-old girl, which added a further six years.



Local Set for LA

■ Bangor University student heads to America to further her career



by **CHARLOTTE PARKER**
news@seren.bangor.ac.uk

A local singer songwriter is to travel to Los Angeles this summer to further her music career. Cara Braia, from Criccieth will also be graduating from Bangor University this summer, after spending her last three years juggling her career with her studies.

The 21-year-old won an international online competition by singing her own

interpretation of a Kinks song. Cara, who has been studying Creative Studies for three years, has recorded many songs including collaborations with artists and producers from all around the world.

Cara, a former pupil of Ysgol Ardudwy, said: "I've been performing since the age of four, and started taking part in Eisteddfodau at a young age.

"From the age of nine, I was singing solos in local venues around the Llyn Peninsula with an operatic group called Reflexions."

At the age of 16, Cara began to take her song writing more seriously. She saw it as a way to express her feelings, and to talk about her experiences of being bullied.

Her call to fame came in 2010, when she uploaded some of her music to Soundcloud. She was then approached by other musicians who wanted to collaborate with her.

Cara said: "I have worked with people from the US, France, Australia, Africa, Poland, Germany and many other countries.

"I hope to be meeting some of the US-based artists during my time in LA and I will soon be releasing my single with dancehall artist Stonebwoy from Ghana.

"My music is played on Heart FM and Radio Cymru. It's great to be able to hear my music played in my home country, as my tracks with other artists are played around the world but I don't

get to hear them."

Along with her singing, Cara wanted more experience working behind the scenes and on film sets.

She said: "I have enjoyed my time at Bangor, especially the Screenwriting, Journalism and Short Film Production modules. I am grateful to the lecturers for all the help and support, and have met great friends during my time at Bangor.

"I'm going to LA on the 31st of May to meet some people that I have previously worked with and meet some new contacts that will hopefully be beneficial to my performance future. I have no idea what to expect as I will be going out there totally alone but I'm excited for the experience."

In Brief

The Urdd Eisteddfod

BANGOR University have announced that they are one of the main sponsors of the Meirionnydd Urdd Eisteddfod. The event will take place in Bala between 26th and 30th of May and the University will be making all sorts of activities to available to the public.

These activities includes all sorts of Science based fun, like chemistry activities and psychology tests, a sea life exhibition and building a 'Joule thief' - a simple electrical circuit which extracts sufficient energy from 'dead' batteries to light an LED and even a Welsh Language exercise bike! The School of education will be putting on craft activities, songs and stories, face painting and puzzles for the children.

Visitors can try their hand at archaeology and excavate some Welsh treasure, and learn more about the Celts, the Romans and the Welsh princes with the School of History, Welsh History & Archaeology. And, a classical and folk music workshop will be held on the Thursday as well as a Harp masterclass by Elinor Ben-net.

Sioned Hughes, Schools Liaison Officer at Bangor University said: "We look forward to the Urdd Eisteddfod every year, and are pleased to meet the students of the future on our stand! It's great to have the opportunity to present science and other subjects in a fun way and outside the confines of the classroom and school."

Pair Charged in Racist Attack on Student

by **CHARLOTTE WRIGHT**
news@seren.bangor.ac.uk

Two intoxicated local men were sentenced to up to two years in prison after a racial attack on a 22-year-old student from Kuwait which took place in January.

The unprovoked attack left the student with a fractured nose after the attack on Glanrafon Hill. The two attackers, Nathan Edward Riley and Craig Lee Jones of Maesgeirchen are known for their previous attacks.

Jones, who breached his ASBO, was jailed for two years whereas

Riley, who was embarrassed and apologetic was given 25 months for the attack.

The victim was found distressed and confused, repeatedly expressing that he had done nothing to these men and could not comprehend why they had attacked him.

The international student also spoke



about how the attack had knocked his confidence and is now debating on continuing his education in Bangor due to fears of more attacks.

Judge Niclas Parry of Mold Crown Court was quoted in the Daily Post newspaper saying that "the aggravating features of "this disgraceful incident were obvious" and how "this was a vicious, unprovoked attack, late

at night, in a heavily populated student area of Bangor where the potential for public disorder is obvious."

The attackers were part of a drunken gang. Riley engaged contact with the victim and began to throw racist abuse at him. Jones then joined in and began to punch him in the face and Riley then began punching and kicking his upper body and face.

Riley has seven previous known convictions for his violent crimes with two offences of wounding. Judge Parry was quoted saying that Jones was coming very close to being handled as a dangerous offender.

Man dead after Caernarfon air crash

THE man who died in the Caernarfon air crash reported by Seren earlier this month has been named.

The man who was 61 years old from Rhyl, named Ashley Hazelwood, passed away after the incident on 15th May. He was rushed to hospital after the crash but despite the swift action of emergency services unfortunately he didn't make it. The Air Accident Investigation Branch has a team inspecting the crash wreckage and will prepare a report in due course.

A North Wales Police spokesman said: "An investigation is underway by the Air Accident Investigation Bureau from Hampshire supported by North Wales Police, to establish the circumstances which resulted in a 61-year-old man from the Rhyl area, sustaining fatal injuries."

The incident follows a similar case at Caernarfon airport only a year ago. Iain Nuttall, 37, from Blackburn, was killed when a plane piloted by his father crashed on 19 May, 2013.

Cup Final Causes Fights

■ Pitch invasions cause chaos at Challenge Cup Final

by **CHARLOTTE PARKER**
news@seren.bangor.ac.uk

Pitch invaders caused problems for Bangor City in their Challenge Cup tie.

Flares were thrown during the game and many fans of both teams invaded the pitch, after Bangor lost the game on penalties at their home ground, Nantporth.

Bangor City welcomed Caernarfon Town for the North Wales Challenge Cup Final on May 13th.

Police stepped in to deal with the pitch invaders.

A yellow flare was thrown onto the pitch during the first minute of play, causing the game to be stopped as smoke poured out. This was soon removed.

An eyewitness said: "A flare was thrown on the pitch right at the beginning of the game, and another was set off behind the crowd.

"After the final whistle, about 50 Caernarfon fans came onto the pitch, but they soon went off.

"One man went over to the Bangor fans and was goading them but security and the police were very quick to deal with him.

"He was struggling with the police and it took several of them to get him under control."

Despite these disruptions, witnesses said the general behaviour of the crowd "made for a really good atmosphere".

After a 2-2 draw, Caernarfon Town beat Bangor City 5-4 on penalties.

Two men were arrested at the game, both believed to have travelled from Caernarfon.

A spokeswoman for North Wales Police spoke of the arrests.

"A 17-year-old youth from Caernarfon was arrested after attempting

to enter the ground with a flare. He has been bailed pending further enquiries.

"A 23-year-old man, also from Caernarfon, was arrested for disorder following a pitch invasion at the end of the game. He remains in custody.

"A minority of travelling supporters from Caernarfon were involved in minor disorder during what was primarily a trouble-free match.

"We will be liaising with both football clubs to seek their support in banning individuals involved in disorder from their respective grounds."

Neither club was available for comment.

POLITICS

In Brief

'Gay Marriage causes flooding,' says Christian Leader

THE leader of the Christian's People's Alliance, Sid Cordle, caused controversy when he stated that it was "pretty likely" that gay marriage was the cause of recent flooding in England.

The statement was made on May 16 during a broadcast of BBC's Politics Today, and provoked laughter among the programme's other guests.

Cordle made the comments after being asked whether he agreed with controversial UKIP councillor David Silvester, who stated that gay marriage caused floods and made it rain.

However, Cordle also stated that UKIP was not a "natural home" for Christians, due to the party's racist reputation.

Reality TV Star Beats Nick Clegg as PM Candidate

A SURVEY by women's magazine Cosmopolitan has found that women aged 18-30 have more confidence in Joey Essex's abilities as a Prime Minister than they do in Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg's. Joey Essex, a popular reality tv show personality, won 3% of the survey's hypothetical votes, while Nick Clegg won just 1%.

The tongue-in-cheek survey has raised issues about the lack of trust that British Millennials have towards politicians. Louise Court, editor-in-chief of the magazine, said that "British politicians have a huge disconnect with young women and have a big fight on their hands if they want to win the battle for the millennial vote."

Ed Miliband Vows to Raise Minimum Wage

ED MILIBAND has outlined his plans to raise the minimum wage should Labour be elected into power in 2015.

Both the Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties have also pledged to increase the national minimum wage, though a Downing Street spokesman has said that ultimately it should be left to the Low Pay Commission to dictate how much the actual increase should be.

Labour believes that the Low Pay Commission, a committee made up of representatives from academia, industry, and unions, have been too conservative in their plans to raise minimum wage.



Young people and politics

by EMILY HOULSTON-JONES

It's hard to stand up and admit you've made a mistake, but it's time for me to do so.

6 months ago, I wrote an article stating that students don't care about politics. I said that our current generation is "apathetic." I lectured readers like I was a maiden aunt, all the while convinced that students don't care about politics.

Boy, was I wrong.

If the past few months have taught me anything, it's that students care about politics. Yes, we may not be interested in the ins-and-outs of parliaments. We may not care a bit about quangos and whips and parliamentary debates. We may not even be entirely sure what those terms mean. But we do care about politics.

Last December, Bangor students came together to celebrate feminism, in an event titled "I Need Feminism Because..." organized by the Bangor Feminist Society (then called the Bangor Women's Society.) The campaign consisted of a diverse range of students holding up signs stating why they felt feminism was still needed in our present society.

The campaign was an inherently political one. The lack of female rep-

resentation in government, both local and national, was the subject of a few signs. Other signs, while less overtly political, still proved that students care about politics and social issues, and that we take note of how they affect our day-to-day lives.

Another political issue which a lot of young people feel strongly about is the presence of UKIP in UK party politics. The rise of UKIP is a hot topic, and peppered amongst all the jokes about some of UKIP's more ridiculous policies are genuine concerns about the UK's political future.

People are paying attention to the upcoming European elections (which will have been held by the time this issue goes to print.) For many current students, this is the first major election that we are legally allowed to vote in. The rise of UKIP has spurred some people to examine their political affiliations carefully, and to truly think about who they want running the country. I've even heard a few people say that they plan to vote to prevent UKIP from coming to power, even though they originally had no intention to vote. In a way, UKIP is the villain that Britain needs right now. Their ridiculous policies are teaching the young people the dangers of apathy. We need to get out and use our vote.

Politics has changed for our gen-

eration. We live in the age of social media, where every political gaffe is endlessly analyzed and discussed. No wonder trust in politicians is low. We make websites revolving around David Cameron's stupid campaign posters (mydavidcameron.com) and Ed Miliband's awkward ways (awkwardedmilibandmoments.tumblr.com). Heck, at this point, Boris Johnson is basically a walking posh guy caricature. And people wonder why young people can't take party politics seriously?

But though our generation has strayed away from traditional party politics, we still care. Given the platform, young people have the potential to do great things.

It's been proven time and time again that UK politicians don't particularly care about young people. When the government raised tuition fees and when they proposed cutting housing benefits to under-25s, they proved that the concerns of young people are not important to them. It seems like a safe decision, considering that 42% of 16-24s have "little to no interest in politics."

But such a statistic doesn't account for what I experience every day, when I see people discussing politics on social media, or campaigning for the Sabbatical elections, or booing every time Russia wins points during Eu-

rovision.

We're paving our own way politically, working out what politics means to us. Our politics will be different from our parent's politics, just as our parent's politics were different from our grandparent's politics.

People believe that young people are disinterested in politics because we don't fit into older generation's preconceived notions of "politically active." We don't care about unions. Party politics don't feel relevant to us, and nor do local politics, a lot of the time.

But we're slowly discovering our political identity, both as individuals and as a generation. A few examples: we are far more likely to support gay marriage than previous generations. We are less likely to watch political programmes on television, but more likely to follow a politician on Twitter. We are less likely to support the death penalty, and more likely to be educated to a degree level.

We are different to previous generations, and so are our politics.

In short, to say that young people don't care about politics is stupidly redundant, as well as condescending. We're still growing into our political shoes, so to speak, but we still have beliefs and opinions and issues that we truly care about.

42%

Percentage of 16-24 year-old Britons who have no interest in politics (2011)

61%

Percentage of 16-24 year-old Britons who identify with a political party (2013)

32%

Percentage of 16-24 year-old Britons who have a "great deal of interest in politics" (2013)

44%

Percentage of 18-24 year-old Britons who voted in the last General Election (2010)

#UKIP leaflet, wrapped around a brick. All ready to be returned to #UKIPfreepost address at their expense.
pic.twitter.com/q2nH7mkLIB

Reply Retweet Favourite More



UKIP brick campaign

by CHARLOTTE FAYE WRIGHT

One thing I feel UKIP have done right this year is paying for their own post, meaning anyone wanting to send something to the party will have their postage paid for by the party. Many opponents of the party took to twitter to campaign that fellow opponents send in bricks and other heavy objects in order to rack up large bills which the party would be forced to pay for. Opponents of the UK Independent Party, whose plans involve scrapping paid

maternity leave, raising income tax, and cutting education spending, sent boxes of 'junk' in order to rack up huge bills. Sadly it is rumoured that after receiving such hefty objects the party had to change their free postage address to an address which only accepts its mail with stamps. The party, who are well-known for their homophobic and racist comments, are also linked to child abuse claims and have been branded by the UK's very own prime minister as "fruitcakes, loonies and closet racists." They are expected to receive 16 percent of votes, according to The Mirror.

The rise and fall of UKIP

by CALLUM HULME

The United Kingdom Independence Party, or UKIP for short, were racing ahead not so long ago in the opinion polls, as their promises of a referendum on the United Kingdom's stance within the European Union gathered quite a lot of positive chatter and attention.

They were saying all the right things in the build-up to the European elections, and the public were enthusiastically picking up on it. That was, until recently, when several high-profile party members came out with erratic, racist and downright offensive claims.

Firstly, Nigel Farage's recent radio interview with LBC has been described as nothing less than a political car-crash. The UKIP leader made such a mockery of his own party in an attempt to promote it that his most senior aide rushed into the studio and forced the show to a halt.

Farage claimed that people "know" which foreigners make good neighbours and which don't, suggesting that the crime rate amongst Romanian immigrants was "eye-watering."

Asked what the difference between a German family and a Romanian one moving next door would be, Farage simply answered: "You know what the difference is."

More recently, in May, Kevin O'Doherty, one of the UKIP party members standing for election in East Sussex was photographed naked, ready to snort a white substance off of a woman's lower back. The same photograph showed him with Nazi symbology tattooed down his left arm.

John Sullivan, another party member, posted this on Facebook in February: "I rather wonder if we shot one 'poofert' whether the next 99 would decide on balance, that they weren't after-all? We might then conclude that it's not a matter of genetics, but rather more a matter of education."

Another candidate, Gordon Ferguson, wrote an open letter for prospective voters stating that politicians from Britain's three main political parties should be hanged after committing Britain to "slavery inside the EU dictatorship." Their voters, he went on to say, should be tried for treason.

After such a spectacular rise into the limelight of British politics, it's only right that their party be subjected to an increased level of scrutiny, and it was this close assessment of the party's racist, homophobic and archaic views that saw the party's support considerably falter.

The story of UKIP's dramatic rise and fall is undoubtedly one of the most interesting political stories to come out of 2014 so far.

In Brief

Troll Allegedly Sent Abusive Tweets to MP

PETER Nunn, 33, has appeared in court charged with sending abusive twitter messages to MP Stella Creasy and feminist Caroline Criado-Perez.

The messages were allegedly sent after Creasy and Criado-Perez publicly supported the campaign to feature Jane Austen on the new £10 note.

The alleged messages referred to the MP as a "witch," with one talking about "the best way to rape a witch."

Nunn denies the charge, though he has confessed to retweeting messages of a violent nature to "further debate."

The case has been adjourned until September 2, with Nunn being released on conditional bail.

Health Cuts Links to Child Mental Disorders

LOCAL council budget cuts and health service restructuring have been linked to a rise in mental health disorders among children, according to Children's Commissioner for England Maggie Atkinson.

The statement was made as part of written evidence presented to an inquiry into the Children's and Adolescent Mental Health Service, conducted by the Health Select Committee.

According to the statement, 1 child in every 10 has a mental health disorder, and three-quarters of children with mental health disorders do not currently receive any kind of treatment or support.

Councils and health authorities have also submitted evidence to the inquiry, outlining the pressure caused by cuts.

Cameron Says Coalition Will 'Last The Course'

DAVID Cameron has publicly stated that the current coalition government will continue until the 2015 election.

His comments come in the wake of feuding between the two parties over free school meals and knife crime.

Cameron, speaking on Sky News's The Murnaghan Programme, acknowledged the "tensions and pressures" within the coalition, but said that it will "last the course."

A year in politics

Seren writers take a look back on a year in politics, from Edward Snowden to Nigel Farage.



Snowdenia

by WYATT WARNER

It's been almost a year since Edward Snowden's insider info about the United States National Security Agency (NSA) came to light, via Glen Greenwald at the Guardian. Specifically, that the NSA was illegally collecting massive amounts of data about American citizens. Just like that, we knew for a fact what many had suspected for years: that the government was spying on us.

It wasn't a huge surprise to most. People made jokes about government surveillance and those who wanted to

show off would say anti-government messages on the internet. It was as if to prove that if the FBI didn't comment on Josh from Issaquah's Facebook post about how George Bush is gay, then the government had no power. That kind of thing had ramifications too though. A friend of mine was visited and questioned by government agents because a guy she didn't know hacked her World of Warcraft account and typed into chat that he had a plan to kill Obama (I guess with his epic-rarity rogue dagger).

No, I wasn't surprised, but I was frustrated. I'd just spent a year telling my new British friends what a great coun-

try I come from. Like many people, I'd lost trust in my government.

But then on one of my first days back for the summer I visited my mom's work, the US Army Corps of Engineers. Here were a group of engineers and biologists, all government workers and all nerdy as they come. A few of them recognized me from when my mom would take me in when I was a kid, and they'd chat with me about college and about Wales. These government workers were collecting my information the old fashioned way.

That's helped me calm down about the whole thing. The government isn't the faceless evil creature that punk

songs make it seem, it's just people. It's true that some of those people are scheming, sleazy, or just a puppet of a corporation, but it's not like there's a drone on hold somewhere, just waiting for me to tweet about how much I love the NHS or anything.

That said, whether the NSA is gathering data about Americans for security reasons like they claim, or to create an Orwellian dystopia like this one guy on my Facebook feed claims, it's not okay. I want a government I can brag to my friends about. Edward Snowden is a hero.

In Brief

GRAVITATIONAL WAVES DISCOVERED

RIPPLES in space-time from the earliest moments of the universe have been discovered by astrophysicists, in a finding hailed by the scientific community as a future Nobel Prize winner.

Einstein predicted the existence of “gravitational waves” nearly 100 years ago in his general theory of relativity, but until now any trace of them – caused by strong gravitational forces – had remained elusive.

Until recently, when researchers from Harvard working at a laboratory on the Antarctic ice cap detected their tell-tale signature on the faint light left over from the Big Bang. The gravitational waves cause rays of light to become twisted or “polarised”, which can then be detected by telescopes such as the one in Antarctica.

The finding not only proves Einstein right (again), but also will allow physicists to better understand what the Universe was like in the first fractions of a second after the Big Bang, when it was still as small as a tennis ball.

Dr Andrew Pontzen, a cosmologist from University College London, said that the discovery meant “a whole new era in cosmology and physics.”

MALE RESEARCHERS STRESS OUT RATS

LAB rats are stressed out by men much more than by women – a finding that may spell trouble for thousands of experimental conclusions.

It's long been rumoured that rats react differently to male and female experimenters. Dr Jeffrey Mogil, from McGill University in Canada, recently investigated the phenomenon systematically.

His study found that rats exposed to men exhibited higher levels of the stress hormone corticosterone and were much less responsive to painful stimuli than those exposed to women.

Further tests involving smelly T-shirts showed that stress was caused by the smell of male pheromones. Having a woman (or a woman's T-shirt) present counteracted the effect entirely.

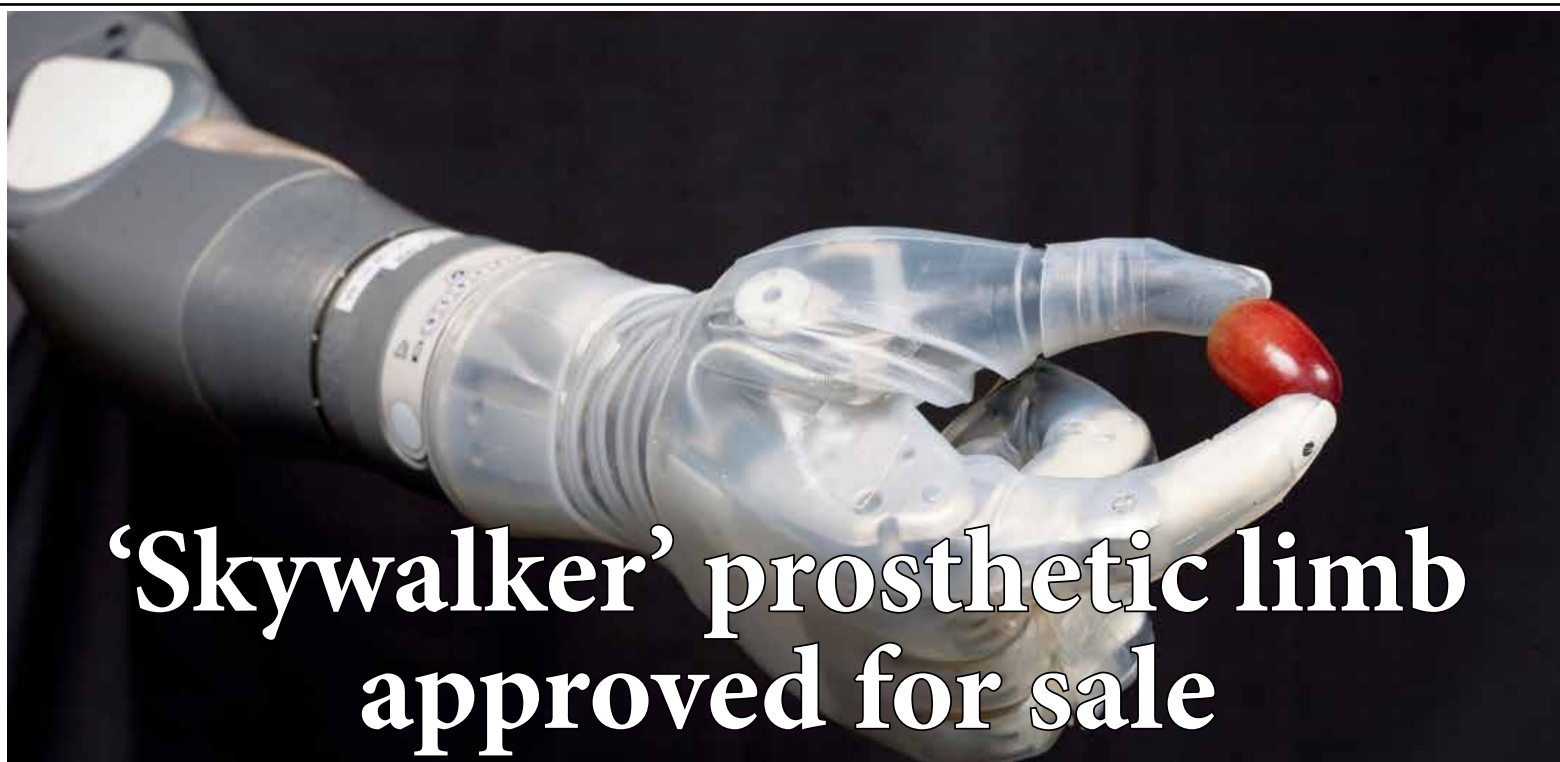
Mogil says that the finding is concerning but not fatal for experiments on rats. He suggests that future research papers should state the sex of the experimenter. Or, he suggests, “fire all the men - or have them chaperoned by a woman.”

ANTARCTIC COLLAPSE “UNSTOPPABLE”

THE West Antarctic Ice Sheet is doomed to melt, according to two new studies – meaning global sea levels will rise by 3 metres.

Geophysicists concluded that the Thwaites Glacier, a body of ice holding the rest of the Ice Sheet back, will inevitably collapse, and once this happens there will be nothing to stop the rest of the Ice Sheet from slowly sliding into the sea.

The process will take 200 years to play out, even under a worst-case scenario, say the scientists involved with the study - but there's nothing that can be done to reverse the process even with drastic emissions cuts.



‘Skywalker’ prosthetic limb approved for sale

BY EMILY HOULSTON-JONES

A new prosthetic arm has been cleared for sale in the United States of America by the US Food and Drug Administration.

The Deka Arm System was developed as part of a project named ‘Luke,’ paying homage to Star Wars character Luke Skywalker, who receives a prosthetic hand during the course of the film ‘The Empire Strikes Back.’

Tom Doyon, project manager at Deka Research and Development Corporation, the device's creators, has said that the prosthesis is “a real milestone” and has also stated that Deka is now focusing on successfully marketing

and selling the device.

The prosthesis is controlled by the electrical signals of the user's body, and works in one of two ways: either by using electromyogram electrodes to detect electrical signals created by muscle contractions, or by using a wireless controller, operated using the user's foot movements. The device learns, over the course of a few weeks, to convert these electrical signals into movement.

Trials have shown that the arms are usually fully trained within weeks, with certain tasks being learnt in a matter of hours.

The product was approved following a study of 36 amputees, during which 90% of participants stated that

they were better able to perform tasks which involved a degree of manual dexterity. Compared to standard prosthesis, a majority of participants found that they were better able to perform tasks such as turning keys in locks, using zippers, brushing and combing hair, feeding themselves and gripping and moving delicate objects – with eggs being used for the study.

The Deka Arm System is not attached using surgery; rather it is fitted to the user with a customized plastic or carbon-fibre socket. The device can currently only be configured for users with a limb loss occurring at the shoulder joint, mid-upper arm, or mid-lower arm. There are currently no plans to create a similar device to limb

loss which occurs at elbow or wrist joints.

The prosthesis was also evaluated on factors such as its ability to withstand damage, the software used, and mitigations to prevent unwanted arm movements. It performed well in all these areas.

Christy Foreman, director of the Office of Device Evaluation at the FDA's Centre for Devices and Radiological Health, voiced her approval for the device, saying that the prosthesis “may allow some people to perform more complex tasks than they can with current prostheses in a way that more closely resembles the natural motion of the arm.” She also described the product as “innovative.”



Earth's ‘twin’ planet discovered

BY NICOLA HOBAN

Scientists announced at a news conference on 15th May the discovery of a planet which is a similar match to Earth.

While the planet, which is being referred to as Kepler 186f after the NASA Kepler planet-finding mission which discovered it, is 10% wider than Earth with a diameter of 8,700 miles, it is the closest match to our planet that has been discovered to date. Orbiting within the “Goldilocks zone” of its star 500 light-years away, the temperatures of Kepler 186f allow for liquid water to flow at the surface, meaning that it has the potential for life to be able to inhabit the planet.

Dr. Elisa V. Quintana, of the SETI

Institute and NASA's Ames Research Center in Mountain View, California, said at the conference: “Kepler 186f is the first validated, Earth-size planet in the habitable zone of another star. It has the right size and is at the right distance to have properties similar to our home planet.”

Kepler 186f is the most recent planet to be found in the mammoth amount of data collected from the Kepler mission, which kept watch over 150,000 stars by monitoring for minor drops in brightness when a planet passed in front.

The announcement of Earth's ‘Twin’ planet follows last year's announcement of another star, Kepler 62, which has two planets residing in its habitable zone – but these planets were

referred to as ‘super Earths’ due to their sheer masses, which meant that their gravities may have been strong enough to pull in helium and hydrogen gases, making them more similar to mini-Neptunes than large Earths.

The size of Kepler 186f, however, makes it more likely that the planet has a rocky surface similar to Earth, which fulfils another step in scientists' quests for a ‘Earth 2.0.’

Another member of the discovery team, Thomas S. Barclay of the Bay Area Environmental Research Institute, said of the discovery: “It's a progression. This planet really reminds us of Earth.”

A similarity the two planets possess besides its appearance and substance are the levels of gravity.

Stephen Kane, an astronomer at San Francisco State University and another member of the research team, said: “You could far more easily imagine someone being able to go there and walk around on the surface.”

However, scientists state that the planet is not a perfect replica; Kepler 186f is closer to its star – a red dwarf that is smaller, cooler and fainter than our own sun – the time it takes for it to complete one orbit is 130 days, unlike Earth's 365 days, and it is towards the outer edge of the habitable zone meaning that it is colder, and that it is probable more of the surface will be frozen.

Dr Barclay concluded: “Perhaps it's more of an Earth cousin than an Earth twin.”

Science@Bangor

CHINESE GARDEN FOR TREBORTH

A CHINESE medicinal garden is to be planted at the University's Treborth Botanic Garden.

The Two Dragons Garden has been established as part of the partnership between Treborth and Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden in Yunnan Province, China. Funded by the British Council, the Confucius Institute, Bangor University and the Friends of Treborth, it'll likely be two or three years before the project is completed.

Plants – from tea to cherry trees – will be chosen for the garden for their scientific, historical, cultural and socio-economic value.

As a showcase for the species used in traditional Chinese medicine, the garden will be a valuable teaching resource for both students and the public, and will increase awareness about Chinese culture and history. It's also hoped that the garden will be used for research projects studying everything from soil chemistry to the trade in rare orchids.

The biggest difficulty, said Dr Sophie Williams, lecturer in Conservation in SENRGY and the brains behind the project, is that it'll take many years to for the plants to mature. Nobody should be expecting a beautiful garden straight away!

Despite this, the plan is for all the plants in the garden to be medicinal. The garden will also follow traditional principles of Chinese garden design, with entrance via a "moon gate" and different "views" from the three different "rooms" making up the garden.

Professor Chen Jin, Director of Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanic Garden and Chair of the Chinese Union of Botanic Gardens said, "The new link between Treborth and XTBG is a great step forward to making stronger ties for China and Wales. The new Chinese garden at Treborth is very exciting and I am happy to be involved with this project."

OPEN DAY AT UNIVERSITY FARM

THE University's Henfaes Research Station at Abergwyngregyn will be opening its doors to the public on June 12th.

As part of Universities Week from June 9th-15th, when universities around the UK raise awareness of the impact of their research on all our lives, Henfaes will be showing how its work has been benefiting Welsh agriculture and science.

Staff there will be explaining everything from techniques for growing tomatoes outdoors to how daffodils are being used in treating Alzheimer's disease to why bees don't always sting.

Dr Morag McDonald, Head of SENRGY, said: "I think people would be surprised at the wide variety of research undertaken at the Henfaes Research Station - both because of its breadth and because it really has been making an impact on Welsh agriculture over the decades."

The Open Day starts at 2pm on Thursday 12th June and light refreshments will be provided.

Wüster on Regent's Park snakes: Don't believe the hype!

BY EDWIN PYNEGAR

One of Bangor's best-known lecturers has been in the national news recently – because of a colony of snakes living in Regent's Park.

Dr Wolfgang Wüster, of the School of Biological Sciences, is one of the country's leading experts on the Aesculapian snake (*Zamenis longissimus*), a species native to Southern and Eastern Europe.

However the snake has also established two breeding populations in the UK, one in woods just outside Colwyn Bay and another along the Regent's Canal in central London.

It was the latter population that hit the papers, with articles in the Inde-

pendent, Daily Mail, Mirror and Daily Star warning of 8ft long baby-eating serpents on the loose around London amid calls for a cull.

Dr Wüster urged the public not to believe the hype and called the media reporting "atrocious" and "sensationalist". The species is actually normally 3-4ft long, growing to a maximum of around 5ft, and totally harmless to anything larger than a small bird or rodent. It has little chance of expanding its range further in the UK because the climate here suits it poorly.

He slammed a cull as a waste of time and effort, despite the species being listed as an alien invasive by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. "Any attempt to eradicate the Aesculapian snake would require justification of

resources to be devoted to an almost certainly non-problematic introduced species with little prospects of spread, as opposed to the many far more damaging species already out there."

The population at Colwyn Bay has been living there peacefully for decades, after a gravid female managed to escape from the Welsh Mountain Zoo around 50 years ago. The population isn't outcompeting any native species and is unlikely to be doing any major damage to the native Welsh fauna, because the wildlife it encounters here is very similar to that in its natural range in continental Europe. Invasive species that "take over" tend to be those from distant parts of the world; when introduced here, with naïve prey and no native predators to control num-

bers, populations can increase very rapidly.

Dr Wüster also expressed bemusement at the fact that the story suddenly had hit the national news, saying that the London population had also been living there without being much noticed for many years, possibly the offspring of individuals which escaped from London Zoo or from an education facility near Regent's Park.

"Actually they are probably the nicest species of snake we have in this country", he added. "Adders are venomous and grass snakes smell awful, so if you want a "show-me" snake, the Aesculapian would be a pretty good choice!"



Chimp split mirrors our own

BY WYATT WARNER

Famous primatologist Jane Goodall's field notes from a "chimpanzee war" in the early 1970s have been re-examined in order to compare the chimpanzee society's fracture to human ones. The notes revolve around the chimpanzee feeding station that Goodall established in Tanzania's Gombe Stream National Park.

A group of chimpanzees in the park split into two in the early 1970s, and groups of males from one faction were observed to enter the other's territory and violently beat a single chimp. Over four years this faction destroyed the other. The violence was so intense and sustained that Goodall dubbed it

a war.

It's not completely clear what caused the split, but a senior male (dubbed "Leakey") died in late 1970. Researchers say that Leakey may have been a bridge between the two factions, because the split began soon after his death. After Leakey, another male, Humphrey, became alpha, but he faced pressure from his two stronger brothers. The other chimps began to follow either Humphrey or his brothers, which caused the divide.

The war lasted for four years, in which time Humphrey's group destroyed that of the brothers. The fighting consisted of groups of males entering rival territory and violently beating single chimpanzees they encountered. Seven rebel males died.

Researchers from Duke University in North Carolina have entered the detailed social data from Goodall's notes (such as which chimps arrived at the station together and how much time they spent together) into a software program that describes the chimpanzees' social network. They found that they could pinpoint the time at which the social divide started—1971, when the group split into a northern and southern faction that spent less time socializing with other. They could also predict which side individual chimpanzees would affiliate themselves with, based on their preferred social contacts.

The Duke University researchers say that the social fragmentation resembles that in human societies. They

compared it to a sociology study of a university karate club's similar split in 1970, where researchers could similarly predict individuals' chosen faction based on their social interactions. That means that chimpanzee societies might help us understand how human-like societies evolve.

The Gombe war is the only known chimpanzee society split, as fractures are very rare—groups can last for centuries, according to genetic research of group members. More hints might be gleaned from New World spider monkeys, which are the only other primate to behave similarly, says University of Texas at Austin researcher Anthony Di Fiore.

In Brief

Energy Crisis Looms

A REPORT by the Global Sustainability Institute (GSI) has issued a warning that within the next 5 years, Britain will have run out of oil, coal, and gas. This shocking revelation has led to a call for a "Europe-wide drive" towards renewable energy production, from the likes of wind, tidal, solar and hydroelectric power by GSI Professor, Victor Anderson. The report goes on to suggest that shortages would increase the UK's dependency on Norway, Qatar and Russia. However, it could be worse, France for example, is estimated to have less than a year of its own fuel sources left.

This lack of resources has led to fears that the UK will soon be 'held hostage' by high energy import prices from countries such as Russia. However, the government believes that shale gas, extracted by controversial fracking, is the answer, at least to bridge the gap until renewable technology increases. Furthermore, incentives for further oil research in the North Sea are being offered, in addition the government is trying to persuade the USA to export more gas to the UK. A Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC) spokesperson said that the UK is one of the most energy secure countries in the World. While the UK's energy future is perhaps uncertain, it is certain that real change must be enacted soon to stop a crisis in the future.

El Nino Threat to Crops

RECENT research surrounding the climatic phenomenon known as El Nino has shown that certain yields of major food crops could be significantly reduced because of the climatic event. An El Nino event is a defined episodic change in climate which is caused by changes in the sea surface temperature in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean. These El Nino events cause a shift in the position of the jet stream, which alters rainfall patterns and temperatures; and can result in extreme weather events, such as droughts or flooding, these events have the major impacts on crop yields.

The research centred on 4 main major food crops, maize, rice, wheat and soybean. The general trend which can be seen is an overall decrease in yield of between 4.3% and 0.8% with maize, rice and wheat. However, when looking at soybean crops, an interesting difference is observed, that being an increase in yield of between 2.1% -5.4%.

The four crops account for almost 60% of the world's food calories produced on croplands. For this reason it is beneficial that forecasts can be predicted for future episodes of El Nino and La Nina, this will allow prediction of when bad yield years will be ahead of harvest. An improved response to the impacts on crop yield can help to reduce the risk of malnutrition whilst also improving the adaption capability against climate change.



Lightning Phenomenon Linked to Cosmic Rays

by CHRIS GLASS

Solar winds are cosmic rays from space which are ejected from the sun, the rotation of the sun hurls out charged particles which travel at a rate of 400 - 800km per second. High concentrations of solar winds occur when faster streams of particles catches up with a slower stream. The Earth is protected from high energy rays from outside the solar system by its magnetic field, however effects of the solar wind can be seen within the Earth's atmosphere. The arrival of so-

lar winds within the atmosphere cause spectacular displays of aurora around the poles, however new research shows that solar winds can also influence the Earth's weather.

A letter recently published in the Journal of Environmental Research Letters stated that solar activity is causing an increase in the number of lightning strikes. The lead researcher from the University of Reading, Dr Chris Scott said, 'around 24,000 people are struck by lightning each year and lightning represents a significant hazard'.

The new research, using data from

Northern Europe, found that after the arrival of a high speed solar winds lightning strikes increased from 321 to 422 over a 40 day period. An observation was also made that the higher the intensity and speed of solar winds, the higher the rate of lightning strikes. These observations were unexpected as solar streams are meant to enhance the magnetic field, this in turn should reduce the amount of solar particles entering the atmosphere and cause a decrease in lightning strikes. This phenomenon occurs because the solar wind particles penetrate storm clouds, making it easier to discharge electrical

energy as lightning bolts.

By understanding the mechanisms behind the process, advances in storm forecasting can be made, this is because solar wind streams are highly predictable, as the sun rotates every 27 days, so the arrival of solar winds is periodic to these rotations. With the advancements in forecasting the question could be asked whether human lightning strikes could be greatly reduced in the future by better predicting and warning of storm events.



Granny Whale Still Going Strong

by GEMMA SIMMONS

This month, one of the most famous killer whales known to mankind was spotted off Vancouver Island. The famous whale, fittingly named 'Granny' is estimated to be 103 years old. She was spotted on her annual migration from California to the Strait of Georgia, off Vancouver Island, Canada with the rest of her pod to which she is the matriarch. The pod, known as J pod of the Sothern resident community, resides in the Pacific Ocean off the west coast of America and is one of the most intensely studied orca population in the world being

continuously studied since the early 1970s.

Scientists say that the pod, which includes around 80 members, has been struggling recently with a lack of available prey however, they say that Granny was 'looking very healthy' along with the rest of the pod. Another 85 year old member of the pod was thought to be one of the oldest killer whales in the past however Granny has far surpassed this age and is now considered the oldest orca in the world. Scientist's use a relatively accurate method of age estimation in their studies based on reproductive history and have pin pointed Granny's birth to

around the year 1911, the year before the sinking of the titanic!

Spotting Granny at the ripe old age of 103 has reignited the cetacean captivity debate; the debate heated up last September after the release of the ground-breaking orca captivity documentary 'Blackfish'. The documentary was centred around killer whales in captivity and the huge negative effects captivity has upon these animals. Marine parks such as SeaWorld strongly refuted the claims made throughout the documentary including that orcas live much longer in the wild than in captivity. Although no-one knows for sure, scientist's claim orcas can live be-

tween 40 and 80 years in the wild and many have been known to be over 90 however SeaWorld and marine parks alike claim that they rarely live over 40. The oldest known orca in captivity is thought to be around 45 years old, however in captivity many whales have rarely passed their early 20s.

The debate into cetacean captivity and animal rights is still ongoing but Granny has undoubtedly added new evidence to the argument about killer whale captivity.

In Brief

Antarctic Shrinking

THE European Space Agency's Cryosat spacecraft has been specifically designed in order to monitor changes regarding loss of mass of the Antarctic ice sheet. A recent article published in the journal of Geophysical Research Letters claims that the Cryosat spacecraft has revealed that the ice sheet is now losing about 160 billion tonnes of ice per year to the ocean, this is twice as much that was recorded from measurements made when the continent was last surveyed. The loss of 160 billion tonnes causes a sea level rise of 0.43mm per year.

The ice sheet can be split into 3 sectors, the West Antarctic, the East Antarctic and the Antarctic Peninsula. The West Antarctic sector is the sector which is contributing the greatest loss of 134 billion tonnes. The sector is particularly vulnerable because the six huge glaciers which dominate the area (known as the Amundsen Sea Embayment) are undergoing rapid retreat due to the influx of warm ocean water, this is caused by strong winds which are influenced by the changing global climate. If the six glaciers within the vulnerable area were to completely melt, there would be a predicted rise in sea level of 1.2m. However this predicted rise is nothing when compared with the predicted sea level rise of 58m if the whole Antarctic ice sheet were to disappear.

Fracking Support Down

A NEW poll released this week reports that fracking support in the United Kingdom has fallen to below 50% for the first time. The research, conducted by the University of Nottingham, found that just 49.8% of the 3,657 people surveyed were in favour of the controversial extraction technique. Meanwhile, opposition to fracking has risen to its highest level, 31.4%, while 18.4% of those that replied were undecided.

The research puts the fall in support, and rise in opposition, down to anti-fracking protests in Balcombe, West Sussex, in 2013, citing this as a turning point in public opinion.

This fall in support will come as a blow to the Government, who are aiming to encourage shale gas extraction as an alternative to imported gas from Russia. Furthermore, plans are afoot for further protests and an anti-fracking camp, this summer, which could damage public opinion even more.

Interestingly, the research also found that Conservative aligned respondents were more likely to be in favour of fracking than those aligned to Labour or the Liberal Democrats. Additionally, older people were found to be more accepting than younger people, something that surprised the report's author, Professor Sarah O'Hara. Finally, the report concluded that the public knowledge about the technology and processes of fracking has increased.



Solar Subsidies Slashed

by RICHARD DALLISON

THE government has announced plans to cut the amount of subsidies paid to large scale solar farms from April 2015, 2 years earlier than this current scheme was due to close. The plans will see owners of solar installations that produce an excess of 5 megawatts competing for subsidies with other forms of renewable energy production. The proposed cut has been widely condemned by many in the energy industry, saying that the move is undermining the renewable industry in the United Kingdom. The curb in subsidies comes after a boom in the solar industry in the past few years, in march of 2012 there were

just 46 large-scale projects operating, this rose dramatically to 184 by the end of February this year and is set to climb higher still with 194 further projects having planning permission and awaiting construction currently.

The Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) stated the reasoning behind the proposed cut is to "move the emphasis for growth away from larger solar farms", this has been coupled with a move to decrease the rate at which subsidies for smaller schemes are cut. These proposals are a clear move by the government to encourage small scale and community projects, in the long run, these schemes cost the government less in pay-outs under the Renewables Ob-

ligation system. This move to smaller and medium sized schemes was confirmed by a government source who stated, "We really want to see more on roofs, commercial and industrial buildings, such as supermarkets".

It has been suggested by some analysts, however, that this move has been taken in an effort to keep rural voters on side in the run up to the upcoming General Election, as some rural dwellers are becoming concerned with the amount of green-land that is being given over to large solar developments.

The announcement by the DECC has caused anger in the solar energy sector and with green campaigners, with many believing the cut undermines the industry. Seb Berry from Solarcentury

was keen to point out that large-scale solar power is "significantly cheaper" than offshore wind already, and will be at a competitive price to onshore wind by 2017, however with these subsidy cuts investment confidence is likely to be knocked and industry development damaged at a crucial time.

While the lessening in government spending on large schemes is concerning, the ray of hope can be seen in the way they are investing more in small scale projects, these community schemes, whether they be solar, micro-hydroelectric or community wind turbines could hold the key to future energy security.



Environmental Protection for UK Overseas Territories

by AL HULLEY

IN recent times, there has been an ever growing concern about ecological resilience and the ability of species to adapt to a rapidly changing climate. In particular there are growing concerns about the status of species inhabiting UK overseas territories. For example the RSPB have noted that 94% of unique British birds live outside Britain.

The RSPB report sent to Prime Minister David Cameron indicates 14 key areas upon which they are concerned - stretching from the South Pacific to the Mediterranean. Furthermore this

document illustrates that 85% of the endangered species in question are from these territories. Bearing this in mind the RSPB are now looking for increased spending to meet the Prime Ministers hopes. This followed his comments stating that overseas territories provide, "an important opportunity to set world standards in our stewardship of the extraordinary natural environments we have inherited". One problem in particular outside UK borders is that there is no legalised protection for species such as the Barking Gecko, the Turks and Caicos Rock Iguana and the Pygmy Boa (Cuban species).

Tourism pressure becomes ever

more evident especially in places such as the Island of Grand Turk. Here there are proposals to build a dolphinarium alongside a freight shipping port, marina and cruise ship terminal on East Caicos. This location is one of the largest uninhabited islands in the Caribbean, containing some of the region's best preserved coral reefs and turtle nesting beaches. Environmentalists including the head of the islands' Department of Environment and Maritime Affairs, Kathleen Wood, has concerns that "this kind of project cannot be done sensitively. You would have to dredge through an incredible amount of reef". Unfortunately when it comes to areas such as Turks and Caicos, eco-

nomically driven minds such as Rufus Ewing stated: "There are some things that sometimes we may have to sacrifice. It is an area we can use to boost our economy, to boost our development. Other impacts upon this environment include forest fires from illegal immigrants from the Haiti disaster of 2010. The current argument for the conservation of UK species within our territories is should it be up to the UK government or conversely the territorial government to protect their species, as stated by Mark Simmonds.



by BECKI WATSON AND AMY BLACKWELL

It's been one of the most controversial SU policy ideas in a long time, sparking heated discussions across social media, and engaging more students in Senate debate than any other topic this year, and all it took was the possibility of 'banning boobs'.

Earlier this month, SU President Antony Butcher and VP Education and Welfare Rhys Taylor announced a policy idea to stop the sale of The Sun in University buildings, and for the SU to actively support the No More Page 3 Campaign, a petition against the infamous 'Page 3' that regularly features topless women in the paper. The idea was to get the debate going before it went to Senate so that the senators would have a better idea of what the student body thought of the idea, and it certainly did that. In addition to the blogs and posts written by volunteer students for the SU, people engaged in lengthy discussions on the merits of the campaign, ranging from 'boobs aren't news', to questions over free press. The debate got so intense that the SU organised an extra discussion session before Senate just to discuss the 'No More Page 3' idea, and invited anyone with questions or comments to come along.

The pre-senate debate kicked off with four speeches from four students, two for the "No More Page 3" campaign and two against. The first

to speak was Pippa Beston who was for the campaign. She commented on the campaign being a small step in the right direction to abolishing sexism and that though a boycott of the Sun in Bangor might not change the world it's a start. Next to speak was Rebecca Earnshaw who was for the against; she expressed her concern about body confidence in young women and how she fears that young women will question why it is not okay for them to be naked and that this would cause a lot of anxiety about the body. Then was the turn of Martyn Curzey who spoke for the campaign and against unfair representation in the Sun

that a boycott would undo all the hard work that Coppafeel had put into the partnership with the newspaper. Other issues were raised such as the national image of the campaign and whether the cause would be understood on a national level, the representation of women and the "ideal body" in other forms of media and whether they were more damaging than page 3 and whether the boycott of page 3 could lead to more fair representation in the long run. A lot of the debate revolved around education as the only way to really solve issues such as sexism and unhealthy body images among others. The debate was an even one with

“IT WAS MADE CLEAR FROM BOTH SIDES THAT THIS CAMPAIGN IS NOT THE END OF THE ROAD...”

for women, people of colour and for those of all sexualities, disabilities and genders. The final speech was made by Amy Blackwell who spoke against the campaign for fears of the freedom of a woman's body being jeopardised by the nature of the cause but was against the values the Sun promotes.

After the speeches were made the floor was opened up for comments. Sarah Jones, the leader of the Coppafeel Bangor Uni Boob Team, raised her concerns over their breast cancer awareness campaign with the Sun "Check 'em Tuesday" and worried

both sides having strong arguments. It was made clear from both sides that this campaign is not the end of the road, and that more can be done on all sides. To abolish sexism, promote body confidence, to educate people about gender, sexuality, race and disability as well as to make people aware that boobs are just boobs and the naked body is nothing to be ashamed of.

The debate ended with an indicative vote which remained as equal as the debate itself. Seasoned senate members commented that this was



the most students to attend a senate debate in their entire term, which is really positive and hopefully can happen for more issues to be discussed at senate in the future. At the end of the debate Antony Butcher noted that a meeting should be held before the end of his term to discuss how we can progress on this debate and a student union, whatever the result.

The senate discussion immediately followed the 90 minute long debate, where, after another short discussion, the vote ultimately didn't reach a majority, meaning the idea now goes to referendum. The referendum needs at least 300 students to vote, and the result will be decided by straight majority, with all registered Bangor students being eligible to vote. Antony Butcher commented, "It was fantastic to see so many students at Senate, and to have such a productive debate about the issues around page 3, and the way that society views women. There were a wide range of viewpoints on what we

should be doing as a Students' Union to tackle this problem, and whether No More Page 3 should be part of the solution. Now that this has been sent to referendum every student in Bangor will have a chance to consider the arguments, challenge their own views, and have their say online. We're also going to have another get together to look at other actions we can take as a Students' Union to address the inequalities that exist in society- all the details will be on Bangor Students Union facebook page by the end of this week."

So now the chance to have your say is here, which way will you vote? No matter what your opinion, this has been one of the most controversial topics the SU has engaged with in recent times, so it's worth your time to read around the debate and find out what it's all about. Who knows, you may end up joining in the debate yourself.



Bangor Unchained

by NATHAN BULLEN

Students are wishing for popular food chains such as Nandos to open in Bangor and believe it will improve life in the area. These days most small towns have successful food chains in abundance, yet Bangor is still missing some of the most popular in the UK. This means that students at Bangor have a lot less choice than students at other Universities.

Adam Penney, 18, said "Although

there is a good variety of restaurants to choose from a Nando's must be constructed. My life is not complete without it. If Nandos was to open here I would go out for meals far more frequently rather than consuming the sustenance that the other eating establishments provide on a sporadic basis."

However, he does not think there is anything wrong with the current restaurants available: "The ones I have been to are quite nice."

But despite this, he still wants a Nandos to be built, insisting that it makes sense for one to open, saying it will help Bangor as a whole.

"There are more students here than local residents during the academic year which is three quarters of the year. If you provide them with the food that they like but currently don't have access to, they would spend more money which will boost the economy of the area."

However, Danielle Nunnerley, 19,

thinks that the restaurants currently here are not enough and really wants new restaurants in Bangor.

"I don't think there is enough good quality places to eat at the moment. There are only a few places I like and I don't think the rest are great. Pizza Hut seems like a compulsory restaurant for anywhere to have and there is not one here in Bangor which is very disappointing."

She added that she thinks Bangor would be a more enjoyable place to

live if there were more places to go for a meal.

"Most students enjoy a good meal at a nice restaurant and there are barely any in Bangor which means a journey to Llandudno if you want a decent choice of restaurants."

The £44 million Pontio building currently under construction will include restaurants, although it is not yet known what they will be. It is hoped that work will be completed by this autumn.



English A-level Reform

by TOM RICKETTS

A levels are an important part of a young person's life, and as such they spark some heated debates regarding the curriculum, the best way to sculpt the minds of our countries aspiring academics. Recently a debate began when the OCR exam board announcing that Russell Brand's parliamentary debate on drug use would feature in a new A Level English

Curriculum. Other pop cultural topics included in the course such as Caitlin Moran's twitter feed, would be studied alongside more traditional texts. The education department has boldly rejected these topics as credible sources for students to learn from. A spokesperson for the department expressed deep distaste for the new topics and stated they "expect other exam boards to do better". Barbara Bleiman a co director of 'the English media centre' has defended the reform saying that, by including social media such as Twitter

in the curriculum, provides students with a chance to study the differences between speech and writing. Those who criticize the changes have claimed the course should focus on classic texts by the likes of Shakespeare or George Orwell, this is what I take issue with the most. We spend over ten years teaching children the proper way to read, write and speak the English language, yet when they reach a certain age we go, "Here's Shakespeare! Or Dickens, or Poe, Analyse this", because it's the only form of literature deemed

respectable enough to learn from. I find this idea insulting. There are a plethora of modern writers out there equally as credible. I would love to see teachers set more class assignments on authors such as Stephen King, J. K. Rowling, Joe Nesbo or Ruth Rendell, just to name a few. In my eyes, failing to properly acknowledge these writers gives students the impression that all the good writers are dead, which is simply not true.



Slacktivism

by EMILY HOULSTON-JONES

The internet is a game-changer. It is hard to think of a single aspect of British society which hasn't been affected by the internet. How we shop, how we study, how we communicate...the internet has changed everything, mostly for the better. The internet has also affected how charities and activists work. Every charity has a social media presence, and petitions abound online. Now, more than ever, it is easier for us to show our support for charities. One click and we can declare to the world

that we want to find a cure for cancer, we want to free killer whales into the wild, and we support gay marriage. But is this necessarily a good thing? I don't think it is. First, let's look at the cold hard facts. Academics Kirk Kristofferson, Katherine White, and John Peloza published a paper showing that "if people are able to declare support for a charity publicly in social media it can actually make them less likely to donate to the cause later on." Basically, there's not an awful lot of meaningful contribution from those who publicly announce their support for charities on social media. This has led to the terms 'slacktivism'

being coined by the media. Being a slacktivist is easy, as the name implies. A quick click, share, retweet, or reblog, and we get that warm fuzzy charitable feeling, with none of the actual hard work required. We don't even have to leave our beds! This isn't to denounce all social media campaigns. The current #bringbackourgirls campaign (coordinated to facilitate the return of over 200 kidnapped Nigerian schoolgirls) has caught the attention of some serious movers and shakers, such as Michelle Obama, and the media reporting is definitely helping the cause. But people are confusing a click with meaningful actions. It's easy to like a

Facebook page. It's a lot harder to actually donate your time or money. The two aren't mutually exclusive, but people act like they are. There's this sense of accomplishment that comes with signing an online petition, or posting a #nomakeupselfie. It makes it a lot easier to ignore the homeless man on the streets, or pass right by the charity shop sign asking for volunteers. But at the end of the day, likes never fed a hungry child, or clothed a homeless man. Amazingly preachy, I know, but it's an uncomfortable truth we all need to admit to ourselves.



Ida is an international student working in liaison with the international office. Every issue she'll write about her experiences in Bangor.

Feeling Domestic

by IDA VÄISÄNEN

While in Bangor, I have adapted a new identity. I'm an international student from an EU country, enjoying pretty much the same rights as British students do. Still when I go home this identity is turned upside down, I'm a Finn studying abroad, and that's when things get complicated. For example, transportation. When I started studying in Bangor, I was entitled to student discount when travelling, as long as I presented the appropriate documents from the university. However, a recent reform in the system made this impossible. I was basically told that in the eyes of the Finnish government I'm not a student, as I study abroad. No reason for this conduct was given. "Any feedback can be sent to our website", the lady behind the counter told me icily. And feedback did I send, presenting the logical contradiction in this methodology. In a land of free domestic education me, someone paying for their education, should be more than entitled for my transportation discount as my expenses of receiving education are bound to be higher when compared to domestic students. Another incident of this kind took place when I applied for a student credit card. It turned out only domestic students could apply for it. Again no explanation for this conduct was given. Might sound a bit dramatic, but I felt betrayed. Britain has welcomed me as one of their own in so many matters, so I was disappointed that my own country has been unable to do the same. Domestic or not, I'm a student just like anybody else, with student income. That's why I'm telling all of you international students going home for the summer to look after your rights in your country of origin. Get your voice heard, fill those feedback forms. No system should put different value for their nationals, regardless where they study. Nothing may come out of my discount rant, but you never know unless you try. If you feel like catching some stunning scenery of North Wales before heading home, how about a trip to South Stack Bird Reserve and Anglesey? There is a chance to see some adorable baby puffins! This half day trip takes place on 31st of May, departing at 1PM. Tickets are 10£/7£ (adults/children), and they can be bought either from Bangor online shop or from the International Student Support office (cash only).

Sabbs' Year in Review

As the academic year draws to a close, our SU Sabbatical Officers take a look back at what the Union have achieved this year, and look forward to what's ahead...



Photo by Lisa Irwin

Antony Butcher - SU President

Goodness gracious me. These last 2 years have whizzed by, and I can barely believe that in a few short weeks this amazing chapter of my life will be over. I feel honoured to have been your President, and it has been truly wonderful getting to know so many inspirational students.

Together, we've worked with the University to get some massive wins – continuing investment into our student led activities, growth in our volunteering projects, the introduction of Heroes, oh – and 24 hour library anybody? These (on top of loads more) would not have been possible without students, without the amazing staff at Bangor Students' Union, and without the staff at Bangor University, so many of whom care deeply about us. Cheers all!

This summer I will be joining thousands of other students leaving Bangor with fond memories, and friendships which will last me a lifetime. If you are leaving – congratulations on all you have achieved, and best of luck for the future. If you're staying – keep getting involved, and keep Having fun! As we leave, however, new students will arrive, and the circle shall continue.

The Union is in great hands next year – Rhys has been an inspirational VP Education and Welfare, and Nicola has been doing top work with the AU. Alongside Lydia, Mark and Guto they will make a great team, and I'm so excited to see what can be achieved.

As students, we are in many ways exceptionally lucky – to have been to University, to have a roof over our heads, even to have clean water on tap. However, our society is not flawless, and the growing inequality we are witnessing – both in the UK and internationally – might be the greatest challenge to our way of living we have ever seen. People often tell me that the students of today are the future – but we are more than this, we are the present. It is up to us to stand up for what we believe to be right, and not to observe passively. Together, we can change the world.

P.S. – in case you haven't heard I'm about to cycle 1000 miles for charity. You can read why at www.antonyjcbutcher.wordpress.com/10000challenge/ and sponsor me at www.justgiving.com/antonybutcher

Rhys Taylor - VP Education and Welfare

First off congratulations to those of you who have submitted your final pieces of work or sat your last exam, especially if you're graduating this year, and best of luck to everyone who still have work to complete and exams to sit – you're nearly there!

This has been an incredible year. Incredible isn't a word that most of us use to describe something (especially a job), but this year as your VP Education and Welfare has been challenging, exciting, tiring, and just all round fun! As a Union we've won Awards

for best Students' Union of the Year, Course Rep of the Year, and Green Impact (Sustainability) Awards, and fingers crossed there's more to come next year.

All these awards are proof that Bangor students and our Students' Union are committed to ensuring that your time at Bangor is as good as it can possibly be. Our Course Reps, for example. At our Course Rep Awards I said that our Course Reps are the backbone of our Students' Union, dedicating hundreds of hours, with little prospect of reward, to improve the lives of those around them – but whether it's volunteering, making sport and activities more accessible, or campaigning to raise awareness of mental health or sexual health, students at Bangor win hands down every time.

I'm sure Mark and Lydia are going to do a brilliant job in developing our societies and community activities, our Course Reps, and our Welfare Campaign next year, and I'm sure that Guto will provide a new direction for UMCB and the wider Welsh community at Bangor. Nicola has really been inspirational in pushing to break barriers to participation, supporting our individual clubs' needs, and I'm sure we'll win Varsity next year on home turf! I think we have a brilliant team moving forward into Pontio which will undoubtedly be a new 'era' for Bangor Students' Union – and I can't wait to be your President next year.

Finally, best of luck in the future and thank you to Antony and Ash for all

of your hard work and dedication, and all of your support from start to finish – deer in the headlights is an apt description of how I started off 11 months ago, so thank you for welcoming us in and all your support in delivering. Diolch!

Ash Kierans - VP Societies and Community

It's been a long two years! Good days, and not so good days, but I wouldn't change a single one of them. Every day I've worked here, I've witnessed the passion, creativity, and energy that students have brought to their societies and volunteering projects.

We've seen the number around 50 new societies start up in my two years here in Bangor, which is a testament to how accepting, and welcoming a community we are.

I've met some wonderful people, students with so much passion that they literally want to do everything, people that have started and joined more societies than you can count on one hand, to inspirational people that have won the highest awards we offer in Clubs, Societies AND Volunteering.

You should all remember that students that are engaged, students that are active, and student that take part in all we have to offer, are the sabbatical officers of future years

I've thoroughly enjoyed my time here, and hope that you'd agree I've done what I set out to do, in leaving

the Students Union, in a better place than it was when I joined.

So I'll finish with this. Love it, Live it, Enjoy it try something new, something different, something exciting, or you'll live to regret it.

Mark, you'll do everyone proud, and show everyone why they elected you. You have yourself a good one!

Nicola Pye - VP Sport and Healthy Living

Hi everyone! I can't believe how quick this year has gone, and now it is the final issue of Seren for 2013-14! I have really enjoyed my first year as your VP Sport and healthy living officer; it has been non-stop with hardly any free weekends. Our clubs have been constantly active with a wide range of activity, and I'm looking forward to working with our 2 new additional clubs, golf and water polo next year. Our activity will continue over the summer, with a range of activities including try scuba diving, Rounders, cooking, sailing and cricket. So if any of you are still around, please do get involved! Additionally, Canolfan Brailsford centre (Maes Glas) is scheduled to be relaunched on July 5th! The wait will finally be over!

As for Ash Kierans and Mr Butcher, I wish you all the best in the future! Your impact over these past 2 years will most definitely not go unnoticed. To Mark and Lydia, let's have an amazing year, can't wait for you to get started!

SU Heroes



Bangor Students' Union is looking for energetic and enthusiastic volunteers to help us out during Welcome Week with a variety of tasks including:

- Helping new students unpack
- Organising events
- Helping at Serendipity, handing out maps etc
- Promoting NUS & Love Bangor student discount cards

SU promotion and making sure people know about Senate and the General Meeting

Minibus driving (you must have a MiDAS certificate for this – if you don't have one and are over 21 with 3 years driving experience we can train you)

Lots of other stuff that we can think of nearer the time...

In exchange for your hard work, you'll get a lovely t-shirt, lunches on days you're helping and lots of appreciation from your Sabbs. We'll also give you free entry to Academi during Welcome Week! This is a great chance to get to meet new people and help students settle in Bangor. As well as this, you'll gain a whole range of skills, helping make you even more employable when you leave Bangor. You'll also get BEA points.

We're looking for Heroes from all backgrounds, to reflect the makeup of our diverse student body. We're looking for students who can be fantastic ambassadors for the SU, and who can

make new students feel at home as soon as they turn up. In order to do this potential Heroes should be:

- enthusiastic
- friendly and approachable
- prepared to work hard
- dependable
- conscientious
- resourceful, and have initiative

If you're interested, please email antony.butcher@bangorstudents.com, briefly explaining why you think you'd make a good hero – we'll select Heroes based on the information contained within your application. We'll be in contact to let you know if you've been successful, and what the next stages are.



Student Led Teaching Awards

The Student Led Teaching Awards is now an annual event in the University and Students' Union's calendar, where we bring people from across the University together to celebrate all the good things about Bangor University.

The Awards started as one big research project, offering reward in return for nominations about quality teaching and exciting learning, and all the things that make someone's time at University better. At Bangor we're now into our third year of the SLTAs, and we're looking forward to seeing what we can do with three years' worth of nominations from students who excitingly told the SU about engaging and exciting teaching, outstanding pastoral support, commitment to Welsh medium education, and even amazing post-graduates who contribute so much at Bangor University.

Rhys Taylor, Vice President Education & Welfare said, "I can't wait to see what we can do with all the information that we now hold on what students class as good teaching and a good learning experience – it's another cog in how the SU represents students on education, and it's something that we can bring students and staff together to further improve teaching at Bangor."

This year's Awards saw over 200 members of staff, students and course reps come together to celebrate the 2014 Student-Led Teaching Awards and Course Rep Awards. The awards ceremony took place in PJ Hall and was enjoyed by all.

Rhys Taylor, Vice President Education & Welfare was joined on stage by some of the Student-Led Teaching Awards student panel to present the Awards to the shortlisted and winning

staff on the night. Rhys Taylor congratulated all staff who received nominations this year – the quality was much higher than ever before. He said; "It is great to see so many different names coming up year after year and how passionate students are about their teaching and learning experiences."

Congratulations to all winners and a massive thank you to the SLTAs student panel, without whom we could not have done these Awards." Thank you to all involved in the event, including our Student Steering Panel and congratulations to all course reps and staff nominated, shortlisted and who won an award. Thank you for everything that you do day in day out to make the lives of those around you better.

Award Winners 2014

The Award for Outstanding Pastoral Support: Sian Pierce, SENRGy

New Teacher of the Year: Farhaan Wali, Philosophy

The Award for the Promotion of Welsh Medium Education: Peredur Webb-Davies, Linguistics

Open Award: Gavan Cooke, Biological Sciences

Dissertation/Thesis Supervisor of the Year: Martina Feilzer, Social Sciences

Postgraduate Teacher of the Year: Sarah Cooper, Linguistics

Fantastic Feedback: Gwyn Ellis, Education

Student Service Department Award: Counselling Service

Innovation Award: Lynda Yorke, SENRGy

Support Staff Member/Team of the Year: Sian Lewis, Psychology

Sustainable Thinking: Helen Gittins, James Walmsley & Nicola Owen, SENRGy

International Award: Monalisa Odibo, Warden Team

Teacher of the Year: Mari Wiliam, History



Winner - Support Staff Member of the Year -
Sian Lewis (School of Psychology)



Winner - Postgraduate Teacher of the Year -
Sarah Cooper (Linguistics & English Language)



Winner - Teacher of the Year -
Mari Wiliam (School of History, Welsh History and Archaeology)

On the Straight and Narrow - LGBTQ+ Action

The National Union of Students' (NUS) LGBT campaign has recently published a report called 'On the Straight and Narrow', a report looking at LGBTQ+ students' experiences of Higher Education – the biggest piece of research ever completed by the LGBT campaign.

This research explores the experience of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) students in higher education, focusing on everyday campus life, access to services and varying factors that can impact their studies. This report draws on a national survey of more than 4,000 respondents from 80 higher education institutions in the UK that was conducted between

February and March 2014. It also comprises case studies from the universities of Bangor, Nottingham, Manchester Metropolitan, University College London, the University of London and from an online focus group with trans students.

This is a big step for Bangor Students' Union. Bangor Students' Union has been core in developing recommendations and research into students' experiences of Higher Education – recommendations that have not only made their way into a national report, but recommendations that Bangor University have committed to implementing.

The Bangor University specific

recommendations were;

1. Academic staff to ensure that module curriculum uses non-heteronormative examples and uses gender neutral terminology.

2. Institutions and Students' Unions should ensure that persons providing academic and non-academic support are sufficiently trained in LGBTQ+ issues, including personal tutors, senior tutors, Course Reps, and Peer Guides. Students should be made aware of this training.

3. Schools/Academic Faculties to ensure that students are aware of Zero Tolerance or any other policy that protects staff and students from harassment. Institutions should also make

reporting mechanisms clear for students.

4. 'Equality Contacts' should be made available to students in schools, similar to Disability Contacts, to enable students to openly discuss any issues that they are facing. This member of staff should also be able to support students with any issues affecting their studies.

The Students' Union's Academic Representation Unit led this research alongside Unity Bangor (our LGBTQ+ society), holding workshops and focus groups discussing various aspects of LGBTQ+ students' experiences at Bangor from societies to education, and an online survey. This research

will also form a part of our Annual Student Statement which details students' opinion of academic life at Bangor, considering factors such as library provisions, Welsh medium education, to employability.

We are extremely proud of this work and we're extremely pleased that the University has committed itself to implementing our recommendations to improve the lives of students at Bangor, and how we can ensure that the barriers that face LGBTQ+ students in succeeding in higher education are avoided before they occur.

SOCIETIES



SU Society Awards

This year saw the return of the Bangor Students' Union Society Awards, an evening to celebrate the achievements of all the SU societies over the past year, with a raise in the profile of the event, as the venue was changed from Bar Uno to PJ Hall, aiming to make the Society Awards more in line with the prestigious AU Dinner. Society members clearly appreciated the new formality and pres-

tige of the event, with the number of tickets sold rising from 96 tickets last year to 150 this year. Between 45 to 50 societies in total were represented at the event, and many of the attendees commented on how impressed they were with the improvements from last year. The evening consisted of a three course dinner, the awards presentation, speeches from VP Societies and Community Ash Kierans and his

successor Mark Stanley, as well as an emotional farewell to Ash at his last Society Awards after his two years as Sabb. As well as this, there was music and staging provided by the always excellent Stage Crew.

In total, there were nearly 70 individual awards, both gold and silver, given out to people who were nominated for their excellent contributions to societies this year, followed by the

13 different group awards. This year, the triumphant society to walk away with the coveted Society of the Year Award was the Bangor University Gaming League (BUGL) after building their society back up after nearly shutting down at the end of last year. All in all, it was a fantastic night that everyone thoroughly enjoyed, with Ash commenting: "The 2013-14 Society Awards ceremony, was an evening

that put societies back in the limelight, the evening was a success, everything came together it was a wonderful chance to showcase some of the incredible work our students have done this year, I felt proud of them all, everything they have achieved this year and look forward to looking back in next year to see how they've continued to grow!"

Bangor Linguistics Society

by SIAN ANDERSON

The Bangor Linguistics Society, an academic society which has close links with the School of Linguistics and English Language, have recently opened their new linguistics library! After the School's move from Main Arts to the Bilingualism Centre at 39 College Road, the BLS were able to snatch up a brand new library space that offers a separate library and office space and plenty of room for more books! The library's grand opening was held on 2nd May and welcomed staff and students alike. Amongst the guests of the event was Student Union President Antony Butcher who managed to raise

a fantastic £50.22 for the MS Society through the BLS bake sale. The society, which was shortlisted for the Best Academic Society Award at the recent Society Awards, aims to provide students interested in linguistics opportunity to socialise outside of class time through social events and the library space. The highlights of the society's calendar are always their Summer and Christmas meals, which happen at the end of each of the two semesters.

The society works really hard to cater for everyone's interests and put their all into making the society the success it is. You can also spot them around Bangor – they're the ones who wear the hoodies with the weird-looking words on the back!

Beaumaris Medieval Day

by MAX DALLEY

The year is 1214, the 16th year of King John's reign. Both lords and common people groan under the weight of his demands, as his puppet, the Sherriff of Nottingham once again raises taxes to fund yet another of the King's expensive wars across the Channel.

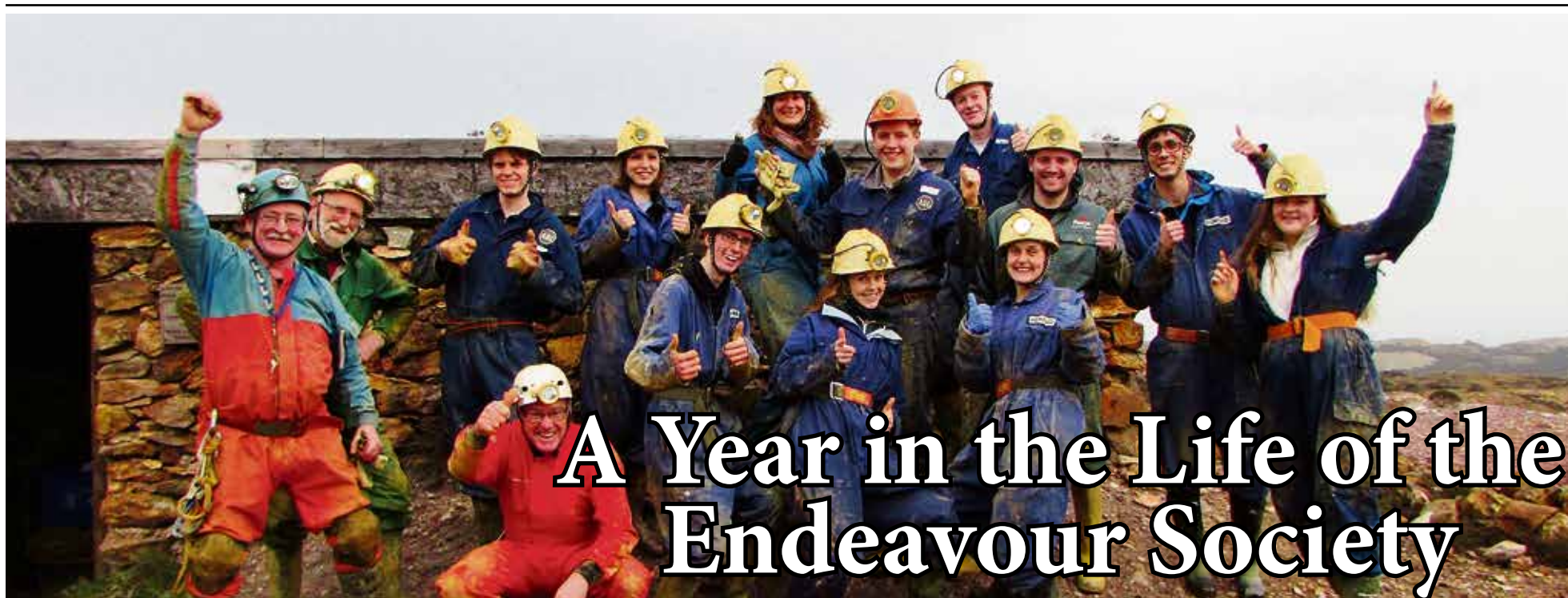
On the 7th of June, several societies will be taking Beaumaris Castle back to the 13th century. Robin Hood and his Merry Men will once again be pestering the Sherriff and his right-hand

man Sir Guy of Gisborne. The day will include combat displays from Medieval Re-enactment and the History and Archaeology Society, while the merry men's renown for archery will be shown by the Archery Club.

The Story of Robin Hood is one that is known all over the world, but this new take on the story as written by Books & Quills and BEDS aims to bring Robin Hood – 'The Myth and the Legend' to the people of North Wales, with the sights and smells of the Medieval Period, whilst Folk Society will be setting the scene with the

music of the period.

The medieval days that the university has participated in, in the past have always been viewed as a great success, but this year we hope to be bigger and better, with more societies, more extravagance, and a story themed day. So feel free to come along and support your fellow students and experience life in Beaumaris during the medieval period.



by MOLLY CZACHUR,
JAKE TAYLOR, AND
FRANCO BIONDO

The Endeavour Society is the student run Ocean Sciences Society. We run weekly talks on all aspects of the ocean sciences from biology and geology through to engineering, chemistry and conservation. These talks are a great way to spark an interest or broaden your existing knowledge on any of these areas of the ocean sciences, and gives you extra insight into subjects outside of your University lectures. It also provides a great opportunity in terms of meeting and talking to people who do research in different fields; a fantastic way to create contacts and network for the future.

Everyone is welcome and no previous ocean science knowledge is needed- check out our Facebook page or contact the Endeavour Society at osxe01@bangor.ac.uk for more information. Here's a little glimpse at what our members got up to this year!

ACADEMIC SEMINARS

THROUGHOUT the academic year we have a range of talks from academics and professionals who have worked all over the world in ocean sciences. This year we are grateful for the amazing contribution our speakers made to

the society. Here's just a few examples of the many talks we held to give you a taste of what Endeavour is all about...

Dr Carol Cotterill shared her experience of being the scientific bridge between scientists and an international drilling programme when she talked about her work as an Expedition Project Manager for The International Ocean Discovery Program (IODP).

There were also talks on the loggerhead turtle conservation efforts in Greece by Bangor's own Goncalo Lourenco, an animal behaviour talk by a behavioural ecologist Dr Jack Thomson.

Dr Mattias Green from the School of Ocean Sciences here at Bangor University discussed why the European Shelf break is so biologically productive.

Come along to one of our talks starting in September and then every Thursday at 7pm in the Dennis Crisp Lecture Theatre in Menai Bridge, with free minibuses going between Bangor and Menai Bridge. We have the talks there then head over the the Aukland for free pizza and a social. It's a great way to meet new faces and get chatting with people doing up to date research on the subject you love.

TRIPS WITH ENDEAVOUR

THERE are ongoing activities throughout the year, in many different

fields of ocean sciences from fun, laid-back activities to more educational (and still fun!) outings. These included a crabbing competition, a trip to Bull Bay and the Parys Mountain Copper Mines, as well as the Holyhead Coastguard Station and the Moelfre RNLI Lifeboat Station to find out about marine emergency services.

If you're still around in Bangor we still have events coming up this semester- a beach clean with a large group from the Snowdonia Society, and a trip to the Blue Planet Aquarium in the last week of May. Our Anglesey Geology Walk will also be coming up in June to end a successful year of Endeavour trips and talks.

AN ACCOUNT FROM A 1st YEAR STUDENT- The Sea Grass Meadows Trip

A FULL day at the beach looking for everything from shells, to crabs, to fish, to anemones (this list goes on). With learned people on hand who could tell me just why the small shell I was holding was such an amazing animal? Going to the pub? As a marine biologist, how could I say no to such an opportunity?

By the time we arrived at the beach in question (Morfa Nefyn), the forecast blue skies and sunshine had given way to grey clouds and howling winds. But did that curb our enthusiasm? Of

course not! Despite the weather the day was a huge amount of fun, meeting (and learning from) other people with similar interests, and of course filling my pockets with a veritable treasure trove straight from the sea; crab claws as long as my fingers, an Icelandic clam (these can live for over 500 years), empty shark eggs, the layer of a shell called the nacre which is paper thin but gleaming with a pearlescent sheen.

Being able to meet some of the lecturers and older students was also a brilliant opportunity for a first year student such as myself. Despite the fact that we misjudged the tides and didn't get to see much of the sea grass meadows we had originally intended to visit, this day was one of the best since starting university, and doing things like this with the Endeavour society has made my time here so much more enjoyable!

WHAT'S HAPPENING NEXT SEMESTER?

THE Endeavour Society is keen to continue its work from previous years and its interest in inviting researchers from across the UK to give talks about different fields in Marine Science. We understand the multidisciplinary aspect of this area and aim to truly explore it in our activities for next semester. We all know that our professors

have limited time in their lectures and, because of our sometimes unpredictable timetable, we can't always attend the events that the University organise. The talks are an excellent opportunity for us to see what is new in Marine Science, from the study of phytoplankton population dynamics to behavioural response in cetaceans, and, naturally, from the physical aspect of oceanography to the biological aspect of marine ecology. We will do our best in trying to comprise all sides, so that students from different courses can engage in our weekly meetings.

Apart from joining us in our weekly talks and meetings at the pub, you can also come to our trips, which are described above. It's extremely interesting to get to know the diversity of landscapes and organisms that Wales holds, and it truly provides a community feel when the working staff from the places we visit talk to us.

Coming from Brazil and having been in the UK for only four months, one of the lessons I've already learned is that we should be able to discuss about our country and region with others - not only the bad things, but also the remarkable features our land holds. Trust us when we say that at least some of our trips might provide you with that feeling and the basic knowledge to see that North Wales is indeed a beautiful place.

Countdown to North Wales Pride

by MARTYN CURZEY

Bangor is preparing for the return of North Wales Pride for the third time after the overwhelming success of the first and second over the past 2 years. North Wales PRIDE is organised by a small voluntary group called Cymru PRIDE Wales and the event returns on the 4th, 5th and 6th of July at Hendre Hall, Bangor. This year Marcus Collins is headlining. Contestant in the 2011 X-Factor, Collins is back with his Top 10 cover of Seven Nation Army. The event will also be host to local acts such as

Alys Williams, from Caernarfon who performed on The Voice last year, and DJs like Ed Mackie and DJ Mouse, and up-and-coming artists like the Kameelion, who has already been featured on a Lily Allen track! But that's just in the evenings - in the daytime there are stalls and activities throughout Hendre Hall, all family friendly. The aim of the event is to celebrate diversity and break down the barriers to discrimination and reach out to as many areas of the community as possible.

Tickets for North Wales PRIDE 2013

are now available online at the north wales pride website.

Prices are £10 for the whole weekend (Friday night through to Saturday Night)

Camping will also be available at the event for £7 per person for two nights (Friday & Saturday). Entry for under 18's is free with a full paying adult as our commitment to support families. Remember to keep up-to-date with Pride this year by checking out the event on facebook and following them on twitter @NorthWalesPride"



SEREN



LOCAL BUSINESS

AWARDS 2014

"WE REALLY APPRECIATE BEING GIVEN THIS AWARD, WE'VE ALWAYS TRIED TO MAKE IT WELCOMING FOR STUDENTS IN HERE WITH OUR FOOD OFFERS AND REAL ALES. AND IT GOES TO SHOW THAT STUDENTS APPRECIATE WHAT WE DO"

DEAN - OWNER



BEST RESTAURANT

"I'M DELIGHTED ASDA HAVE WON THIS AWARD FOR THE SECOND YEAR RUNNING. IT'S WONDERFUL TO KNOW THAT STUDENTS HAVE PICKED US OUT OF ALL THE LOCAL BUSINESSES, AND SHOWS THAT WE'RE AT THE CENTRE OF THE STUDENT HUB"

JANETTE WILLIAMS - PEOPLE MANAGER

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WINNERS, NOMINATED AND VOTED FOR BY YOU:



BANGOR'S FAVOURITE BUSINESS

"WE'RE REALLY PLEASED TO HAVE WON THIS AWARD AGAIN, THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO VOTED US BEST RESTAURANT TWO YEARS IN A ROW"

MARY PHILLIPS - OWNER



BEST SUPERMARKET

SOME COMMENTS FROM OUR VOTERS:

“TAP AND SPILE BEST CASK ALES IN BANGOR!”

“ALWAYS HAD A FRIENDLY WELCOME AT NOODLE ONE”

“NOODLE ONE THE BEST ALL ROUND COULDN'T ASK FOR A BETTER ESTABLISHMENT IN BANGOR HOPE THEY WIN”

“THE ROGUES GALLERY IS BEST IN TOWN FOR BOTH TATTOOS AND PIERCINGS WITH AMAZING STAFF TO ASSIST WITH ALL ENQUIRIES!”



In Brief

Two and a Half Men ends

THE producers have confirmed that the hit comedy will end after its 12th season. The question whether Charlie Sheen's character will be brought back for the ending series is still open. US television network CBS has confirmed that the last episode of the controversial sitcom will air in 2015.

Walter could return

BRYAN Cranston has revealed that he may appear in a Breaking Bad spin-off, Better Call Saul. The upcoming prequel is created by Vince Gilligan and Peter Gould. Cranston commented that he could return alongside Aaron Paul's character Jesse Pinkman in the series, if he is asked to do so. Cranston is also seeking to direct one of the episodes.

Play School's Humpty to be auctioned

THE cuddly toy is expected to be sold in a price range between 800-1200£. Humpty appeared in almost every episode of the pre-school series, which ran for more than 24 years, from 1964-1988. Humpty was so popular that he reportedly received fan mail. The Play School-series celebrates its 50th anniversary this year.

Barbara Walters retires

AFTER a 52-year career, US broadcaster Walters retired with her last appearance on her daytime show, The View. Walters, 84, began her career in 1962 and was known for her high-profile interviews of world leaders and pop culture icons. Walters has been seen as a pioneer of female broadcast journalists. Walters will remain active despite her retirement, serving as an executive producer of The View.

Broadchurch hoarded BAFTAs

THE success of ITV's crime drama Broadchurch was proven as it won three awards at TV BAFTAs: Leading Actress, Supporting Actor, and the Drama Series. Another victorious show was Channel 4's IT Crowd, which won the best Female and Male Performances in a comedy programme. Questions have arisen from the several nominations received by the less successful shows such as BBC One's The Village and Channel 4's Southcliffe.



HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER

by EMILY HOULSTON-JONES

After an impressive nine-year run, the television series How I Met Your Mother ended on 31st March this year.

But the series finale was not without controversy. Fans took to the internet in droves to complain about the two-part finale. They were joined by television critics, who also expressed their displeasure at the show's ending. One critic, Tod VanDerWerff of The AV Club, went so far as to attack the show's creators, describing them as "shi**y long-term planners."

It isn't hard to see why the series finale created such vitriol. At its worst moments the episode felt rushed and inauthentic, cramming several years

of plot and character development into ten minutes. After the languid and sometimes frustratingly slow pace of the rest of the season, this episode went too far in the other direction. I was left wishing that the writers had focused a little less on the build-up to Barney and Robin's wedding (which stretched out for 22 episodes, and a portion of the finale) and more on the evolving relationship of the gang, post-wedding.

The decision to spend so much time focusing on the relationship between Barney and Robin was odd, considering the fact that they divorced in the first 15 minutes of the episode. This was just the first example of the show skimming over major plot developments.

If this review seems light on opin-

ions regarding the eponymous Mother, it's because the finale itself seemed to gloss over her existence entirely. After a 9-series build-up, the mother appeared and disappeared so fast that I barely had time to remember her name (it's Tracy McConnell, just in case you were wondering).

For me, this was the biggest failure of the series finale. As Ted's children point out in the final minutes of the episode: this wasn't the mother's story at all. This was Robin's story.

But in a way, it wasn't. Robin and Ted, ostensibly the romantic centre of the entire series, end up back at square one. In terms of character development, nothing has changed. Yes, Ted may have a couple of wingman kids and Robin has a new haircut, but in terms of actual

character progression, they've remained in stasis.

If one views How I Met Your Mother as a self-contained love story, then it fails abysmally. Ted and Robin's story is circular, leaving me as a viewer unsatisfied. To invest several years in a story then to end up back where you started is disappointing, to say the least.

How I Met Your Mother has always deceived its viewers, creating red herring after red herring in an attempt to keep viewers hooked. Discovering that the entire premise of the show was a red herring was a disappointment, to say the least.

And the less said about Barney's strange evolution from party animal to a sensible father, the better.



PARKS AND RECREATION

Dying with dignity

by WYATT WARNER

My favorite TV show is ending, and I'm thrilled. Even though Parks and Recreation has had a history of terrible viewership numbers (despite positive reviews) it's held on for six fantastic seasons. Now the showrunners have announced that the next season will be its last, and it's just in time.

This is especially great news after How I Met Your Mother's nearly universally hated finale, and Community's abrupt cancellation. How I Met Your Mother was written into a corner and Community went out with a fizzle

on a downward spiral, both fates that Parks and Recreation will avoid.

It was starting to show the signs of senility though. When original character Ann Perkins (Rashida Jones) and fan favorite Chris Traeger (Rob Lowe) left the show last season, it marked the beginning of the end. The actors sensed, revealed and contributed to the waning relevance of the show. That said, their exit was fantastic. It was funny while remaining emotional and emotional while remaining subtle—Exactly why I love Parks and Rec. That's proof enough for me of the show's ability to end storylines gracefully.

Furthermore, many of the charac-

ters' arcs had completed. In fact, main character Leslie Knope (Amy Poehler) ended season six after making a major turn in her life, wrapping up the personal arc that she had been experiencing for two seasons. Tom Haverford (Aziz Ansari) accomplished the same. While the new chapter of their lives would no doubt be interesting, such a departure from the usual dilemmas and goals of the characters would have been a major shift in the direction the show was going.

The subject of the upcoming season is most likely to be an epilogue of sorts, establishing the characters in their new roles, especially as it's only going to be twelve episodes long, half

the length of a usual season. However, a short, several minute epilogue ended the last episode of season six. The epilogue showed the slice of the characters' lives three years in the future. It remains to be seen whether that's where the seventh season will pick up from or if it will take place beforehand.

While I would have been happy with the ending had the series not been renewed one more time, I trust the writers to give it a good end given the knowledge that it will be the last season. There will be a hole in television when Parks and Recreation is gone, but at least there won't be a hole in Parks.



FARGO

A lot can happen in the middle of nowhere

by THOMAS
BICKERDIKE

In 1996, Joel and Ethan Coen made a name for themselves with their hugely successful black-comedy crime-drama *Fargo*. Now, Noah Hawley has written and directed a sequel, with the Coen Brothers as executive producers.

Set in Bemidji, Minnesota, Lester Nygaard (Martin Freeman) is a disgruntled insurance salesman, suffering from problems at home. He has a chance encounter with Lorne Malvo (Billy Bob Thornton), a mysterious out-of-town hit man who soon shows his manipulative side. This includes a kidnapping and a series of murders for which Lester is connected in some way. Oth-

er notable cast members include Colin Hanks (son of Tom Hanks) as Officer Gus Grimly and Bob Odenkirk (Saul Goodman from *Breaking Bad*) as Deputy Bill Oswalt.

The film made it clear at the beginning that it was based on true events (not really!). The TV series: "The events depicted took place in Minnesota in 2006. At the request of the survivors, the names have been changed. Out of respect for the dead, the rest has been told exactly as it occurred."

Of course, there are comparisons to be made with the film. The film featured an Oscar-winning performance from Frances McDormand as Police Chief Marge Gunderson; in this the slightly toned-down Molly Solverson played

by Allison Tolman. The main difference is that Solverson is not pregnant. Martin Freeman is clearly paying homage to William H. Macy's Jerry Lindgaard – the hapless individuals caught up in everything. Episode 4 establishes that they are both set in the same universe.

One thorny and much debated issue is Martin Freeman's accent. It does sound somewhat corny, but is there a particular way to do Upper Midwest/Minnesota accent? Some people have praised it though. Billy Bob Thornton gives the best performance though. His lack of words is enough to give a scene a chilling atmosphere and when he does speak it is usually in simple phrases, yet it speaks volumes.

The cinematography is simplistically created,

yet effective at the same time. It adds to the dark dramatic and also comedic scenes. The scenery is pretty much the same as the film's snow-filled landscapes with a sense of desolation.

Available to watch on Channel 4, there are those who believe that this is the best new crime drama since *True Detective* and *Breaking Bad*. That is a bold statement to make. Hawley could have made a mess of this, ruining the charm the film had going for it. Instead, it reminds viewers of how much of a classic the Coen Brothers created. If you have not seen it, it may be worth watching that beforehand.

"Your problem is you spent your whole life thinking there are rules. There aren't."



by WYATT WARNER

Despite the wails of book readers every week when a line is changed or character cut, Dan B. Weiss and David Benioff, the executive producers and showrunners of *Game of Thrones*, have been steadfast in their adaptation approach, and it's working wonderfully.

It wasn't always this way though. During the first season, a lot of dialogue was lifted straight from the books and it was clear when some wasn't, because it was often terrible. The adaptors tried to keep the huge world of the source material intact and the result was complicated interactions, confused viewers and lots and lots of boring talking.

But Dan and Dave learned a great deal from those experiences and stepped up. They've even

become very good at writing iconic passages for the screen. Peter Dinklage, in character as Tyrion Lannister, gave a speech in a recent episode that has left fans clamoring to get him nominated for an Emmy. The speech was good in the books, but the showrunners made the correct decisions to simplify the fantasy-fiction language and add and remove certain lines. The result is a spellbinding performance of a more direct, more succinct, and more passionate speech that not even the most finicky of purists can criticize. Now it's the show's dialogue that has a more profound impact on viewers, thanks to Weiss and Benioff's great understanding of what works for television.

They aren't just showing their adaptation chops, but also skill with original content. The show is inevitably catching up with the books and now major plots are show-only and in a

recent episode something major was revealed that hasn't even been published in the books yet. Purists still defend the originals as the superior medium but what the producers are doing is adding tension and action, and keeping characters relevant, all of which is very important for any story (they might even teach George R.R. Martin a thing or two!)

Where they can't adapt or invent they cut. It's always controversial when they do (some book reader somewhere has an undying love for Lannister guard #20 and is currently writing an angry letter about how his part in the show wasn't big enough), but Weiss and Benioff have a better understanding of TV writing than either angry readers on the internet or Martin himself. If a character isn't part of the show it means that he doesn't belong there. It's a balance of respect for the source and respect for the medium.

Of course, the show is infamous for mishandling sexual content. There's at least one scene including female nudity in almost every episode and male nudity is very rare. Twice now the show has portrayed rape that book readers tend to maintain is consensual sex. However, Benioff and Weiss have proven that they can learn from mistakes, so while the boobs will never be gone for good (it is HBO after all), it's likely that their appearance in the future will be more subtle and elicit less eye-rolling.

Fans of the books fear that given Martin's poor health and slow writing, the series' end will be shown on TV rather than in print. It would be a shame for Martin's decades-long work to be finished by another writer, but Benioff and Weiss have proven that should the unfortunate happen, the series will be in good hands.

In Brief

Guardians of the Galaxy

A NEW trailer was released for the next Avengers movie on Monday. A teaser ad was released in earlier days, serving as a 25 second build up to the full trailer. It carries on the colourful nature of the poster. Guardians of the Galaxy will be released on August 1st 2014.

Harry Potter spin off

THE forthcoming film of Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them will be released November 18th 2016, two days before the 15th anniversary of Harry Potter and the Philosophers Stone. The cast and crew are yet to be confirmed. The story will follow a 'Magizoologist' and will be an extension of the Potter universe.

New Batman still released

A STILL of the bat suit and batmobile for the upcoming Batman vs. Superman has been released online. The director Zack Snyder posted the photo to Twitter. The dark black and white photo appears to reveal that the film will take inspiration from Miller's The Dark Knight Returns, as Ben Affleck has filled out considerably and the suit has stumpy ears. The film could be released on May 16th 2016.

Hayao Miyazaki retires

INFLUENTIAL animated director Hayao Miyazaki has retired at the age of 73. It is widely considered that the newly released, The Wind Rises, will be the Studio Ghibli co-founders last, in a career that has spanned six decades.

Act in Star Wars!

J.J. ABRAMS, director of Star Wars Episode VII, announced that fans of the series would have the chance to appear in the film. This is a part of a new pledge named Star Wars: Force For Change, with Disney pledging \$1m to begin. Each participant would donate \$10, and be entered into a draw to visit the set and play a role in the film. The pledge hopes to raise money for UNICEF's innovation labs to help communities around the globe.



by ALI KESHTMAND

THE 14th of May to the 25th of May has marked the 67th Cannes film festival, one of the world's most prestigious film festivals. If you don't know what the Cannes film festival is, it's an invite-only gathering of film-people and other high class civilians over the period of about two weeks, watching a boatload of new films of lots of different genres, with a specific jury giving hell awards out.

These range from the gracious Palme d'Or, the highest prize awarded, to the more specific little ones that people pretend are anywhere near as good as it (Prix du Scenario, I'm looking at you). Pulp Fiction, The Pianist, Taxi Driver have all been recipients of the Palme d'Or, as well as Amour, Blue is the Warmest Colour, and The Tree of Life; all those films you say you've watched.

The jury, of whom the only relevant ones are: Sofia Coppola, Willem Dafoe, and Nicolas Winding Refn, will

be the principle executors of award-giving. While you and I will not know many of the films, part of the importance of the festival is bringing great attention to both large-scale productions and smaller, independent films.

Of the various films presented at the festival, the one that I unbiasedly suggest you should be most looking forward to is 'Lost River', the directorial debut of Ryan Gosling, star of such films as The Notebook, Drive, Crazy Stupid Love, and generally being quite an attractive man. Lost River will fea-

ture a cast of Matt Smith, Eva Mendes, and Christina Hendricks. But if you're into film, there is much other great art to look out for from some more established directors, such as 'Goodbye To Language' by the insufferable yet hilarious Jean Luc-Godard (seriously, watch his television interviews), and 'Jimmy's Hall' by Ken Loach; famous for films such as 'Looking for Eric', and others that nobody has heard of.



Obituary: H.R. Giger

by CALLUM LEWIS

Hans Rudolf Giger, renowned Swiss surrealist artist and Oscar winner for Visual Effects, has died aged 74, after suffering a fall at his home in Zurich. The visionary mind behind the design of Ridley Scott's Alien was famous for his uniquely dark style and fascination with biomechanical design.

In a statement to Time, Scott described him as "a real artist and great eccentric, a true original, but above

all, he was a really nice man. He will be missed". The pair worked closely on the classic sci-fi horror Alien, released in 1979 and critically acclaimed thanks in no small part due to Giger's truly otherworldly design. The titular alien (or Xenomorph, to give it its true name) remains iconic for its impossible appearance, while still reflecting the darkest natures of humanity. Much of Giger's art shares this same ability, transforming our ideas of purity, death and sex into an occult futuristic nightmare.

Giger's desire to push the bounda-

ries of how we perceive ourselves made him legendary in the mind of any horror fan, but like many great artists he led a troubled life beset by paranoia and the fear of his own mind. He often spoke of his nightmares, and the worry that his dark imagination might take over his life. Yet to those who knew him well, he was regarded as a kind and generous individual who preferred to stay out of the limelight.

Today his art is often praised for its bravery in portraying unnerving, even uncomfortable depictions of the blend between machine and flesh. Its ability

to provoke an immediate, visceral reaction is notorious, yet celebrated.

To many he was ahead of his time, a Lovecraft of the cyborg-laced future. Giger's style has inspired countless fans, from tattoo parlours and alternative bars to modern musicians and the lasting imprint he left on film horror. All thanks to the legacy of a man who stared into the abyss, and dared to make it his own.



by AMY BLACKWELL

I have to admit I have never really followed the Godzilla franchise in the past. Huge monsters have never really been my thing. I don't like King Kong and I've never seen Jurassic Park (I know, how have I survived this long, right?). However, I actually enjoyed this version of Godzilla. This summer blockbuster has given the franchise a breath of fresh air in the wake of the 1998 film disaster.

The first part of the film follows Joe Brody, played by Bryan Cranston (or as we know him, Walter White) who works in a nuclear power plant in Japan.

Cranston's acting is probably the pièce de résistance of the film, coming a long way since his Malcolm in the Middle days, though after Breaking Bad I don't think anyone is surprised at how talented this actor actually is. It's just a shame it

doesn't last long in the film. You'll see what I mean.

The rest of the film follows his son Ford Brody, a bomb expert in the US Army, played by Aaron Taylor-Johnson. Though he has the tough army guy act down to a tee I probably wouldn't put him up there with Hollywoods best. This family backstory gives the film an extra layer and an element of humanity which it would otherwise lack.

The bit everyone really wants to hear about is the monsters! The CGI in the film is on point, the monsters have come a long way since the cheesy man-in-a-suit days. The MUTO are long skinny, almost robotic looking huge insects and Godzilla himself is extremely realistic without straying too far from his classic appearance.

The film is an excellent representation of the Japanese classic, the use of old nuclear test footage is, as the Guardian have described it, "ingenious" in letting the audience take a glance at Godzilla's past in the film's canon and how it fits into actual human history.

For the non-scientifically minded some of the nuclear backstory can get passed over and I feel the original story's human-anxiety of a nuclear world is missed slightly by the

film's humans constant insistence of using nuclear force to stamp out their little bug problem. In terms of storyline the film follows the modern-apocalyptic-human-stupidity-route, resulting in the message "don't let Americans handle heavy explosives". The audience aren't sure whether to root for the giant monster God or the human army and the poor people of San Francisco are simply collateral damage.

Rotten Tomatoes has rated the film 73%, saying that it has just enough human interest to anchor the "monster go smash" plot line. Peter Bradshaw, writing for the Guardian, has accused the film of being slow and sleepy. Bangor student Liam Shier said "it is a good Americanised representation of the film. They successfully stuck to Godzilla being a "God" and a true representation of Kaiju. It has been a successful rekindling of the franchise!"

For me the film made for great entertainment but the lack of useful female characters is off-putting. I mean, hello guys, women can be in the army too! The film wouldn't have suffered with a female lead.

All in all the film was enjoyable. I would definitely recommend giving it a watch.

SETH ROGEN ZAC EFRON ROSE BYRNE BAD NEIGHBOURS

by BECCI JAMESON

Bad Neighbours pits family man Seth Rogen against frat ring leader ken doll Zac Efron. College fraternity Delta Psi Beta headed by Teddy Sanders (Efron) move into quiet residential area and become a constant disruption for their neighbours Mac Radner (Rogen) and Kelly (a sparkling Rose Byrne) who are trying to raise their lovely daughter Stella while still clinging to the party lifestyle they left behind. The film follows their struggle with noise complaints and increasingly elaborate pranks that stemmed from a police call.

Rogen and Byrne have great chemistry as the thirtysomethings anxious to do right by their daughter, look cool in front of the kids next door and still get invited to parties like they used to. Byrne's role is meatier than is expected in films like this. Kelly is just as scheming as Mac, equally keen to get one over the uni kids by doing something stupid. They're a very likable

couple, both as tempted by the hard partying lifestyle of Teddy and gang as they are dismissive of it. It's interesting to see Zac Efron not singing and dancing and to say he's grown up is an understatement. Although there is a little nod to his musical theatre with a little dance off between Rogen and Efron.

As usual with these kinds of films, the funniest parts are shown in the trailer. The airbag sequence is particularly enjoyable, the exercise ball vs Seth's head is a little over the top and as for a baby chewing on a condom, there are no words.

In a delightful twist, the worldwide version had to be called Bad Neighbors rather than the American Neighbors because they thought viewers might get mixed up with that much loved Aussie soap. Its little things like this that show how well the film makers wanted the film to do around the world and I don't think they will be disappointed with the \$49 million they made in the opening weekend.

The supporting cast are on top form. Providing the opposite of Rogen and Byrne are divorced couple Jimmy (Ike Barinholtz) and Paula (Carla Gallo) who are desperately immature and over the top with Jimmy providing a diversion by jumping off the upstairs landing and breaking his leg. Dave Franco is great, jumping in with his brothers mates and providing a spot on Robert De Niro impression. His character development is rather odd, he suddenly turns into an ambitious postgrad who tries to talk Teddy out of his increasingly crazy plans. An interesting supporting role from Lisa Kudrow that added nothing to the film but made everyone in the cinema go, 'Oh, its her.'

There are some laugh out loud moments and some cringey 'you took it too far' moments but all in all Bad Neighbours is a big ball of fun, bouncing effortlessly from frat house to baby stroller.





Words: **HEATHER BOYLES**
Photos: **LJ TAYLOR**

Wales Comic Con takes place at the end of April, every year, at Glyndŵr University in Wrexham and this year at Seren we thought we'd check it out! We had bought tickets in advance but still had to queue for about 40 minutes, though the line was so long we had expected to wait longer! Those who were yet to get their tickets had an even longer queue!

Once in through the door, we came into a corridor where we were given wristbands followed by an entrance hall where you could queue for panels taking place in two lecture theatres. We followed the crowds down a very long corridor past a café, one room with a stall of video games, and Kenny Baker (R2D2) signing at a table to one side.

Finally it opened out onto a car park which had chips and burger vans and sports and police cars that must have appeared in films. To the left was a very small building which we discovered housed comics and Jonathon Ross - there was a ridiculous queue!

Across the car park we finally made it to the main hall with all the guests and yet another queue. Though we did have a chuckle overhearing a 6 or 7 year old girl moan "Mum I want to watch it!" and the mother replied "No! You are not watching Game of Thrones!"

The hall itself was the University's sports hall, not particularly big - perhaps a little bigger than Bangor's Powis. Guests were sitting at tables along the walls all around the room, with a few tables of merchandise in the middle. We decided to have a walk around the hall and take a few pictures before seeing any of the guests. There were cast members of Red Dwarf, Allison Mack from Smallville, dwarves and hobbits, a number of minor Game of Thrones cast members, Percy Weasley, a couple of wrestlers and Warwick Davis among others. A rather strange collection.

Atlantis

Eventually we got back around to the Atlantis cast, where there was a large queue for Mark Addy (also from Game of Thrones). I managed to squeeze through it to see there were about two people queuing for Robert Emms (Pythagoras) and queued to get my

friend a signed photo.

Next was Jack Donnelly who plays the lead character Jason. It was still early and there was only one person in front who was finishing up so I hopped in the queue. He extended his hand with a big smile and introduced himself. I found it odd that the 4 main characters (Ariadne the princess was also there) hadn't been given a Q&A session. I expressed that I was disappointed and Jack admitted it was actually because the producers had said no to a panel, because they didn't want the cast to reveal too much about series 2, and they thought that's what people would ask about.

As he wrote my name I asked him if it was his first convention. He replied excitedly; "Yeah! It's crazy! It's great. There's so many people I'm just overwhelmed! And there's so many people dressed up it's insane - have you been to these before?" I replied that I had and agreed about the craziness of cons. I then had a photo with him and he waved "nice to meet you". He

SEAN BEAN'S POCKETS HAD BEEN SEWN UP... WHEN HE KNELT DOWN, HIS POCKETS SPLIT OPEN AND ALL THE KIT KATS AND CHOCOLATE FELL OUT OF HIS COSTUME...

was lovely and obviously just so excited and pleased to be there. I couldn't help but think that if he thought that was a lot of people, just wait until he gets to London Comic Con.

Later I saw him talking to a family hanging around after they'd had their Photo Op with him. They told him they had watched Merlin and watched Atlantis because it was the same people. He said "Yeah well because we knew there'd be that tea time hole to fill, we hoped people who watched Merlin would watch us." Then they asked when the second series would be and he said that they've already done 6 weeks of shooting in Morocco and that it is due out in October.

Game of Thrones

At the panel were the actors of King Rob, Jorah Mormont, Shireen (Stannis' daughter) Myrcella, Meera and Sir Barristan Selmy.

This was a good panel. There were lots of interesting questions asked but it has to be said Aimee Richardson who plays Myrcella Baratheon/Lannister stole the show. That girl is hilari-

ous and has perfect comic timing. Highlights were at one point the girls were asked:

"What is it like to be part of this huge successful HBO show, with all these established actors and amazing locations?"

"It's crap." Aimee answered straight away causing the audience to burst out laughing. She then went on to say "Thing is I'm an idiot in school! I couldn't be more unsuited to this life! And now I get recognised and have like "fans" it's weird but great."

Ellie Kendrick who plays Meera gave a thoughtful answer basically saying how they'd all been welcomed in. She also told the story of her and Natalia Tena (Osha) being taught how to properly skin rabbits really fast. In the scene it's real rabbits, so although it made her a bit squeamish she can now skin a rabbit.

Kerry Ingram (Shireen) was quite nervous answering but also gave good answers echoing how welcoming everyone had been.

Later on in regards to fellow actors Aimee

Wright (Bran Stark) when he was younger. At the beginning of the series someone's head had been chopped off, and the whole crew told him it was real. He believed them and went white as a sheet.

Mark Addy also said that with Atlantis when they'd gone to Morocco there was something about the rock layout of the location they were using that reminded him of Game of Thrones, and then they found someone had actually written with stones "Game of Thrones."

Later I went to get Ellie Kendrick's autograph (Meera) and asked her what it was like on set with Thomas Sangster and Isaac Hempstead-Wright and did being a similar age help them all get along. She said it did and generally it was a nice welcoming atmosphere.

She called Isaac and his mum "legends" which I could understand as he does come across as quite entertaining in interviews. I asked what they talked about on set and her handler joked "Nothing that can be repeated." Ellie smiled though then said "Where we're gonna go for tea to be honest. Isaac's mum is brilliant and knows where all the best places are, so we just discuss whether we're gonna get a burrito or burger for dinner."

Other Guests

"Cosplay guests" had been invited. We encountered the Jack Sparrow lookalike when we arrived. He was standing outside the main hall in the morning. We asked him where the toilets were before we got into the queue, where he replied in full character "I can't tell you where the loos are but I can direct you to a good hedge" and pointed drunkenly to the one behind me.

Matt Elliot who dresses as the 11th Doctor was also there along with a really good Captain Picard lookalike.

The venue is the smallest I've ever been to for a convention, which would lead me on to say that it's only really worth going if there are guests you really want to meet, and the journey isn't too long because it isn't a merchandise heavy convention. Also even though there were a few people dressed up, there wasn't a cosplay masquerade. However, if there are guests that take your interest, the panels were good, and the size of the venue meant queues weren't that long. Overall it was a great day out.

Richardson enthused:

"I was 12 when I started and when I was younger I was obsessed with Elf the film, like honestly you don't even know! And of course Peter Dinklage is in Elf. So when he first introduced himself I was just like-" At this point she put her hands on the table with wide eyes and did a very high, long, squeal. Then she was in fan girl mode and said excitedly "And then Lena Headley was in St. Trinian's 2! And Oh my God you don't even know!"

Other highlights were the older cast members talking about Sean Bean. Mark Addy told how one time all the good chocolate bars had gone from the catering tables. Sean Bean's pockets had been sewn up in one scene, and he had to kneel in front of Mark Addy. When he knelt down, his pockets split open and all the Kit Kats and chocolate fell out of his costume, and the rest of the cast wheeled on him accusingly.

Another anecdote was that the whole crew had played a prank on Isaac Hempstead-



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In Brief

Hadfield's Bowie cover removed

CANADIAN astronaut Chris Hadfield's famous video of a cover of David Bowie's 'Space Oddity' has been taken down. On May 13th, he tweeted: "Bowie's last day – we had permission for a year, so our Space Oddity video comes down today".

The song, recorded on the International Space Station at the end of Hadfield's five-month mission, received over 22.4 million views on YouTube. He said: "We are working on renewing the licence for it, but as there are no guarantees when it comes to videos shot in space, we thought you might want to have one last look before we take it down."

Metallica to headline Glastonbury

METALLICA are to become the first ever heavy metal to headline Glastonbury. They will make their debut appearance at the event performing on the Pyramid Stage on Saturday 28th June; the other two headline acts are Kasabian and Arcade Fire.

In an interview with BBC 6 Music, founder Michael Eavis said: "they're one of the most amazing rock bands in the world, everywhere I go people say 'When are Metallica going to play?' I said, 'They will be here one day' and this is their time now".

Drummer Lars Ulrich told Radio 1's Zane Lowe: "No one is better suited for a mud party than Metallica".

Morrissey biopic in pipeline

THE makers of the Oscar-nominated short film 'The Voorman Problem' are set to create a biopic about the early life of former Smiths frontman Morrissey, provisionally entitled "Steven."

Director Mark Gill said it is "as much a film for non-Morrissey fans as it is for die-hard devotees." However, he would not deny that it is "a love letter to Steven Patrick Morrissey and the dark satanic mills of Manchester."

Shooting is expected to begin at the end of the year, yet it is unclear whether Morrissey has given the film his blessing.

Flaming Lips to cover Sgt. Pepper's

US rock band The Flaming Lips are to release a track-for-track tribute of 'Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band' by The Beatles in October. The album will feature collaborations with Moby and Miley Cyrus. The Lips and Cyrus recently performed 'Lucy In The Sky with Diamonds' during her Bangerz tour and a download is available with pre-orders.

The Lips' Wayne Coyne told Rolling Stone: "It's really just a lot of great friends of mine who are all contributing... People are like, 'Why do you do Beatles songs?' and I'm like, 'Because people love them.' I think it'll generate a lot of interest."



Coldplay: Ghost Stories

by WYATT WARNER

Coldplay are not the type of band that whips fans into frenzy over an album release. They don't play fun pop earworms or even divisive music that rides its controversy to stardom. That's never been a problem though—understatement is the backbone of their music. Besides, they've never been lacking for fans who'd rather listen to their music in the car on their way to work than in a sold-out arena.

So there is no reason to get excited over their latest album, 'Ghost Stories'. But even without hype or controversy, even without any context on which to predict its quality, it still disappoints. 'Viva la Vida' and 'Mylo Xyloto' saw the band expand as artists, try new things, improve on old

ones and generally make progress as songwriters and musicians. While Ghost Stories isn't bad by any means, it's a departure from that progress.

Over half the songs are forgettable, low-mid tempo tracks with few to no interesting qualities. It's not even that they're understated (like many previous non-single tracks), they're just slow enough to qualify them for the supermarket playlist but not fast enough to be interesting.

'Midnight', with its distorted vocals and dreamy electronic background noise, might have been cool in the right context, but unfortunately the context it's in is halfway through a Coldplay album that's desperately in need of an up-tempo song. Instead of ethereal, the song feels sluggish. To the band's credit, they at least tried something different, even if

they fell short of interesting.

Thankfully, the album is not without a few good songs. 'Ink's energetic instruments are a great counterpoint to its passionate yet introspective vocals. It's a song that's different from anything the band has done before, yet still sounds like Coldplay.

'Magic', the album's first single, is an example of how low-mid tempo songs should be done. Its backing instruments include new elements for Coldplay, like acoustic guitars and a synthetic beat, which build from understated and subtle to passionate and anthemic, while staying interesting throughout. It's a demonstration of Coldplay's signature ability to make soft rock interesting.

Finally, 'A Sky Full of Stars' is the song that will single-handedly prevent many listeners from writing off

the entire album. It was produced in collaboration with Swedish DJ Avicii and manages to mix both their styles without being obnoxious. It sounds like Coldplay, it sounds like Avicii, and it sounds incredible. If you hear anybody humming a song in the next few weeks, pay attention—it will probably be this song.

Three songs do not make an album though, and even 'A Sky Full of Stars' can't pull Ghost Stories out of mediocrity. Some might call it a return to Coldplay's roots, but that just means they've forgotten much of what they've learned over their careers. Let's hope they can learn from this mistake and make their next album the fantastic musical experience that we all know they can produce.



The Black Keys : Turn Blue

by THOMAS BICKERDIKE

When you think of past works by Dan Auerbach and Patrick Carney, you think of the success of 'Brothers' and 'El Camino'. They had the unquestionable appearance of rock albums. In contrast, their eighth studio album 'Turn Blue' looks more psychedelic. Honestly, look at the cover!

'Tighten Up' has long been considered their most popular single, along with as the Grammy-winning 'Lonely Boy'. Personally, my own personal favourite track is 'Little Black Submarines' – an underrated masterpiece.

Believe it or not, Turn Blue was announced back in March via Twitter by Mike Tyson (yeah, the retired boxer!). This included the title and a

link to numerous cryptic videos featuring a hypnotist. There is rationale to this: the band had licensed the use of a song in a documentary Tyson was making and he, in turn, offered a favour. The name is inspired by a phrase used by the fictional character Ghouardi, a horror host from their home-state Ohio in the 1960s.

It is once again co-produced by their long-time collaborator Danger Mouse.

This album comes after Dan Auerbach's divorce and the consequential dark nature seems to be a theme surrounding the whole album. However, they seem to have looked on the bright side. For example, in the final track 'Gotta Get Away' Auerbach almost reveals: "I went from San Berdoos

to Kalamazoo, just to get away from you." This track is the most classic rock-esque on the album.

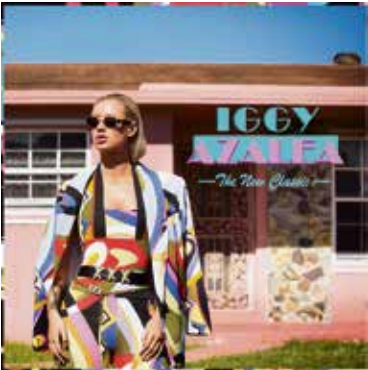
'Fever' is not as rough-edged as previous works, featuring a synth organ throughout. You probably heard it when they recently played on Later... with Jools Holland, proof that they are experimenting with more than just guitars and drums, causing some debate amongst listeners. Traditionalist fans vie against those who embrace the exploration of the new. The ending is somewhat misleading, because you expect a solo and instead it abruptly calms down. Although only just over four minutes, it feels long, certainly longer than some of their previous hits. Actually, the opening track 'Weight of Love' is

their longest ever song, which is almost reminiscent of the Eagles' 'Hotel California', yet there is also a bit of a Pink Floyd influence thrown in.

The Black Keys are certainly more diligent than some musicians: this is their eighth album in the last 12 years. Turn Blue is not a bad addition to their discography; it is certainly a change in style compared to their usual blues rock, yet I predict it will not be as successful as El Camino or Brothers. That is not to say I won't be listening to it again. They themselves have admitted "you get your money back after the tenth listen".



Iggy Azalea: The New Classic



Eurovision 2014

by SARA LLOYD WILLIAMS

At Eurovision Song Contest, you were here again. Every year the thought of this camp spectacle fills the people of Europe with extreme euphoria, extreme dread or extreme nonchalance. There are those who love it beyond belief; those who at the mere mention of the word Eurovision are hit with bursts of extreme anger, mumbling something about political voting and then there are those who will happily sit through the spectacle on a Saturday night, murmuring opinions at the TV or their Twitter feed without much more feeling than they'd give an episode of Britain's Got Talent. I personally fit in that camp.

From the offset those in charge of Eurovision PR in the UK geared us up for an exciting year. Molly Smitten-Downes was plucked from near obscurity to represent Britain in this year's competition. Having suffered Engelbert Humperdinck and Bonnie Tyler in recent years, Molly felt like a breath of fresh air as our representative. Her song 'Children of the Universe' while sung well with powerful lyrics, felt a bit bland performed live. Having been polled to close the competition it wasn't a performance that stuck in my mind in comparison with some other acts, and clearly the rest of Europe agreed placing her in 17th place.

As for other performances, the eventual winner of the competition

Austria's Conchita Wurst gave a powerful performance. Her James Bondesque song teamed up with the inspirational image of what beauty should look like, guaranteeing her a place in hearts across Europe. But the biggest surprise of the night for me was the Netherlands. 'Calm After the Storm' by The Common Linnets was about as far away from a stereotypical Eurovision song as you can get, yet still managed second place.

But despite all the positives that make up Eurovision, there was no denying a tension in the air this year. Eurovision is often said to hold a political undertone, seen mainly in the way various countries vote. But with each 'boo' that came when Russia was given top points came the reminder that many of the countries competing this year are living in the midst of a horrendous situation, one that not even a camp pop show can overshadow.

Beyond the music, the rest of the event went by without many issues. The Danish presenters, while not slick, did their jobs effectively with big smiles throughout, though the attempts to fill the gaps during the phone vote was at times horrendous. The moment when they announced they'd flown in the French band's favourite chef from a local restaurant was just bizarre!

So despite the UK's disappointment I still enjoyed Eurovision 2014. It was at times extremely inspirational TV and I can't wait to see what we give the continent in 2015 to contest with!

by AMY BLACKWELL

My most recent obsession (and the only reason I have survived my exams this year) is angry female rappers. Especially Iggy Azalea. Born Amethyst Amelia Kelly, the 23-year-old rapper originally from Sydney, Australia, first arrived on the American rap scene in 2011 and made a name for herself with her controversial viral videos for songs 'Pu\$\$y' and 'Two Times'. She was the first female and non-american rapper to appear in XXL magazine's annual 'Top Ten Freshmen' issue. 'The New Classic' is her debut studio album.

The rapper's mission is to "make people question and redefine old ideals" and through this album she certainly does. The three songs released prior to the album were 'Bounce', 'Change Your Life' and 'Fancy'. All of these are great songs, easy to listen too and enjoyable too. My particular favourite is 'Work' a story of personal struggle, that really puts into perspective the struggle of lower class women. The song is gritty and real whilst still being quite funny and catchy. This is skill Iggy Azalea seems to possess across all songs in this album. You can really tell she means what she says and isn't just in it for the downloads, compared to artists such as Nicki Minaj.

The album as a whole flows quite nicely together all song possessing the same heavy beat and smooth rapping style. The artist hopefully paves the way for a wave of new hip-hop artists that lead the genre away from the gangsta rap culture. If you're looking for badass women who know who they are and what they want then Iggy Azalea is a must! And, if you like her I recommend Angel Haze, a similar artist with a similar message. Iggy Azalea is a great female inspiration.



World Cup songs - The best and worst

It is a World Cup year and musicians will want to cash in on the opportunity by releasing a song to show their support. So, here are some of the best and worst (blimey, there were a fair few to choose from) World Cup songs.

THE BEST...



New Order –
World in Motion (1990)

'World in Motion' was recorded for Italia 90, written by New Order and Keith Allen. This was very much of its time, but a stark contrast to New Order's work from a decade before as Joy Division. This lifted the mood of the nation prior to the tournament with its piano riff, cheery lyrics and classic commentary in the background.

Six members of the England team took part in the recording, including John Barnes who gave a master class in how to rap.

It remains New Order's only number 1 hit, even reaching number 5 on the Billboard Modern Rock chart in the US.



Baddiel & Skinner &
The Lightning Seeds –
Three Lions (1998)

Euro 96 gripped the nation and a large part of the driving force for that was 'Three Lions', by Lightning Seeds and the duo of Frank Skinner and David Baddiel. As a result, the lasting sound bite of the tournament was the phrase "Football's coming home".

Two years later for France 98, it was re-recorded with updated lyrics and reached number 1 in the charts, even though it was the "unofficial" anthem.

Plus, the video features the iconic scene of Skinner dipping his arm, whilst holding a melon, into a bucket of custard, so it would resemble the World Cup.

THE WORST...



England Squad –
We've Got The Whole World
at Our Feet (1986)

Written by Tony Hiller, Stan James and Bobby James, this was a twist on the traditional spiritual tune 'He's Got The Whole World in His Hands' for Mexico 86.

It was not really with the times to be honest; like many previous attempts, it featured a marching band. It has the atmosphere of the kind of song you'd hear at the end of a 1960s prison film. It is in no way inspirational (well, it could inspire people to think they could do no worse).

It reached number 66 in the charts. What's particularly concerning, the writers also wrote Scotland's official song 'Big Trip to Mexico', which was infinitely better.



Del Amitri –
Don't Come Home
Too Soon (1998)

Let's have a laugh at the expense of Scotland. Del Amitri's 'Don't Come Home Too Soon' was their official song for France 98. If this was not a football song, it would pass.

Justin Currie said it was written for completely honourable reasons, but was used as the official song for commercial reasons. Did he stop this? Of course not. What's worse, the squad had to get involved. They must have been thinking, "Do we have to?"

Depressing realism in action. How to best sum up the hopes and ambitions of and motivate a nation? Simple: "Don't be too rubbish..."

BOOKS

BOOK
NEWSPrincess
Diaries

ON 1st May Meg Cabot, author of the teen fictions series 'The Princess Diaries' announced that she would be visiting Mia Thermopolis two more times.

She will be writing two novels, one for young adult readers and the other for adults, undoubtedly aimed at the original fans of the series. The adult book will focus on Mia who will be engaged and planning her wedding. The young adult novel will focus on a new character Olivia Grace who discovers she is Mia's long lost half sister.

Miles
Franklin
Award

THE shortlist for the Miles Franklin book prize has been dominated by women writers this year, covering a range of topics from Indigenous culture and heritage, Japanese internment in the second world war and Australia's ageing population.

The shortlist was announced Thursday 15th May in New South Wales and is a great advertisement for Australia's growing literary culture, though in this field there is definitely room for improvement.

Authors include Fiona McFarlane, Cory Taylor, Alexis Wright and Evie Wyld.

Poetry
against
Pollution

COPIES of Simon Armitage's poem 'In Praise of Air' has been copied onto pollution absorbing material and displayed outside the University of Sheffield. The poem both tugs at the heart strings and purifies the air!

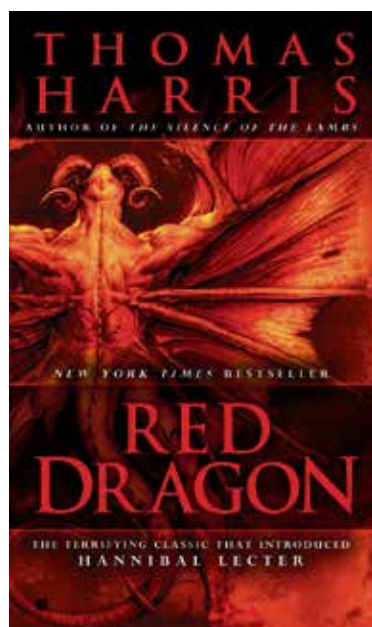
Professor Tony Ryan called it "a fun collaboration between science and the arts to highlight a very serious issue of poor air quality in our towns and cities." After all to quote Armitage "My first word, everyone's first word, was air."

Little Rebel

GILLIAN Cross has been awarded the Little Rebels children's book award for her book 'After Tomorrow' "a frighteningly believable story, a real page-turner with a strong sense of danger always present, and many big issues of a possible future just below the surface."

Cross believes that it is important to understand the world even as children.

Seren Reviews

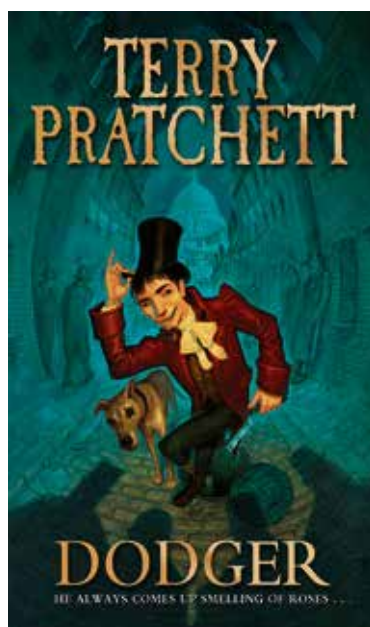
A SELECTION OF OUR FAVOURITE BOOKS THIS
MONTHRed
Dragon

by BECCI JAMESON

SINCE I've become a fan of the TV show *Hannibal*, I thought it was only right to read the book that inspired it. Comparing the show to the novel was a lot of fun, because you can see the pieces that have been lifted, altered and paid homage to by Bryan Fuller and his minions. It is very much like fan fiction, probably one of the best examples I can name of something that has the "inspired by/adapted from/based on" label. Whereas the show focuses heavily on Will Graham and Hannibal Lecter, their intricate personalities and evolving (or devolving) relationship, the book's emphasis is on the serial killer, especially in the latter half. Lecter only has a couple scenes, and Graham wasn't nearly as interesting as how Hugh Dancy portrays him. Instead of being tortured and tormented by his awful gift of empathy Will came off as a little irritating, though he was an engaging enough protagonist. Even though I was prepared for his general absence, I still really missed Dr Lecter himself.

The last half really galloped along once Harris turned the plot's focus on to Francis Dolarhyde as a person instead of the killer in the background. I got the sense that Harris felt he was the most interesting character and poured the story's emotion into creating him. I certainly felt like he was the deepest character out of them all. I think what *Red Dragon* has inspired is generally better than the book itself as a whole, but it's still a very worthwhile read.

Dodger

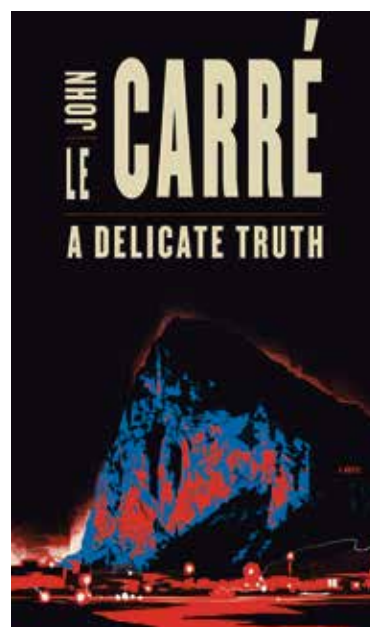


by WYATT WARNER

TERRY Pratchett's *Dodger* is a novel set quite literally in Dickensian London: Charles Dickens himself appears as an important character in the novel. Other historical figures of "Charlie's" time also make appearances. In fact, only one major character is fully invented by Pratchett, which gives fans of Victorian England's history and literature something to look for on every page. These nods to the reader and subtle yet clever references are the biggest appeal of the book.

The story is basic and the characters are predictable, but the depth, as it often does with Pratchett, comes in the form of genius turns of phrase and new ways of interpreting genre tropes. He manages to do this very accessibly and without being patronizing, which makes the book a relatively easy, but never boring read. It has all the depth and cleverness of an intelligent author, without the pretentiousness that sometimes accompanies them.

While his usual prose style is simplified to better match that of Charles Dickens, fans of Pratchett's Discworld series will recognize his unmistakable imprint on every word of *Dodger*. In fact, it's easy to forget that the book isn't a Discworld novel. Pratchett's habit of looking at things in new ways gives anything his unique feel. New fans and old will appreciate the astute yet sarcastic lens of Pratchett's writing shift from his usual fantasy setting to good ol' England.

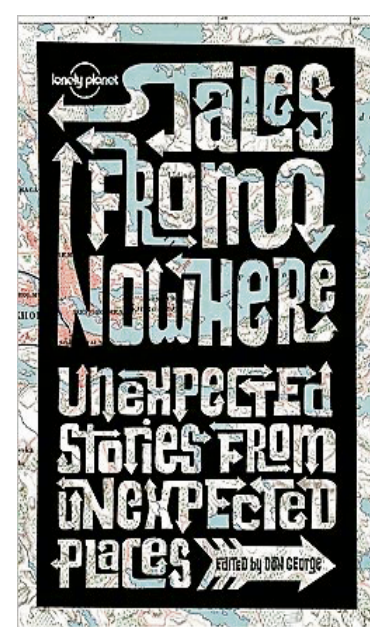
A Delicate
Truth

by JEZ HARVEY

JOHN le Carré has been writing spy novels for more than 50 years. You might have thought that after 50 years, a writer might have used up their originality or that their style might have got left behind as younger, more contemporary writers come along and muscle in. Not Le Carré. Known best for the "George Smiley" series that the film *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* was based on, his latest work, *A Delicate Truth* follows a young civil servant who gets drawn into the murky world between politicians and businessmen who seek to profit from war.

Le Carré's style certainly hasn't changed, but whilst he's managed to retain the depth of characters and tension in his writing, you could never confuse this with his earlier work. For someone to write for 50 years and yet have their work remain so contemporary and to be so much 'of their' time, is impressive. For him to be over 80 and still write a gripping and edge-of-your-seat read, is even more impressive. I devoured the book in a 3 and a half hour train ride from London to Bangor and had to stand on the platform to finish the last two pages as I couldn't wait until I got home.

Fans of spy thrillers will enjoy this as a change of pace from the American, brash, guns and glory, macho dross that gets pumped out, and fans of characters and storylines will find much to enjoy as well. A fantastic read by an author still at the top of his game.

Tales
from
Nowhere

by NICOLA HOBAN

THIS book is for anyone who has the ambition to travel. An anthology put together by the Lonely Planet, this book is a collection of 30 real-life tales from travellers around the globe who have travelled to places that felt like Nowhere, like a walking trail in Tuscany, or a desert beyond Timbuktu, or Shanghai International Airport.

These authors tell stories about the places that they thought would be just another Nowhere, but then something happened - an unexpected encounter or experience that changed a normal journey into an extraordinary adventure.

My friend lent me this book because she knew that I would love it. She wasn't wrong. As somebody who wants to travel (desperately), I thoroughly enjoyed this book and when I could get away from my revision I would go to back to reading about adventures that I can only hope to experience for myself one day.

This anthology is for any person who has daydreamed of far off places and backpacking to unique areas. It is a collection that not only draws you in and makes you feel like you are experiencing the ride with these writers, but it also gives you some superb ideas for places to visit when you want to have some adventures of your own.

The Outdoor Co-ed Topless Pulp Fiction Appreciation Society

STIRRING UP THE NORM IN NYC



Image courtesy of coedtoplesspulpfiction.wordpress.com

by BECCI JAMESON As it's sunny in New York at this time of year, members of the four year old Outdoor Co-ed Topless Pulp Fiction Appreciation Society have been stripping off everywhere they can; the group want to celebrate good books and sunny days and enjoy both as long as the law lets them. It's not clear what connects reading and being topless but these women are evidently having a lot of fun proving there is one.

Founder A. Andrews said that, 'four summers ago, my best friend and I were talking about the law in New York that says women are free to go topless anywhere a man can, and about the

fact that no women ever did. It clearly wasn't because no woman would ever want to – when it's 90 degrees outside, who wouldn't rather be bare-chested than suffering under a shirt and bra? But most women didn't know they

“WOMEN ARE FREE TO GO TOPLESS ANYWHERE A MAN CAN

had this right, and those who did were often afraid to take advantage of it. So we decided to create a group to combat that ignorance and fear. We made it a book club because we loved books and loved hanging out with other people who loved books. And it's been going strong ever since.'

Andrews says that everyone has been incredibly supportive and that the response from the public was overwhelming. Some people were a little shocked but as she says 'this is New York. Most people go out of their way not to be fazed by the unexpected sight.' The women involved seem to be having the best time. 'We don't get as much reading done when we're at one of our events as we would by ourselves in a silent, locked room, but then we don't mean to – our gatherings are more social, and we spend more time chatting and discussing books than actually nose-down in the pages, reading them.' This would be truly liberating but for some reason I can't see it 'taking off' in Bangor.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

by AMY BLACKWELL

The Maze Runner by James Dashner is fantastic for fans of *The Hunger Games*. Don't be put off by its "Young Adult" status it is a great read for adults as well as teenagers.

It is set in a dystopia called "The Glade." Its residents, the Gladers, are all teenaged boys, all of whom have had their memory wiped and all they can remember about themselves is their first name. This is true for protagonist Thomas. The Glade, which resides in the middle of a gigantic maze, appears to be their only means of escape and is guarded by half-robot-half-creature beings.

The book, the first in a trilogy, follows Thomas as he gets to grips with his new surroundings, only he has a feeling he's been here before. With the arrival of a girl named Teresa the

world of the Gladers will be flipped on its head forever.

The book is a thrilling read and fits right in with the modern trend of dystopian fiction. It can easily compete with its contemporary rivals *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent*.

I really enjoyed this book, it was a welcome break from the heavy Victorian texts I have been reading for my degree and I am excited to read the rest of the series. The film of the novel is currently in post-production and will arrive in cinemas in early Autumn of this year.

I for one am excited to see this fantastic novel on the big screen. Though, as Seren's resident bookworm I must insist you read the book first. Just in case.



IN MEMORY OF...

SUE TOWNSEND



by IDA VÄISÄNEN

AUTHOR Sue Townsend has died at the age of 68. Townsend was best known for her series of humorous diaries of Adrian Mole, depicting the youth and adulthood of an infinitely aspiring author.

Townsend enjoyed great success in the 1980's when her series sold more copies than any other work of fiction during its decade. Townsend's publishing house has confirmed that she was working on another Adrian Mole

book, which will now sadly remain unpublished.

Townsend's books have been able to reach readers over the decades with their ageless themes, such as difficulties of youth (zits, the elderly man you are supposed to care for refuses to die) and adulthood (your literary genius not discovered yet), treated with irresistible humor.

MARY STEWART



by WYATT WARNER

BESTSELLING English novelist Mary Stewart died 9th May 2014 at the age of 97. Stewart was an author of both romantic novels and the Merlin series which blended historical fiction and fantasy. The series, based on Arthurian legend, revolved around the wizard Merlin, and even used his original Welsh name Myrddin Emrys. She was also known

for seamlessly incorporating fantasy elements into the real world setting of her romance novels without drawing much attention to that fact, a trend which has become popular in recent years. She was truly ahead of her time. She also wrote a suspense novel titled *The Moon-Spinners*, which was later adapted into a Disney film.

What to wear to the Summer Ball

Men

Women

By JAMES HOLMAN

By CHARLOTTE FAYE WRIGHT



Naomi Dress
£50.00

Panya London is a fresh new exciting women's fashion label founded by two sisters, Natalie Panayi aged 31 (who features in series 9 of the BBC'S 'THE APPRENTICE') and her younger sister Lexi Panayi aged 22 (who has a degree in Fashion).

The clothing line is brand new which guarantees that no one will be wearing the same outfit as you at the ball.

This is their 1st collection and features 12 'weekend' going out dresses. These are a mix of different styles from body con, skater, minis, midi, maxis, backless and non backless with the aim that they will suit all body types.

Panya London understands the power of the perfect dress and use luxury fabrics from Italy, Spain and France.

The brand has already found a devoted fashion following. Dresses have been seen on celebrities such as Lucy Meck from The Only Way is Essex.

Panya London is a truly British brand. The key to their success is the belief that "fashion shouldn't just look great, it should feel great."



Ola Dress
£45.00



BURTONS
2 Piece
Light
Blue
Sharkskin
Tailored
Fit Suit
£119.00



BURTONS
£6.00



BURTONS
£8.00

Gentlemen, if you are attending the summer ball this year and haven't managed to get your hands on a suit yet then you'd better get a move on or else all of the good ones will be gone! It isn't very often as students that we get to dress up in something besides whatever theme Academi has got going but the end of the final term is a time for suits left, right and centre. This can become expensive but it shouldn't have to be. You can attend every outing in the same suit if you change little things about your outfit. This can be from choosing another tie to changing your shirt and adding a waistcoat. It's that simple! For the summer ball, a lighter suit would be better. It is summer after all and, with any luck, the weather will be nice on the 31st so you won't have to suffer in the sun in a dark suit. Grey and blue are preferable to black at this time of year. Why

not be a little more bold and get a patterned suit? Next and Burton are good places to pick these up. The next problem you face is what colour shirt to wear. A good idea to ensure that your shirt matches your suit is to take your suit along with you and ask the sales assistant whether the combination works. That's their job after all. A bright shirt will make you stand out for all of the right reasons at the ball and will give your suit a lift. However, if you want to go for a more formal look then a dark shirt would be more suitable. Finally, you have chosen your shirt and suit, what about the tie/ bow tie? Why not get a tie that contrasts with your suit? Floral and patterned designs are huge this season for men and will add a lot more character to your outfit. Choose a colour that doesn't overshadow your suit but contrasts it in a complimentary way. Looking forward to seeing you all there!



NEXT
Summer Shades Shirts
£28.00



With the summer ball getting closer and closer I think I speak for most females when I say, "What the hell do I wear!?" and "Are people wearing long or short dresses?" Well, fear not because there is in fact plenty to choose from. It's clear that Bangor does have a lack of clothes shops but with online shopping your dress is just a click away.

Topshop, New Look, River Island and Debenhams are really the only choices available in Bangor. Dresses can also be ordered to the store instead of a home delivery, giving many options.

River Island's dresses start from around £25, and they have a variation of dresses in store and online. Dresses can also be bought online and refunded in store if they don't suit the buyer's needs.

Whilst expensive for a high street store, Topshop have a wonderful range of Spring/Summer dresses that can be used not only at this ball, but at many formal events to come.

KATE MOSS FOR TOPSHOP
One Shoulder Chiffon Dress
£85.00



NEW LOOK
Wide Fit Stone Cut Out Chunky
Peep Toe Heels
(Also Come in Black!)
£27.99



RIVER ISLAND
Pink Burnout Print
Cut Out Prom Dress
£65.00

If you're lucky enough to be able to push the boat out a little and flash a little more cash House of Fraser now have the categories "Prom Night" and "Summer Ball" which contains the perfect dresses for the ball. House of Fraser also has an amazing clearance sale on full of beautiful dresses!



HOUSE OF FRASER
Little Mistress Cowl Back Embel-
lished Detail Maxi Dress
£85.00

Summer Ball 2014

Katy B

This Peckham girl has music running through her veins. Her father represented Germany at Eurovision in 1976. Katy has previously sung on multiple breakstep, dub-step, and UK Garage tracks before quickly gaining popularity from 2010 up to now with the release of her new album, Little Red. With over 700 000 Facebook likes and millions of views on YouTube, Katy B represents a fun, big experience as she tours nationwide.

Charli XCX

Charli XCX has gained millions of listens for her tracks, including 'SuperLove', 'You (Ha Ha Ha)', and her most recent hit with Iggy Azalea, 'Fancy'. Charli has been writing music since she was 14, and from a young age has pushed forward towards her passion of music. From the start she made use of her promoter father and MySpace to organise gigs, now Charli has finally reaped the rewards of her strong DIY ethics.

OTHER ACTS INCLUDE... SCOTT MILLS TAKE THAT 2
VIVA LA COLDPLAY UK FOO FIGHTERS

BREAKDOWN OF YOUR TICKET COSTS

Artists' Requirements:

4%/£1.80

Staff: 8%/£3.60

Acts:
45%/£20.25

Funfair:
9%/£4.05

Licensing/Uni Fees: 9%/£4.05

Tech and Equipment:
25%/£11.25

WIN A TICKET TO THE BALL!

We have one ticket to give away to a lucky winner; with all of this year's tickets sold out, this is an unmissable opportunity! For your chance to be entered into a random draw to win a ticket to the Summer Ball, send in your name and email address to this link:

SEREN.BANGOR.AC.UK/BALL2014

The competition closes at midday on 29/05/2014 and winners will be notified via email and our Facebook Page.

HEALTH AND BEAUTY

THE TRUE PRICE OF BEAUTY?

Don't let your beauty affect the Earth's

By SARA WILLIAMS

Microbeads are tiny plastic particles found in most exfoliating products, from cheap shop brand ones to the more expensive designer type. Have a look in your bathroom right now and I can almost guarantee you will find one product containing these beads. But over the last few weeks there have been increasing calls to get rid of these small beads from all beauty and cleaning products. Why is this? What harm can they do? And what can you use instead?

The main product that microbeads are found in and associated with in student homes is facial cleansers. The purpose of microbeads in beauty products is to exfoliate the dead skin cell layer from the surface of your skin to allow more oxygen and moisture to reach the new skin layer underneath. But despite the frequency of the beads being found in these products they can also be discovered in everything from shower gel to toothpaste (and even some household cleaning products). The beads add an extra dose of friction to these products that makes penetrating and removing an area of dirt much easier. The cheap cost of the beads means that using them had become standard industry practice.

But research into the long term effects of these micro beads has unearthed some disturbing results. It emerges that the microbeads are too small to be filtered out of the water at treatment plants and environmentalist claim that the end up in our rivers, lakes and oceans. The sheer concentrated mass of micro beads contained

in each dollop of product (more beads are proven to give better results) means that with each time a product is flushed away with water tens of beads are added into our waters. When you consider how common the practice of using these products is in an area as small as Bangor it becomes easier to understand the scale of the problems facing our waters.

So what's the problem with having these microbeads in or water? The beads are made from plastics such as nylon, polyethylene (PE), polypropylene (PP), polyethylene terephthalate (PET), and polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA). While these names might not mean much to the average Bangor student they cause two problems to the environment they end up in. The first is that they are non-biodegradable materials, meaning that once they enter the water system they will not simply dissolve, but remain in their bead forms for decades.

This leads to the second problem, and the one that has environmentalists petitioning to have the beads removed from all products. The beads are being eaten by fish and other wild animals in the water, who believe the beads to be pellets of food. The beads, once in the animals system, break down and become toxic. As a lot of commercial water treatment centres dump the water in public waters this means that the potential for our daily supply of fish to become a toxic food source is ever increasing.

Until the mid-1990s the practice of using microbeads in beauty products was highly uncommon, with companies using natural ingredients such as crushed walnut shells or dried coco-



nut rind to create the friction needed in exfoliation products. But low cost and the normalizing of the practice within the industry meant by the turn of the millennium, natural products were a minority rather than the majority.

So what are companies doing to change these practices? Seren contacted some of the larger companies to clarify their stance on microbeads. Johnson and Johnson (which owns Clean and Clear and Neutrogena) replied, stating:

'At the Johnson & Johnson Family of Consumer Companies, we are phasing out and will eliminate the use of polyethylene microbeads in

our personal care products by the end of 2017. We have stopped developing new products containing polyethylene microbeads and have been conducting environmental safety assessments of other alternatives. These assessments are part of our "informed substitution" approach, which helps ensure that the alternatives we choose are safe and environmentally sound, and that they provide consumers with a great experience. Our goal is to complete the first phase of reformulations by the end of 2015, which represents about half our products sold that contain microbeads.'

While The Body Shop tweeted the response

'We've discontinued the 3 products that have the micro beads in and we are just selling these through now.'

So what can you do to help?

Check the labels of your facial cleanser very carefully and if you see microbeads or any of the plastics named above in the ingredients swap for another product. If you're unsure of products to use, a quick Google search will provide you with a selection of plastic-free options. Alternatively, make your own facial exfoliator using 2 tablespoons of olive oil and 2 tablespoons of either sugar or salt and help do your bit to preserve our waters.

L'oreal Skin Perfection

by SARA WILLIAMS

L'oreal Skin perfection is a new range of products brought out to compensate for the problems by young skin, with the target audience aimed to be 20 – 30 year olds. With so many products designed as 'anti-wrinkle' or 'age defining', aimed towards the older generation it's nice for a company to identify that those with younger skin do not necessarily poses the youthful perfection portrayed on television screens. The range contains a lot of products from moisturisers to skin primers; I personally bought their Advanced Serum, Magic Touch Instant Blur and Awakening Eye Cream.

Beginning with the their Advanced Serum this is a serum that's meant to be applied after face cleansing either as a standalone face serum, or underneath your usual moisturiser. I've been using it as a base for my normal moisturiser as I've found its texture to be a little bit too oily without another moisture layer to compensate. The product is designed to tighten pores and minimize their appearance over time. When the product is applied I definitely felt that my face looked smoother but after nearly 2 weeks of use without it on I can't honestly say I see much difference.

Magic Touch Instant Blur closely re-

sembles a face primer. It's used above your daily moisturiser and uses '4D' light reflective technology to even out the colour of your skin and lessen the appearance of any blemishes or imperfections on your face. It can be worn on its own or as a primer for makeup. The texture is extremely smooth and doesn't feel oily or intrusive on your skin. While there is no immediate effect after 10 minutes the skin where you applied the product in noticeably brighter and even toned that it was previously. While it can be used all over your face the relatively small amount in the tub along with the price means that I tend to be a bit more selective and only apply to the worst of my problem areas.

Finally the Awakening Eye Cream uses the same technology as the Instant Blur to lighten the dark circles underneath your eyes. Again you can apply this on its own or as a primer to make-up; it sinks

in well and therefore can easily be used as a base for makeup. Out of all the products this is definitely the one that I feel makes the biggest difference to your skin, brightening up even the most tired eyes.

There are many more products that I haven't tried, and I encourage you to seek them out if they appeal to you. They definitely succeed in lightening your skin, and can work a miracle after a heavy night revising (or partying!).



Pull the Other One

by SARA WILLIAMS



Over the last few weeks there have been numerous reports of various celebrities using a technique called oil pulling. The ancient Hindu medical technique is a process of 'pulling' oil through gums and teeth through a sucking motion, much as you do with mouthwash. It is meant to remove microbes from in-between teeth and detoxing your gums leading to whiter teeth and overall healthier gums. But is there any merit to the process?

Opinion in the medical world is still currently divided. There has been no long term testing as yet into the effects of oil pulling but overall the general opinion is that it does no harm. Consensus also shows that while any oil can be used in the process, if coconut oil is used the natural vitamins and minerals found in this oil increases the health benefits significantly. Coconut oil also has the added benefit of having little fat attached to the oil

meaning that the toxins are attracted to the oil in a greater mass. Effects can be seen after a week of daily use so if you want to attempt to get a dazzling smile for your May Dance or Graduation photos here's the technique.

- Take 1 large tablespoon of coconut oil and put in a large microwaveable bowl. Melt the oil down until it becomes liquid, or gets a softer texture form. This will make it easier to pull through your teeth.

- Swish the oil around your mouth for 15 - 20 minutes without stopping.

- 5 minutes prior to completing your course of pulling create a water and salt mixture in a mug using 1 teaspoon of salt in 1 full mug of water. Allow to cool as you finish the oil pulling

- After the allotted time is done spit out the oil in your mouth, making sure not to swallow any of the substance as you do so.

- Rinse your mouth using the salt water mixture for a further minute and spit out.

- Complete the process by brushing your teeth as usual.

An immediate effect might not be felt but doing this once a day for 4-5 days will guarantee an overall cleaner feeling for your mouth.

GAME OF HAIR

by SARA WILLIAMS

CERSEI LANNISTER

- Start by taking two small sections (from either side) from the mid-way down back of your head, and begin plating these sections together.
- Take a small section of hair from the top of each side of the head and twist the stands to the ends, pinning away from the face.
- Tie twists into one large ponytail and lay above the large braid.
- Take two large sections of hair from the temple area and loosely braid across your head towards the back.
- Combine the ponytail, two braided sections, and back braid into one braid.
- Tousle the free flowing hair to separate your newly done plait, liberally spray with hairspray and go 'hang out' with your brother.



SANSA STARK

- Part hair in the centre from the front all the way to the back.
- Section off one or two inches on either side of the part.
- French braid one section until it reaches the end of the part.
- Repeat on other side.
- Braid the ends of the two French braids together and secure in palace
- Curl the free flowing hair and liberally spray with hair spray.



DAENERYS TARGARYEN

- Take a large section of hair from the top of each side of each side of the head and Dutch braid it back.
- A Dutch Braid is the same as a French braid, except each section of hair is braided under rather than over.
- Tie braids together into a ponytail at the back of the head.
- Take another section of hair on each side and Dutch braid it backwards.
- Tie braids together and include the ponytails from the first braid.
- Leave the rest of the hair straight, or you can use a barrel curler to create soft waves.

MARGAERY TYRELL

- Braid partially damp hair and leave over night to create subtle waves through your hair for light texture.
- Loosely pull out braid in the morning (or to preserve waves no more than 2 hours before an event) and finger comb through any knots that may have occurred.
- Take small sections of hair from around the temple area and twist through to the ends, away from your face and pin at the back of your head.
- Take larger sections from underneath the same area and repeat the above process, pin in place underneath the original section.
- Braid both sections together at the end and tie together at the ends
- Repeat on other side.



MELISANDRE

- Begin by centre parting your hair.
- Section off a large section of your hair at the front which will be left loose to frame face.
- At the back section off top part of your hair (above the ears) on both side and braid together.
- Twin braid into a bun and pin securely against your head.
- For added volume keep sectioning off parts of your hair and secure around the bun, keep doing this until you feel the bun is large enough, but make sure you still have enough hair loose underneath the bun.



Beards, And Why You Look Ridiculous

by WYATT WARNER

You're a dude at University, and you're starting to really feel like an adult. You're trying to act manlier and the girls in your flat won't stop talking about Thor, Hugh Jackman and every member of the Canadian bobsled team. You gave shaving a miss for the fourth time this week because you didn't wake up early enough to do it before your 3 PM lecture. You look in the mirror, and see the same stubble that you see on the kind of Hollywood actor who makes the rounds on Pinterest every week. "Hmm," you think "I could totally grow a beard."

Sorry to let you down, buddy, but you probably can't. Your mom's not here to tell you when you're getting scruffy so that's now my job. Bangor, ya'll are getting scruffy. First of all, even if you've got hair on your face, that doesn't give you the strong jawline of Jake Gyllenhall or the innocent good looks of Ryan Gosling. Let's be honest, you probably just look like a university kid who could use a shave.

Next, even if you've got the hair in place, is it even thickness and color?

Does it go far enough up your cheeks to actually look like a beard? (This is the big one. Evaluate honestly.) If not, try again next year and see where you can get.



Ok sure, let's say you can grow a pretty good patch on your chin, but your moustache is still as peachy as when you were thirteen. If you want to look like a circus ringmaster or Lucifer, then by all means rock your chin point, but it's not as modern, manly or sexy as you think it is. The current

style is a full beard trimmed close to the skin or slightly longer. Experimentation is good, otherwise trends would never change, but keep in mind when trying to emulate Elvis or Hercule Poirot that you look ridiculous.

So you won the genetic lottery (or maybe your dad was Armenian or something) and you can grow thick and even facial hair? Congratulations, you testosterone-pumped beast, lots of people are envious (including myself). That doesn't give you a free pass. Feel free to experiment (hair grows, after all, so your terrible goatee won't be there forever), but keep in mind that the shape of your face is a big part of what looks good on you. If you're a bigger guy, your hair follicles will be further apart than say, Ryan Gosling's hair follicles, so you'll have to grow your facial hair a bit longer than his to get the same coverage. Besides, big dudes look great in a thicker beard.

And please, whether you're growing a beard on accident because your fourth final this week is coming up or because you think you're suave, trim about an inch off the bottom of your beard on your neck. Keeping that is just unacceptable.

Maybelline 24 Colour

by EMILY HOULSTON-JONES

Anyone who has a modicum of experience shopping for make-up knows how deceiving make-up advertising can be. Supposedly "long-lasting" make-up is no exception. It seems like every other product on the market is marketed as long-lasting, and very few products actually live up to the moniker.

However, every rule must have an exception. And in this case, the exception to the rule is Maybelline's Superstay 24 Colour. Available in a range of colours to suit any skin-tone or taste, this lipcolour can withstand even the drunkest of nights-out in Bangor. The two-part applicator allows easy application, with one end resembling a normal lip-gloss applicator, and the other end being a balm, used to lock in colour.

The colour itself is almost supernatural in its staying-power. After extensive testing, I can safely say that this lip colour can withstand pretty much anything. This colour has lasted through several cold sore bouts, a lot of cocktails, and many, many, hangers. It's also pretty to boot, my personal favourite being Absolute Plum (340.)

Be warned, this colour will usually

take some pretty heavy make-up remover. A flannel and water will not cut it here. But a couple of minutes scrubbing is well worth the long-lasting colour.

At only £8.99, this product is definitely worth the price. It works best in matte shades, with the glitter shades having slightly less staying power. Use sparingly and let the colour dry before applying the balm, and you'll have a lip colour which will be able to withstand everything from a three-course Sunday lunch to Bangor's rainy weather.



ARTS AND CULTURE



You might think a play about a couple lesbians who live in a small Welsh town and drink all day sounds completely mad – and you'd be right. *Low Tide in Glass Bay* is brilliant, boldly written, and absolutely barmy. The eccentric but lovable Karen Thomas (Missy Fitzalan Howard) and Bronnie Lewis (Eliot Salt) stumble from drama to disaster, carrying the audience with them through a whirlwind of hilarious calamities. Ironically they're also the most stable and rational individuals in the whole play.

If there was ever a play that de-

served a sequel, then it's definitely *Low Tide*. Watching the Bronnie and Karen saga play out on stage is somewhat addictive. As a pair, Salt and Fitzalan Howard have a solid on-stage rapport which comes across as relaxed and subtly flirtatious. The performances of other cast members are just as good, each playing partially on an existing stereotype but keeping their characterisation fresh and original.

There's a great strength to the story as a whole, and the main narrative and side plots have been written to intertwine with ease. If

there's a certain serious tenderness to Robwyn Jones' (Robyn Wilson) blossoming teenage romance with George Hope (Hector Dyer), this is perfectly counterbalanced by the ludicrous and passionate love affair that evolves between Lynette Hope (Bryher Flanders) and Owain Griffin (Finbar Fitzgerald). Equally, the slightly insulting yet wholly playful bickering that takes place between Bronnie and Karen helps keep the whole performance light and down-to-earth.

The play might be a comedy of family chaos, but it's also a story of

love, friendship and, overall, fun. Bronnie and Karen believe themselves pretty unsuited to being parents and in some ways are, having decided not to get a cat because it's too much commitment and they might kill it. Being landed with their niece after her mother 'Bitch Suze' (who is never seen but is regularly slagged off) dies on holiday, both they and the audience wonder how they will cope. Their clueless attempts at parenting and offering advice are tragic but heart-warming, and even when little Robwyn's aunts are feeding her copious amounts of

alcohol you can't help but put your faith in them and know it's all done out of love.

All the extra things, the little bits of attention to detail, are what push the whole performance over the edge from being very funny to being down-right hilarious. From the note on the fridge saying 'Fuck off Owain' (a reference to their neighbour's penchant for stealing their yoghurt), to costume quirks such as Kerry Hope's (Katie Wells) fabulous bunchies, everything visual had been purposefully placed to add to the comedy.



17-year-old finds the key to success

by KIRSTY WARREN-JONES

A 17-year-old pianist from Essex has won the BBC Young Musician 2014 describes as "the highlight of his life".

Martin James Bartlett performed Rachmaninov's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini in the final at the Usher Hall, Edinburgh.

Martin won at the second attempt

after entering two years ago.

The other finalists were percussionist Elliott Gaston-Ross, 15, and recorder-player Sophie Westbrooke, 15.

Martin, from Hornchurch, said he could not believe he had won.

"It was a real shock as I've watched the competition for so many years and I was in it two years ago. It feels amazing," he said.

"My mum always had it on the TV when I was growing up so it's something I've thought about for quite some time. I did it two years ago and learnt so much from the experience so I thought I'd come back and try again."

Martin began learning the piano at the age of six and has studied at the Royal College of Music junior department with Emily Jeffrey since

the age of eight.

He has been learning at the Purcell School in Hertfordshire after becoming a student there in 2010.

They were judged by a panel of world-renowned musicians; composer James MacMillan, conductor Alice Farnham, pianist Alice Sara Ott, percussionist Colin Currie and recorder-player Michala Petri.

For the first time, an ambassadorial

role was awarded to violinist Nicola Benedetti on the 10th anniversary of her win.

Benedetti said: "Martin lives and breathes music. He is a powerful and natural musician and his love for music is serious enough to carry him through the challenges ahead."

What's going on in Bangor?



End of year music concert

THE Music at Bangor season draws to its traditional close on 6th June with a programme of popular classics from the University's Music Society, Brass Band, Concert Band, Chamber Choir, and Symphony Orchestra, including a performance of Lowell Lieberman's

Flute Concerto with soloist Josephine Wilkin, and best of all a free glass of Cava for all! £12 / £9 concessions / £3 student, Tickets available on the door only. Doors open at 7.30pm.



Dawns Yr Haf/ Summer Ball

THIS month, of course the end of year summer ball is also happening. Tickets are pretty much sold out, but anyone who has already put a deposit down or paid for their ticket have a lot to look forward to. What hopes to be a beautiful night in the Bangor calendar, there are exclusive

performances from Katy B and Charli XCX! Keep tabs on the Seren Facebook Page and website for coverage! See page 33 for more details.

Dracula rises once again!



by PORTIA HELENA DODDS

BEDS has once again delivered another fangtastic (excuse the pun) show in the form of an adaptation of Bram Stoker's "Dracula". This particular performance may not be as bloody as the Sky adaption, but it was bloody brilliant nonetheless. From Samuel Ball playing the charming Count of Darkness, Sam Davies playing the wonderfully crazy Renfield to the horrifying undead wives, the entire cast made the Victorian sensation exciting and intriguing to watch. The directors, Chib Alexander, Maeve Elmore and Natasha Raso worked with all the red lighting they could find and made the audience shiver with fear by having their scary monster, Raphael French, lurk around the auditorium. Although he is the title name of the play, Dracula in my opinion was not the focus of the performance. Yes, he was the mysterious and the cause of the terrible things happening to the women and the children mentioned, but it was

Van Helsing, played by George Gladwin, and his friend, Jack Steward, played by Andrew Hull, who really took charge of the action. They were both powerful and bold and the acting of both men was professional and in some cases touching. They were, however, seemingly no match for the seductive and impressive count himself. He was able to capture the minds and souls of his female victims, Mina Harker, Sarah Griffiths, and Margaret Sullivan, Sarah Homerstone, as well as almost taking the innocent Lucy, Lydia Walker, nearly sucking the life from them all, including Jonathon Harker, Jonny Stuart, with his vampire powers. Although many jokes could be made about the entire cast really having a good stab at a classic adaptation, it must be said that they really pulled out all the stakes. The use of stage fights was somewhat comical but only added to the great adventure that the characters had and left the audience thirsty for more. Or at least, thirsty enough to read the book the play was adapted from!



Directors: Nastasha Raso, Chib Alexander and Maeve Elmore



Christmas come early, for Gamers at least?

by LEWIS JENKINS

The closest thing the gaming scene has to Christmas is right around the corner. The Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) is taking place from the 10th to the 12th of June in Los Angeles and millions will be watching online as the biggest names in video game development gather to show off their upcoming games.

Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo are obviously the ones to watch out for,

as the latter two attempt to catch up to the formidable lead Sony has taken since the start of the shift to the current generation of consoles last November. After a couple of tepid releases, the thing that will really shift the balance will be the upcoming exclusives on each platform. An iconic game that will move consoles is really what everyone is looking for at the moment.

Firstly, Sony will look to preserve its lead in the market with an update on the games it showed last year as they approach imminent release. The racing game DriveClub is expected to be present along with gameplay from the Victorian steam-

punk shooter The Order: 1886. It is also rumoured that there will be new entries in the Uncharted and God of War series which, along with the imminent release of the massively hyped Watch Dogs, should ensure that Sony remains a strong competitor in the field.

Microsoft will be playing catch up after a disastrous presentation last year. To succeed this time, they'll need to focus much more on games for the system, which is why they'll be showing off sequels to some of their classic exclusives. The recently announced Halo 5 will be there, along with Fable Legends and Forza Horizon 2. On top of this there are

rumours of a Gears of War 4 which, combined with the new Call Of Duty game, would complete the trio of shooters that made the Xbox 360 so popular. They'll be looking to fill the dry spell until then with the wild-card third person shooters of Sunset Overdrive and Quantum Break.

This E3 is really make or break for Nintendo after dismal sales of the WiiU despite having a year's headstart on the competition. The "console-selling game" is even more important for them. Luckily, they have a few titles that may fill that role. Mario Kart 8 is launching just before E3, Super Smash Bros WiiU will be prominent, including a tournament

at E3 itself, Bayonetta 2 will put a more mature-orientated game on the console and rumours of a new Legend of Zelda title and a Pokemon Fighting game will certainly draw interest to the system. If Nintendo pull it out of the bag this year, there's no reason why they wouldn't be able to make a U-turn in the market.

Essentially, it's all still to play for in the console war. Let's not forget about the multiplatform titles appearing however. Look out for Dragon Age: Inquisition, Batman: Arkham Knight, Destiny, Assassins Creed: Unity, Far Cry 4 and as always, if you're incredibly optimistic, Half Life 3.



Main: Broken Age (2014)
Inset: LucasArt's The Secret of Monkey Island (1990)

The Point and Click Comeback

by ADAM WILLIAMS

During the nineties, LucasArts was a pioneer of the point and click adventure game, bringing us now classic titles like the Monkey Island series and Day of the Tentacle. These games have a special place in my heart, and looking back it's not hard to see why. These games were original, completely engaging, and most of all, they were funny. Looking back, when was the last time you played a game as unique as the dystopian motorbike adventure Full Throttle? Or as charming as the Mexican folk-lore inspired Grim Fandango?

go? All these games hold something that is sorely missed among the big budget AAA games of today; a focus on complete originality. Sadly, the point and click adventure's are painfully absent from recent game publishers' calendars, and many would say that the genre is well and truly dead. But is it really?

The beginning of this year saw the release of the first act of Broken Age, an entirely crowd funded point and click adventure game from Double Fine with a second act and an iOS release currently on its way. In its tongue-in-cheek Kickstarter video, adventure game spearhead Tim Schafer states "if I was to go to a pub-

lisher and pitch an adventure game, they'd laugh in my face". However, with Broken Age raising over four times its estimated budget entirely from public donations, it's obvious that there is a huge want among consumers for a return to this once mighty genre. And happily, the end result is a triumph. Not entirely perfect; the puzzles are a little on the straightforward side, and it suffers from patchy moments in its dual story, but Broken Age is packed with charm, humour and originality, reminiscent of those classic point and click titles that dominated sales in the nineties.

The past few years have seen a

number of successful adventure titles that further prove that the genre is still alive and kicking, most notably being Telltale Games' The Walking Dead series. Instead of taking the oversaturated first person shooter approach to the zombie apocalypse trope (see the pointless The Walking Dead: Survival Instinct) Telltale injects new life into an almost stagnant theme through a focus on narrative and character development, a feat that is hugely entrenched in its adventure game roots. Worthwhile indie titles such as the robotic love tale Machinarium and the eerily atmospheric Kentucky Route Zero also continue to display how valuable the

genre truly is.

For a lot of people, the point and click genre begins and ends with poorly made room escape flash games, and blame can be partly put on publisher's neglect of this now almost rare category. However, this recent resurgence in adventure games has shown that consumers not only enjoy, but demand these games, and are willing to fork out the money to play them. We may be past the golden age of LucasArts adventure games, but hopefully projects like Broken Age will help bring the genre to a new generation.

Survive the summer gaming drought

EVERY Gamer knows that Summer is hardly something to get all that excited about. Sure there's the promise of hot weather, a break from your studies and for the football fanatics among us this year even brings us the World Cup - however, little to no new games are about to land in our consoles.

Perhaps it's a government conspiracy to get us out of our darkened rooms, away from our tvs and out into the world.

Whatever it is here at Seren we've built up a list of the best games from the last year that you can now get your hands on at a decent price, or replay if you already have them, as well as a few of the most recent to grace the shelves of GAME and our pick of the best summer releases yet to come.

Beyond: Two Souls

PS3 Exclusive. Pick it up on Amazon for just £15.35



RELEASED in late 2013, Quantic Dream's return to the cinematic, psychological thriller has been racking up accolades. It stars Hollywood's Ellen Page and Willem Dafoe in the lead roles, in an attempt to take cinematic gaming to a whole new level - something it masterfully achieves.

Beyond Two Souls is a game meant for those among us who love a game with a great narrative because at times the gameplay fails to be completely convincing and there's little freedom to do much other than follow the story.

Like Heavy Rain before it though, Beyond pushes the boundaries between game and movie and is nothing short of addictive.

Without going into much of the plot, it centres on Jodie, a young girl with psychic powers and Aiden a mysterious and unseen entity.

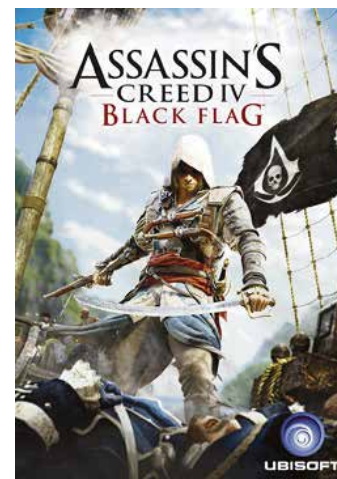
Beyond may not be the best game you'll ever play but if you've a penchant for a good story and want to see the PS3's graphics at it's best then it's definitely worth your time.

The Summer Catchup

It's been a pretty decent year for the gaming industry. With summer round the corner and the end of exams in sight why not catch up on some of the best?



£38



£20

Grand Theft Auto 5

PS3 & Xbox 360. Pick it up at Amazon or Game for just £29.99



PERHAPS the most anticipated game of the last few years, Rockstar's GTA V did not disappoint.

It seems unlikely that there's a gamer yet to get this in their collection and for good reason. GTA V gives you exactly what you want from the franchise; cars, guns, money, ridiculous characters with a side of a decent storyline and the biggest open world map that gaming has ever seen!

And to shake things up a little Rockstar decided to include not one ridiculous criminal protagonist but three!

Whether you're a hardcore GTA fan who will endeavour to not only complete the game's story but gain 100% or more of a casual criminal who just wants to have a drive around Los Santos, GTA V is definitely a game that needs to be on your shelf!



£15



£18

Summer Picks

There's little to shout about in gaming over the summer, but if you're going to spend your cash on any we recommend these...



Release Date: 27th May 2014
PS4, Xbox One, PS3, Xbox 360, Windows & Wii U

THE hotly anticipated open-world action adventure Watch Dogs is almost upon us. The game, set in Chicago Illinois, has sparked quite the following online since its official announcement during Ubisoft's E3 2012 panel. It was originally scheduled for a November 2013 release date but was pushed back for 'further polishing'. Watch Dogs' open world environment and entire premise seem to mirror the developer's successful Assassin's Creed franchise; something that can't entirely be a bad thing.

Players will control vigilante, Aidan Pearce, a highly skilled hacker. Judging by the amount of time spent on getting the game ready for release and the attention to detail the developers have undergone (they worked closely with Russian anti-virus company Kaspersky to ensure the hacking with the game was realistic), Watch Dogs is going to be...well, one to watch!



Release Date: 20th June 2014
PS4 (PS3 version also available)

IT'S pretty difficult to choose the best new games during a season where very little new games are released. That being said, it's just made it a lot easier to highlight The Last of Us: Remastered as one of the games to add to your collection this summer. Remastered sees Naughty Dog's 2013 action-horror third person survival masterpiece make its way to the Playstation 4, enhancing its already beautiful graphics.

The game follows survivor Joel as he attempts to escort 14 year old Ellie across post-apocalyptic America which has been infected by Cordyceps fungus. The game, which has won over 200 game of the year awards, combines hand to hand combat, guns, melee weapons and stealth techniques with Joel and Ellie coming up against a number of enemies, from the fungal-zombie clickers to other survivors. Like every-

thing that Naughty Dog creates it is pure genius, with an amazingly written, heartwarming and thought-provoking story to fluid gameplay and stunning graphics. If you have a PS3 you better already have this in your collection, and if you own a PS4 make sure you pick up your copy when it's released in June!

CREAM OF BANGOR

A pudding a day keeps the exam blues away



Photos by Victoria Allen

by HARRIET WELLER

If you fancy a break from revision or want something to satisfy that sweet tooth in the summer sun then head on down to the newest edition to Bangor's high street, Cream of Bangor. Having opened up just three weeks ago, Cream of Bangor has an impressive array of tantalising treats with something to suit everyone from crepes, to waffles, to ice creams, to even the weird and the wonderful, like Indian sweets. With all that on offer, Seren could not resist a visit and is here to welcome you to Bangor's one and only dessert parlour, with an exclusive interview (accompanied by a mammoth ice cream sundae of course, all in the name of journalism).

We chatted to joint owner and business entrepreneur, Ali, who gave us the lowdown on Cream of Bangor and some great tips for any budding entrepreneurs.

So to all those who haven't had the delight of visiting yet, tell us, what does Cream of Bangor have on offer?

Well as you can see our menu is pretty extensive as we are trying everything out. We have crepes, waffles, ice cream milkshakes, chocolate bar milkshakes, ice cream sundaes, sandwiches, cakes, some traditional

puddings and some Indian sweets for people to try.

So tell us what brought you to Bangor?

I live just down the road in Llanelli, and I already own 5 Indian takeaways and restaurants but wanted to start a new venture along with my business partner Jamal and we thought Bangor was missing a place like this. Being in business is all about building connections, and that's how we acquired this place as we knew the landlord and thought it was a great space to create a dessert parlour in.

Wow, so business number 6! But not quite an Indian takeaway, where did the idea for a dessert parlour come from?

Due to my very sweet tooth I wanted to expand to something a little bit different. We often visit Bradford due to past connections and saw that dessert parlours were popping up everywhere and people were loving them, so we thought why not, let's give it a go and here we are!

Where did the inspiration for the name come from?

There are so many names out there but we came across one that we loved in London called 'Cream' and

wanted to make it unique to Bangor so ended up settling on Cream of Bangor.

How has the response to all these puddings been so far?

Great, especially because of the sunshine and the biggest surprise has been the response to our Indian sweets, they sold out in the first week and as that is our unique selling point, we were really happy. We also have already had regular customers building up who are bringing their friends so we are feeling positive.

Who are you trying to reach here in Bangor?

Students are our main focus, which is why we do a 15% discount (great!), but everyone really from students, to tourists, to locals, everyone loves puddings!

Discounts sound great but are you planning on doing any exciting events to promote your new business?

We are hoping to host a grand opening in a few weeks where we will have lots of free tasters and entertainment as we showcase everything we have on offer so watch this space.

We look forward to it! Where do all these delectable desserts come from?

All our ice creams and desserts come from down the road in Harlech, coming from Welsh producers was a really important factor for us and their ice cream is award winning but our Indian delicacies come from a speciality baker in Manchester.

The ice cream definitely lives up to its award status. (said happily after demolishing the ice cream sundae!) Are you hoping to go one step further and make anything homemade at all?

We definitely have ambitions to go homemade, especially with the cakes and Indian sweets but we wanted to see what the customer demand was first. We do make sandwiches on site here every morning though and everything is freshly assembled right before the customer's eyes.

You have a lot to offer already but do you plan to expand at all?

We are dreaming big as we hope to open branches across North Wales, starting in Llandudno and then heading to Chester but Cream of Bangor will always be our central branch. We also want to be more than a café and are happy to cater

for events from birthday parties to student events; our aim is to have Cream of Bangor on everyone's lips.

Finally for all those who want to come and try out Cream of Bangor for themselves, what do you recommend?

The strawberry and chocolate crepes are my favourite but if you want something a little different I recommend one of our Indian delights, Rashmali, it's very sweet and melts in the mouth. Kinder Bueno milkshakes are what my staff always go for though.

So why not take a break from those exams, and join the Cream of Bangor craze. We are sure you won't be left disappointed and ice cream is definitely good for those brain cells. Before you jump out of your seat though, we have even more great news as the generous people of Cream of Bangor are offering you a free regular Waffle or Crepe with every copy of Seren until the end of May!

Enjoy and for more info and the latest dessert news head to Cream of Bangor's facebook page.



1 FREE CRÊPE
or
1 FREE WAFFLE

[applies only to regular]



Expires 16 - 06 - 14

DYLAN'S: THE BEST PLAICE AROUND FOR SEAFOOD



by KAYLEIGH REID

From the beautiful location with an abundance of seafood and the stylish setting it's hard to believe that Dylan's will only have been open for two years in June. Now firmly embedded in the heart of the local community, this refined restaurant is sure to leave anyone who visits hooked.

Dylan's is a restaurant doing more than simply offering great food and experience, it's a restaurant striving to bring a community together and put it firmly on the map.

Dylan's First Steps

From the clever flavour combinations right down to the innovative presentation, you would never guess that Dylan's was the first venture of co-owners David and Robyn into catering. They have proved that all it takes is one big idea and bucket-loads of passion and anything is possible.

David and Robyn were frequent visitors to Anglesey and saw a gap in the market for something truly special. They envisioned family restaurant where customers can expect a "relaxed, informal atmosphere whilst enjoying the highest quality of food and service."

They first imagined this to be a pizzeria in the scenic town of Menai Bridge, however, the beautiful scenery soon served as inspiration. The Menai Straits offers a wealth of seafood, with a staggering 90% being exported across Europe, it seemed a travesty to ignore, so the idea for Dylan's to specialize in pizza and seafood was born.

Dylan's is now a name recommended by locals, students and tourists alike, receiving overwhelming positive feedback as they look to appeal to everyone. Not surprising due to their mouth watering menu which changes twice a year to infuse the flavours different each season offers.

Sourced Strait from the Menai

From humble beginnings, Dylan's started as an old boat yard building which has now been extended on to the river bed to become a unique restaurant that aims to work with the community by sourcing all their food locally and preparing fresh on site.

Seafood such as their famous Menai mussels, lobster and Anglesey sea bass are all sourced from the Menai and around Anglesey, everything else from breads to chutney is freshly made on site.

Dylan's doesn't shy away from big portions either, their "Ferryman's Platter" starter for two generously comprises of smoked trout, prawns, fresh shelled Menai mussels, and smoked salmon. If this wasn't enough, Dylan's adds two dips; a wonderfully smooth smoked mackerel pâté, horseradish and tarragon mayonnaise complete with a lush crispy salad and soft freshly baked focaccia bread, sourdough and cornichons.

Dylan's offer a variety of pizzas baked to order, from the classic "Margherita" to the innovative "Aphrodite Pizza" which combines roasted fig, cured ham, goats cheese, tomato and mozzarella with rocket leaves and honey. But let's not forget the locally inspired "Welsh Rarebit Pizza" with perl las blue cheese, Pant Ysgawn goats cheese, taleggio, tomato and mozzarella.

Or perhaps you find yourself in a flounder where you fancy a pizza, but don't want to miss out on the seafood? Well Dylan's thoughtfully caters to this dilemma by adding "Swel-lies & Skerries Pizza" with prawn, mussel, smoked mackerel, tomato & mozzarella, or "The Menai Strait Pizza" combining local lobster, scallops, chilli, basil, tomato & mozzarella.

Dylan's also offers a variety of vegetarian options as well as other main dishes including the ingeniously presented "Burger Boxes" which holds all you could ever wish for to create a

gourmet burger feast.

A range of sides, starters (now including sushi!), and tempting desserts are also available as well as an extensive drinks list which is probably longer than the food menu!

Dylan's prides itself on its diversity and the ability to welcome anyone. The scenic decking allows customers to dine outside and even offers a basket of blankets for when the sea breeze gets a little chilly.

Indoor seating is available across two floors, however upstairs has a capacity of 90 and can be hired out as a private room for special events.



So whether you want to relax with coffee and homemade cake whilst looking out on to the sparkling Menai Straits or an evening celebration to remember, Dylan's has it all.

They Really Push the Boat Out

If anyone has attended local food events in the area they will be familiar with Dylan's pride and joy, Ronnie. The little blue French van which judders up to events such as food festivals and farmers' markets allowing people to buy their freshly baked goods.

Dylan's itself offers something for everyone from movie and pizza nights, where the upstairs is changed into a cosy cinema, to Welsh music events.

An exciting development for 2014, is the selling of Dylan's products such as their sauces and chutneys, allow-

ing you to recreate a little of Dylan's magic at home. This project was a huge success when it was trialled in December, the cute packaging and great taste served as great Christmas presents and inspired Dylan's to make a New Year's resolution to keep the project going all year round.

Seafood Festival: we'll sea you there!

As well as sourcing their food locally, Dylan's aims to work with the community and by collaborating with other local businesses. This unique business mantra captures Dylan's ambitions to encourage other businesses to help put Menai Bridge on the map.

This year Dylan's is hoping to build on the phenomenal success of last year's Seafood Festival which will take place 29th - 31st August this year. The 2013 festival saw 50 local businesses working together to create a Seafood Wonderland in Menai Bridge and was a huge hit with the local community attracting a crowd of 10,000.

A year in the making, the seafood festival, which now is hopefully to become an annual event, sees businesses, Anglesey Sea Zoo, local people and Bangor University come together to create a fantastic event.

The free festival kicks off with a procession through Menai Bridge which invites children to workshops to create jellyfish lanterns. Later in the event, festival-goers can expect arts and crafts galleries for the children as well as educational presentations on sustainability and exhibitions on sea creatures made by marine biologists from the School of Ocean Sciences.

There is also a cooking master class on Sunday evening, and live music including international harpist Catrin Finch on the Friday night.

DRINK OF THE MONTH

Yes, summer hasn't quite had the sun you expected so far, but at least you've finished exams! Time to celebrate with a delicious cocktail that will take your mind off your internally predicted grade.

The Old Fashioned

Ingredients

- Sugar cubes
- Angustora Bitters
- Rye whiskey
- Cherries
- Oranges
- Ice

1. Place one sugar cube into the cocktail mixer
2. Throw in two 'dashes' of Angustora bitters. You needn't worry how much specifically, play around with it.
3. Put in one cherry and half a slice of orange
4. Mash, muddle the ingredients
5. Put in two measures of rye whiskey
6. Pour in ice cubes
7. Stir, pour into glass (tumbler preferred)
8. Peel a small strip of orange zest, twist it tightly to release juices, then rub the juices around the glass lip, before placing it inside the drink.

Some real old-fashioned nerds say no cherry or orange, but it's really just a matter of opinion and taste.

Seren Down Under - Goodbye

by JOE KEEP

Well, this will be the last Seren Abroad, at least from me as my time in Australia is set to draw to a close. My plane journey home is booked and beckoning, yet I don't want to walk down that corridor and say bye to this year.

The memories that have been created, the friends that have been made and the experience itself have all been fantastic, and make me wonder if coming back will be able to make up the things I have to leave behind.

However, this feeling can be no

different to feelings of people leaving university for their home towns over the summer, leaving behind what has become home and heading somewhere that seems a distant memory to most.

I am looking forward to the little things though, knowing family are around the corner,

our first year.

It is this grounding I feel I need. After spending such a long time away, I need an injection of normality to tell me what I've done was real. The experience is one that no one should pass up though, it defines you as a person and proves, if not to everyone else, but yourself, just what you

member them? This train of thought is one that has stuck with me over the past few weeks, as I wonder what coming home will actually be like. All of these questions trouble us in times of change though, as we know time has changed us.

One thing is for certain though: we cannot go back to how we were. If

tion and make the most of it.

So, this is just a chapter in my life story, one I can look back to and remember fondly whilst also saying: "I did that." Despite it coming to a close, I can only approach the next one with the same vigour, intensity and optimism I approached this one with and I can only hope everyone has the same approach as me.

Joe will be back in the UK and writing for Seren Bangor again in September 2014.

“This experience defines you as a person and proves just what you are capable of...”

compared to 30 hours away and being able to talk to friends that haven't been seen in a whole year. These are also the reasons we go back home during university, for a semblance of realism and grounding, especially in

are capable of.

However, questions of what can we expect are at the forefront of our minds. Is everything the same? If not, what has changed? Are the people we once called friends still like we re-

we did that, we would never make progress or develop to our potential. This, combined with fears of change, is what makes us question if what we are doing is right. The best course of action: just go headlong into a situa-



Top 5 Destinations - Summer 2014



BRAZIL

AS the largest country in South America, Brazil is diverse. Whether you are exploring one of its many cultural cities, walking amongst its famous dune beaches or taking a dip in one of lagoons along your way, Brazil has something for everyone to enjoy. This summer it hosts the FIFA 2014 World Cup followed by the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

Top Places to Visit:

Iguazu Falls, Paraná, on the Brazil-Argentina border.

Sancho Bay, in Fernando de Noronha Archipelago, elected the most beautiful beach in the world.



SCOTLAND

THIS summer Glasgow will be holding the 2014 Commonwealth Games. To coincide with this the city and Scotland itself has had a major development with new sports venues and transport links for accessibility. Many people are drawn by the culture of Scotland such as its historic castles, houses, and battlegrounds, ruins and museums, not to mention Haggis and whiskey.

Top Places to Visit:

Loch Ness to search the lakes for the famous monster.

Scale Ben Nevis, Britain's highest mountain.



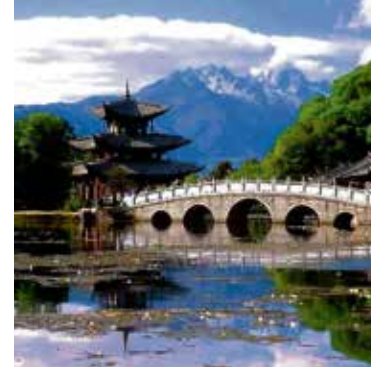
BELGIUM

A largely unrated country amongst the gems of Europe, Belgium has some of the worlds best and most favoured foods such as a beer, chocolate and chips. Its picturesque cities of Bruges, Antwerp, Ghent and Brussels offer a cultural and idyllic experience. Yet somehow the words 'Belgium' and 'holiday' do not seem to meet. 2014 marks the 100th anniversary of WWI which may change many preconceptions.

Top Places to Visit:

A brewer to taste some of the world best beer.

The trenches in Ypres.



MALAYSIA

COMPETITIVE fares offered by Malaysia Airlines, AirAsia, Firefly and new operator Malindo Air make getting around this widely spread-out country a cinch boosting its tourism in the past few years. With its bustling capital of Kuala Lumpur breaking new grounds in business, Malaysia also offers some of the worlds best beaches and islands as well as National Parks and Reserves.

Top Places to Visit:

The Petronas Twin Towers, Kuala Lumpur

A guided tour of Sabah through cycle tourism.



SEYCHELLES

TOURISTS enjoy the Seychelles' coral beaches and opportunities for water sports. Visiting wildlife in the archipelago is also a major attraction for most. Whilst it can be described as paradise on earth, the Seychelles are not just there for those looking to relax. Hiking, diving, snorkelling, boat tours and other adventure options are all readily available with the promise of hot weather and beautiful scenery.

Top Places to Visit:

Morne Seychellois National Park
The glorious bays and idyllic beaches of Maye.

The Worst Place to Fall...

A piece of original travel writing

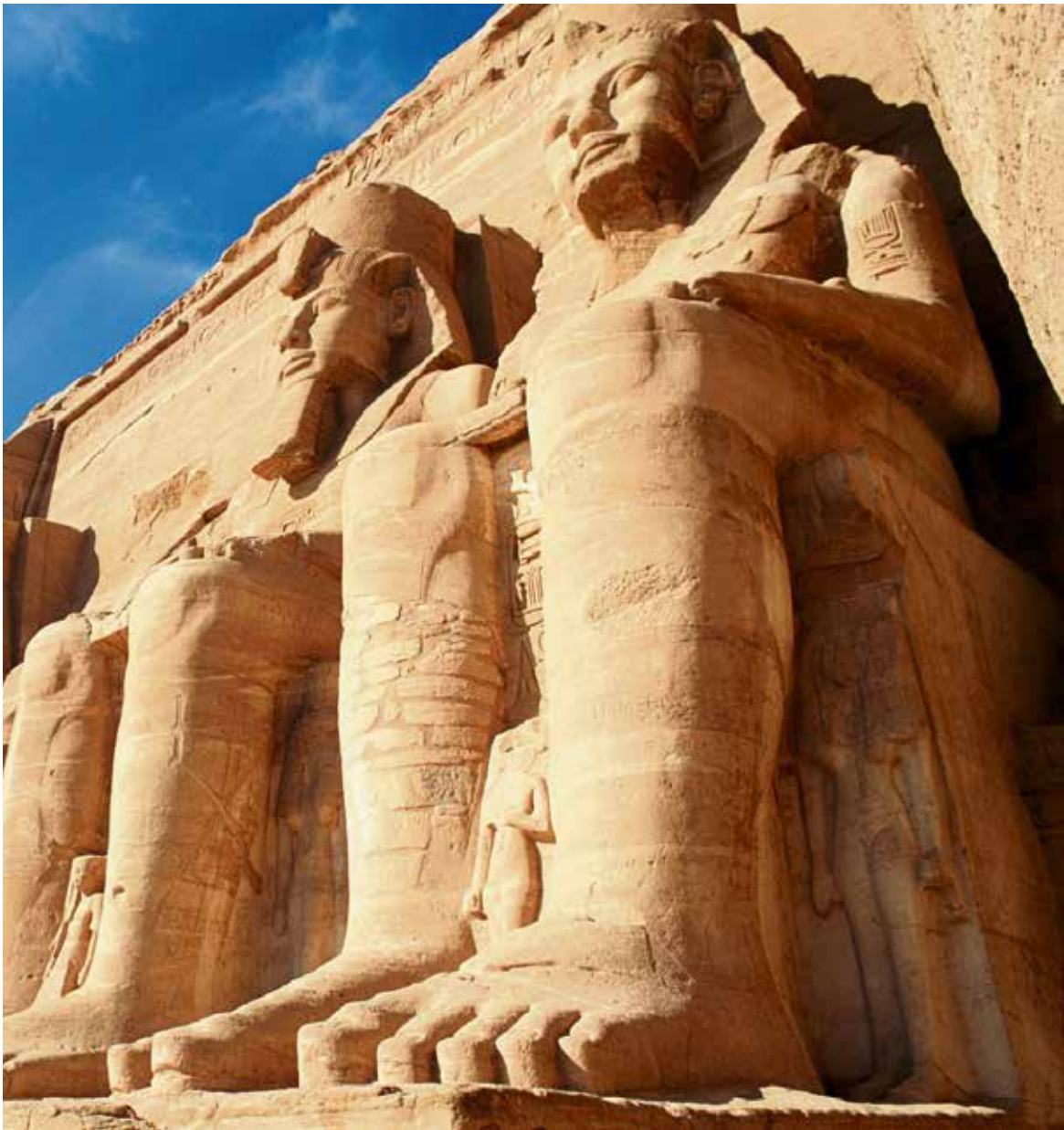
by STEPHANIE YEABSLEY

A man swings a bucket overflowing with ice through the muggy air and scorching heat. "7 up... Coca Cola!", I watch the beads of sweat roll down his face and notice his rolled up jeans and billowing shirt. Compared to my shorts and vest top he seems overdressed. So why do I feel like I'm melting? My eyes are drawn to the drinks in the bucket. Oh I wish. I can feel the freezing liquid falling down my throat, refreshing my body with a cool wash. This is the last thing I remember before everything goes black...

As a young teenager, a tour round The Valleys of the Kings on holiday in Egypt was not my idea of fun. After two hours of constant moaning to my parents that I would be fine back at the hotel by the pool, we arrived. Looking back now, I wish I had appreciated it a little more. Then however, all I remember was the blistering heat and sun-burnt shoulders of the thousands of unprepared tourists all here to see the ancient tombs.

We walked towards yet another tomb. They all looked the same to me. Pausing outside I look at the hieroglyphs for a split second, feigning interest, before I retreat and once more stare at the floor. Even my Hello Kitty sunglasses aren't blocking out the intense rays of the Egyptian sun. I catch every couple of words the tour guide says. "Tombs... History... Egypt... Ancient..." I'm sure from the concentrated looks on my parents' faces it's very interesting...

"Pay attention Steph!", my dad whispered. My eyes dart upwards. He is frowning at me. Does he not realise how hot it is? I feel tired. I cling on to the wall of the tomb for support. The walls are wet with the perspiration of thousands of tourists. I really need a drink. A man walks by in the near distance. A young girl about my age runs over and trades a few coins for one of the cool drinks he carries. I would do anything right now to be



that girl. I stare at him a while longer. He looks blurry... I feel tired... So, so, hot...

"Steph?!""Steph?!""Wake up Steph!" I open one eye, and then the next. The sun is too bright... and, where am I? I sit up. I'm on the floor? My eyes adjust to the bright sun, I see my sister waving something in the air. "I

Temple of Ramses II

JUST HAD TO FISH YOUR SUNGLASSES OUT OF THE BIN!", she shouts. What? What is she talking about? I look up. My dad is laughing. My mum looks terrified. I knew I should have stayed at the pool...

I rise shakily to my feet. I hear muttering and turn around to see a couple of Egyptian officials staring at me. Staring at the stupid English girl who faints and lands in a bin...

"So can we go and get a drink now?"



TOURISTS EVACUATE KENYA

THE foreign office has issued a 'high threat' of terrorism resulting in thousands of Brits being evacuated from Mombasa and areas of the Kenyan coast. Both Thomson and First Choice have cancelled all holidays and flights to Mombasa up until October as a precaution. The FCO has advised against non-essential travel to areas nearby the Kenyan-Somali border and Nairobi. Bombings in the Kenyan capital have killed at least ten people and wounded scores of others. It comes as a real shock to many Brits hoping to travel to this area to experience a African safari.

RYANAIR vs EASY JET

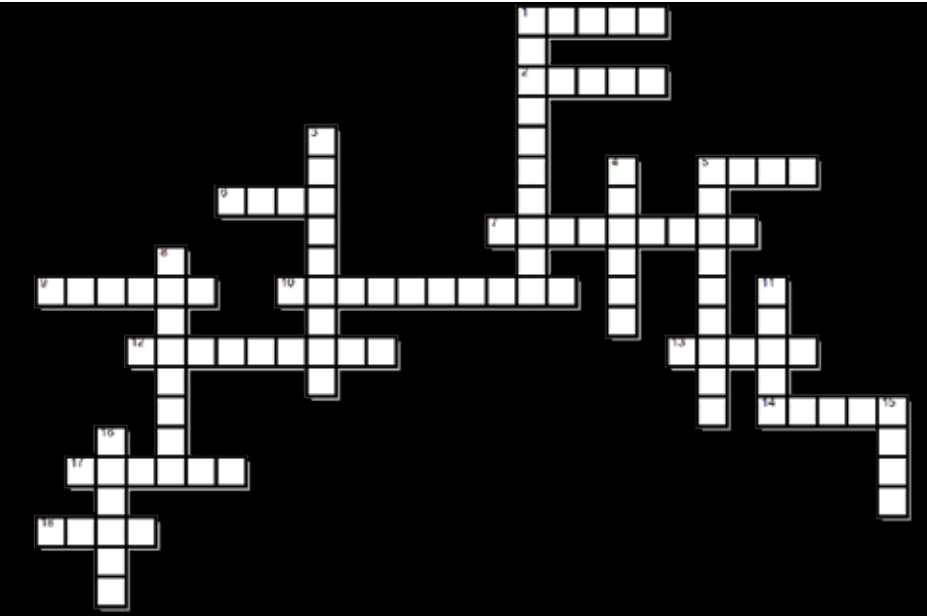
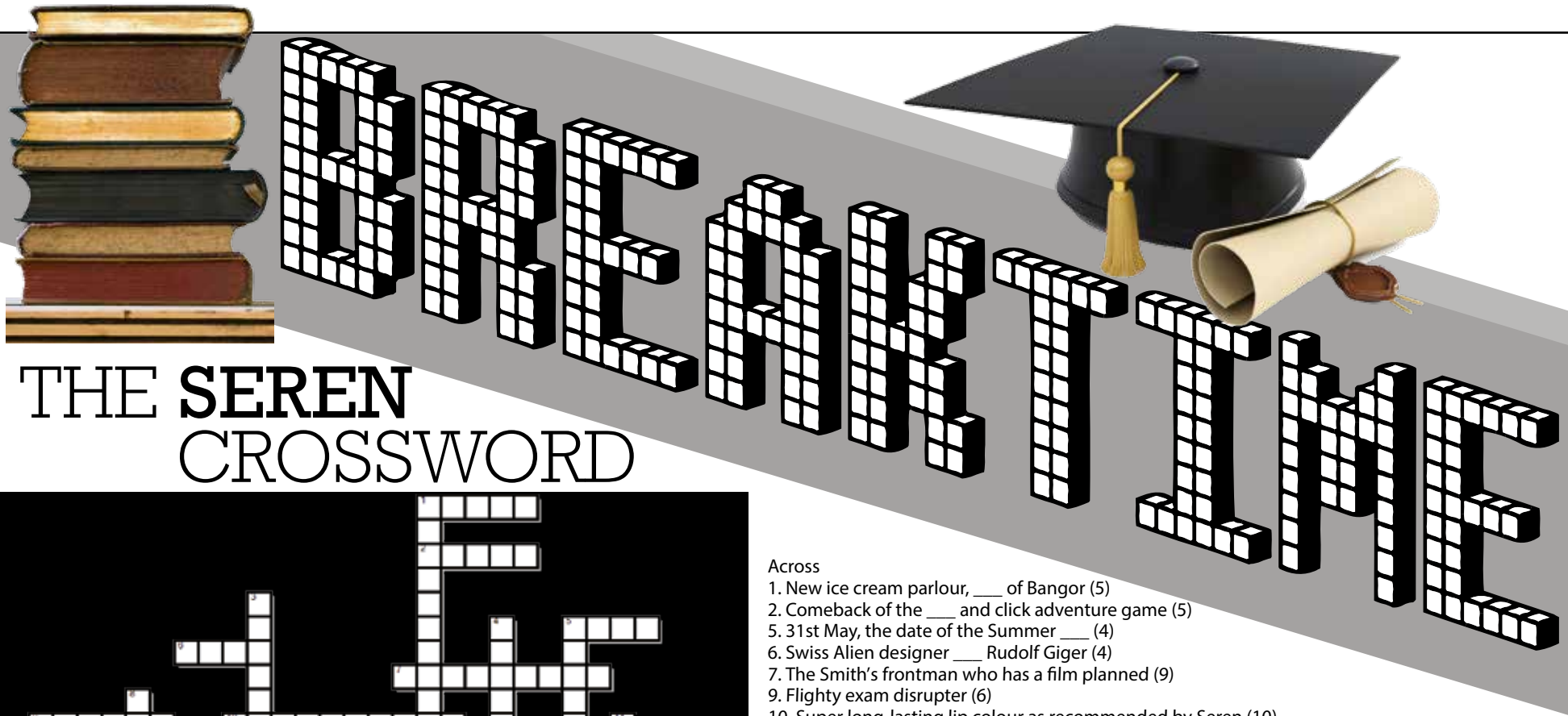
RYANAIR have vowed to rival easyJet in the battle to attract higher-spending business travellers. Deputy Chief Executive Howard Millar stated that "...we essentially both have the same product and fly to similar airports - largely around Europe." He believes that by targeting certain aspects such as allocated seating, business fares and a better webdesign they can "catch up very quickly" with the rival budget airline company. Next month see's the launch of a new family product for Ryanair which offers discounts for children on allocated seating fees and bags as well as family discounts for frequent fliers.

A NECESSARY ACCESSORY?

THE 'b-tourist' band aims to provide travellers with a private space in which to eat and sleep during a flight. Made of a piece of elastic stretched between two seats it gives passengers their own private area during a flight. The strip is said to be lightweight, easy to pack and assemble, and can fit several seat plane seats.



BUT is the so called clever design merely an inconvenience to other flyers? The 'b-tourist' band may potentially block other passengers own private spaces on the plane by ruining their view of the back-seat television screens. It could also be seen as a hazard by preventing passengers from moving to visit the toilet aswell as preventing them from leaving their seats in the event of an emergency. A current poll claims that 74% of frequent fliers "wouldn't be seen dead" with this accessory on their travels.



- Across
- 1. New ice cream parlour, ___ of Bangor (5)
 - 2. Comeback of the ___ and click adventure game (5)
 - 5. 31st May, the date of the Summer ___ (4)
 - 6. Swiss Alien designer ___ Rudolf Giger (4)
 - 7. The Smith's frontman who has a film planned (9)
 - 9. Flighty exam disrupter (6)
 - 10. Super long-lasting lip colour as recommended by Seren (10)
 - 12. First heavy metal band to headline Glastonbury (9)
 - 13. Acronym of recently ended American sitcom with Ted and Robin (5)
 - 14. Spy writer John le Carre's latest novel, A Delicate ___ (5)
 - 17. The reason we are all here, they come in 2:1s and 3rds mostly (6)
 - 18. Graduation month (4)
- Down
- 1. Graduation outfit (3)(3)(4)
 - 3. Serener Joe Keep returns from his study year in ___ (9)
 - 4. Duke University are studying the behaviour of ___ in the 70s (6)
 - 5. Name of this page (9)
 - 8. Harry Potter spin off Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them will be released in ___ 2016 (8)
 - 11. Unfortunate mishap for our Travel Editor as she travelled around the tombs in ___ (5)
 - 15. American sitcom that ending after twelve series, Two and a ___ Men (4)
 - 16. Planet that could be a twin to Earth, ___ 186f (6)

SUDOKU!
EASY

	3		8					
	9						5	8
7			5					
		8		7	4	1		
3			9		1			7
		2	6	3		5		
					5			1
8	6						3	
					3		2	

HARD

5	3			7				
6			1	9	5			
	9	8					6	
8				6				3
4			8		3			1
7				2				6
	6					2	8	
			4	1	9			5
				8			7	9

BEFORE



AFTER



Look at these 'identical' photos from the society awards- can you find the six differences?

FIFA WORLD CUP

Brasil







With the World Cup just around the corner things went a little World Cup crazy during the Seren all-nighters. As you can see we all dressed the part and may, or may not have formed the Seren Pigeons - our total-ly official, high ranking professional football team. We will be available to defeat your amateur team from next September.

Anyway, the World Cup is pretty exciting. Whether you like football or not there's a good chance you're going to get into it anyway. Plus with the time difference in Brazil the pubs are going to be opening extra late! It's going to be a good summer! We just hope you aren't supporting Eng-land, because that would be unfortunate...

To get you in the World Cup spirit we've put in some pretty interesting World Cup facts and figures, expertly sniffed out by our American Wyatt - we aren't too sure if he knows what football or the World Cup is!

We've also included a sweepstakes kit for you! Well, we say kit...it's just a list of countries that you can cut out - but we saved you the trouble of trying to work out if you've got all 32. That part did take us quite some time - journalists obviously aren't any good at maths!

Right, this is it from us until September now so enjoy your summer, enjoy your World Cup and COME ON ORANJE!!!

THE WORLD CUP IN NUMBERS



RUN YOUR OWN WORLD CUP SWEEPSTAKES

Cut out all of the countries, fold them in half and put into a hat (or other substitute item) to then be picked out in random.

Each person who participates will pick out one of the countries at random.

How many countries people are allowed to choose depends on how you want to play it and how many people are taking part.

For example, in the Seren sweepstakes we've allowed people to enter up to three times. Or you could only allow one per person and let the remaining countries become that of a 'pot'.

Once a World Cup winner is crowned the person who drew that country is the sweepstakes winner.

It is a good idea to write down who picks out which country since the World Cup winner won't be crowned until 13th June and you don't want people to have lost or forgotten what country they picked!

KOREA	FRANCE	GHANA	MEXICO
AUSTRALIA	COLOMBIA	ITALY	HONDURAS
PORTUGAL	ECUADOR	CROATIA	CHILE
ENGLAND	JAPAN	GREECE	SPAIN
BRAZIL	BELGIUM	ALGERIA	IRAN
ARGENTINA	GERMANY	CAMEROON	BOSNIA
SWITZERLAND	IVORY COAST	COSTA RICA	URUGUAY
HOLLAND	USA	NIGERIA	RUSSIA



Bangor City: Season in Review

by LJ TAYLOR

Despite a tough start to the season for a very young Bangor side, it this week ended in a success which saw Nev Powell's team lift the Play-off Trophy and make a welcomed return to European Football.

The Bangor manager was full of praise for his young players; "So if you look at it from that perspective our young lads; Joe Culshaw, Iolo Hughes, Jamie McDaid to name a few, have come in and done really well being thrown straight into it," he said.

It could not have been more perfect for The Citizens as they took on their fierce rivals, Rhyl, in front of a home crowd of over 1400 on one of the sunniest afternoons of the season.

"Playing Rhyl there's always that extra incentive, the fans love to beat Rhyl. And it really spurs you on, it's not just an important match but there's all that history and rivalry between the clubs," Bangor captain, Michael Johnston, told Seren.

"You can say we play Rhyl too many times but from my point of view, it's a local derby and it still adds something

important. The more we play them the more we know their strengths and their weaknesses, we're able to work out strategies. We've beat them three times in the last month or so and it's about getting that winning formula. There's a lot of psychology in football and I think we've really managed to get the edge," explained Powell.

Bangor went on to win the match 2-0 and their supporters rushed onto the pitch to join the celebrations at the final whistle.

"We always have a lot of support, even if we're on a bad run of form there's 300-400 there. The support is there for us so we just have to do our job and put the club back where it belongs; back in Europe," said Johnston.

Nev Powell was full of praise for the fans as well; "Bangor is the best supported side in the Welsh Premier League. They always go that extra yard and on the pitch you can really feel that buzz from them. They were great for us on Saturday"

"Even been stood on the touchline you can feel it and as an opposing player you must be stood there thinking 'what is this'. It's superb, they've been superb for us all season," he told Seren.

It was a tough start to the season which saw the team struggle to come away from matches with the important three points, but they have worked hard to gel as a team over the season and establish themselves amongst the top half of the Welsh Premier League.

It was a stunning 9-1 defeat to Welsh Premier League Champions, The New Saints, towards the end of the season which saw The Citizens miss out on third place to Carmarthen due to goal difference. However, the Blue and White Army picked themselves up, and wins against Newton and Rhyl FC saw them return to European Football.

"Getting to the playoffs has been a real plus and our form going into it was great. After the TNS defeat we haven't conceded a goal, hopefully we can manage not to concede in Europe," said Johnston.

"At the start of the season, our aim was to finish in the top six. Anything above that was a plus so it's been great. Not being in Europe this year has really hit home for the experienced lads, you really notice the consequences and it was horrible not to be involved," he said.

Big things are to be expected of City next season, as they turned around a poor start and finished the season on form, playing exciting and attacking football. With a youthful first team and their Under 19's finishing second in their league it looks as though Bangor's youngsters still have a lot to offer.

"A lot of the younger lads have been a part of the first team, and those who haven't been on the bench have still come to train with us. It's really great for them to have that belief in themselves and know we're interested in the younger players - Nev definitely is, look at what he's done this year," said Bangor's captain.

For manager, Powell, Bangor's future could hold even greater things with his hopes of one day being able to be a 'full-time' club.

"We won the league as a part time club and when you see TNS, as a full time club, winning it and having it wrapped up by Christmas, you've really got to look at how we won it as a part time club. That wouldn't happen anywhere else. In the conference it's the part time clubs who are right at the bottom of the league. No one else will do that and that will live long with us," he said.

There's also a lot of great things going on off the pitch for Bangor, such as the development of the 3G training pitch which Bangor University's football teams will also benefit from. There are also plans to extend The Book People Stadium in Nantporth, in what has been a really successful first full season at the stadium. The club has managed to host a number of Wales Under 21 matches, as well as the Wales Women's World Cup qualifier against Montenegro earlier this month.

Thanks to a considerable investment from both Bangor University and the Football Association of Wales, the club looks to extend its main stand, construct a supporter's stand and create an education suite. The work on the ground will also mean that Bangor City will be able to play home games in their Europa League fixtures at Nantporth.

With this season all wrapped up successfully, Powell and his Blue and White Army are already looking towards the next.

"The lads are back in training in just a couple weeks and we just need to keep ticking over and try and progress even more," he said.

Dragons are Spirit of AU

by YAN TRINH

This year Bangor Dragons Cheerleading Squad have had their most successful year to date, managing to place in the top 3 squads at competitions an astonishing nine times. At both Regional and National level, Bangor Dragons have excelled. The highlight of the year was a first place trophy for the all-girl level 3 group stunt team that competed against not only university teams, but also well-known all-star teams from across the country. In April, the co-ed level 3 cheer squad also took second place at the annual National University Championships. These outstanding results and growing reputation could not have been achieved without the hard work and dedication of every team member. Although stressful at times, due to the changes a single in-

jury can make to the dynamic of the team and the squad's choreography, Bangor Dragons have enjoyed their success.

Training three times a week, the squad have also given their time to participate in many university events. The Dragons have supported the Men's Basketball team at all of their home games, giving demonstrations and creating an exciting, motivating atmosphere. They also travelled to Aberystwyth to attend Varsity this year for the first time, to support all of the Athletic Union's Clubs. The squad were delighted to be asked to perform at the successful Bangor Sport Relief Mile in March, which allowed them to showcase their talents to students and public alike. As well as pleasing the large crowds, a number of squad members got involved in the run itself and raised hundreds of pounds for charity. Other fundraising events

and participation within the Athletic Union, resulted in the awarding of the Steve Connor Spirit of The Athletic Union Award to the Bangor Dragons Cheerleading Squad at the Athletic Union Dinner. A number of the squad, achieved half and full-colours for their commitment and performance throughout the year.

Despite the majority of the squad having no previous cheerleading experience, all have excelled, both individually and as part of the team. Many have grown to love the sport and see the squad as their second family.

On a more personal note, I would like to say well done to everyone who made Bangor Dragons what they have been this year and a huge good luck to the new committee and next year's squads!





Season of Progress for Hockey Ladies

By FIONA HAILSTONE

The 2013/14 season for Bangor University Hockey Club Ladies has been extremely positive. The cohesion between the both the first and second team squads has been fantastic. The support for both teams games has been incredible and the regular movement of players between squads has meant that everyone has had to compete for places, helping to both improve performance and development.

On the pitch this year the Club has enjoyed many successes, as the Ladies second team went very close to promotion in both their BUCS and Saturday League divisions. The Ladies first team were the only Bangor hockey side left in the quarter-final stages of the BUCS Cup and also progressed to the quarter-finals of the Saturday League cup, narrowly losing 1-0 to a penalty corner goal. The first team also travelled to Cardiff to compete in a national competition in the second round of the Welsh Cup, where they played against a very strong Cardiff Metropolitan University team.

Most recently the Club competed in Varsity against Aberystwyth University, fielding two teams. An excellent day was enjoyed by all, with the Ladies first and second teams both winning tough games, 2-0 and 3-1 respectively.

The Club's reputation has improved immensely this year within the North Wales Women's Hockey League; for the first time the Club has attended all league meetings and represented the University at development meetings with Hockey Wales. Bangor players have become active members of the hockey community through coaching and umpiring and there have been organised social events with local hockey teams, such as Arduwy & Arfon Hockey Club.

At the Athletic Union Dinner the Club was shortlisted for the Club of the Year award, which is a great achievement in itself. Development this year has been the main objective and this will continue with the support of the incoming committee. This, as well as many more fundraising efforts, such as our involvement with the Movember tournament and our recent and successful fundraiser for Wales Air Ambulance.

Jitsu Grading Success

by JITSU COMMITTEE

The beginning of February marked the start of a 90 Day Sober Challenge for the Club Captain, Felicity Walker. From the 1st February to the 1st May she gave up all alcohol and for the last 30 days all forms of tea. The task was undertaken in an effort to raise money for a trip the club plan to take later in the year to train in Canada. After attending the The Jitsu Foundation (TJF) International last summer Felicity became determined to ensure that others were able to experience international training opportunities. Aware of the financial constraints of many students and what such a training opportunity would mean to the majority of the club members, Felicity set about trying to raise money to help reduce the individual costs for any member wishing to take part in the trip across the Atlantic. Felicity's GoFundMe account (<http://www.gofundme.com/6lu85k>) has so far raised £548, but she hopes to raise more before the deadline of payment for the trip. February also saw

the Jitsu Club attending the TJF Randori Nationals. The second and final national competitions of the academic year for the Club, looked at the lesser known part of The Jitsu Foundation Jitsu- ground fighting. The two day national event sees Jitsuka from around the UK come together to train under the instruction of world renowned Sensei, with a focus on ground fighting. As well as training, the event has a competition element with Jitsuka being given the chance to compete against other Jitsuka of their grade, gender and weight in Judo-esque competitions.

March was also a hugely busy time for the club as it hosted the annual Bangor Regional. This year's regional was the largest yet with an impressive turnout from the entire region, to both the training and the social event later in the evening. The regional was an extra special event as the Club was able to welcome Jitsuka from some Scottish clubs, who travelled down especially to visit. The region also took this opportunity to award Sensei Craig Byrne of Preston his Senior Primary (SP) badge. A huge event in any Jitsuka's

career, the awarding of an SP is given for contributions by the individual not only to their own club but to their entire region, and allows Sensei Craig to now progress to training for his Second Dan.

The Club had no time to rest after hosting such an event though, as the next weekend they travelled to Aston to help West Midland clubs celebrate their 25th anniversary. The 25 years of Jitsu in Aston was celebrated with a regional training event and black tie dinner, and the month was then rounded off in spectacular fashion with another 100% pass rate at the annual grading. Bangor University Jitsu Club was the only university club to come away with a 100% pass rate and is proud to congratulate the following people from the club on achieving their next belt: Tate Jack who was awarded orange 1 and Sabine Hildebrandt who was awarded her orange, Bradley Critchlow was awarded his green belt, James Smith was awarded his purple belt and Gareth Juleff was awarded not only his light blue belt but also top of the mat (a special award for the Jitsuka who performed the best during the grad-

ing). This is the second time a Bangor Club member has come back with the award and this is a big achievement for Gareth.

Throughout April, Bangor was honoured to be present for some key milestones in the careers of two of Preston's brown belts. Bangor and Preston are two of the closest clubs in the region and Bangor would like to congratulate Sensei Michael Quigley on becoming the instructor for the Preston Junior Club and on the presentation of his Hakama, and Sensei Brian Naisbitt on being presented with his mandate.

So far in May the Club has continued in its nonstop antics, welcoming a visit from Sensei Ady and Sensei Sophie from the West Midlands region, and Sensei Frankie and Sensei Winston from the Wales region for a special 4 hour session. The Club had an excellent time attending the final regional of the year last weekend in Liverpool, and now looks forward to the final grading of the year next month, the Foundation's Summer Ball and training course in London in July, and the Club's end of year meal and AGM later this month.

Successful Year for Frisbee

by ADAM GRIFFITHS

The past year has been Bangor University Ultimate Frisbee's most successful to date.

On the field, the Women's Team have had a record-breaking year, beating their previous highest finishes in all competitions. This included placing second in the Northern Indoor Regionals before progressing onto a sixth

place finish at the Indoor Nationals.

However, the Women's Team topped that performance by going undefeated at the Outdoor Nationals to become National Champions for the first time in their history.

The Men's Team did not perform as expected at the Indoors Regionals and narrowly missed out on qualifying for the Indoor Nationals after losing the final game in sudden death.

This was turned around at Outdoor



Regionals, with the team coming away from the weekend with eight wins and only one loss to qualify for the Outdoor Nationals.

This spurred on a great performance at the Outdoor Nationals to finish fourth in Division 2, placing the team in the top 20 nationally.

At Varsity, Ultimate Frisbee main-

tained their undefeated record with the Men's Team winning by the maximum margin of 17-0 and the Women's Team winning on their debut 13-1.

Off the field the Club has enjoyed a very good year for fresher retention and also had two of the biggest socials that the Club has seen with over 40 people in attendance.



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SPORT

Bangor City Return to Europe



by SCOTT WILLEY

On a sunny day at the busy Book People Stadium, Bangor triumphed over Rhyl FC to return to European football after a one year absence. Finishing 4th in the Welsh Premier League, Bangor were confident of progressing to the Europa League qualifying stages against a 6th placed Rhyl side they had beaten twice in the last month.

The game started very cagey, with neither side able to dominate possession and create many chances within the opening ten minutes. Rhyl's Peter Dogan earned himself a yellow card with a tough challenge on Bangor left-wing Sion Edwards. The first twenty min-

utes continued in the same vein, with neither team really asserting themselves. The first real chance of the half came from Sion Edwards, whose cross was knocked down by striker Les Davies for Chris Jones, who volleyed inches wide of the Rhyl goal. Straight back at the other end and Bangor City goalkeeper Jack Cudworth was called to make his first save, diving low to his right to keep out a strong header from a Rhyl corner.

A sustained spell of pressure from Rhyl came as Bangor tried to play the ball out of defence rather than opting to clear it long. Fortunately for The Citizens, Rhyl could not capitalise. Rhyl striker Steve Lewis received an unnecessary yellow card for going in late

on Bangor goalkeeper Cudworth. Bangor once again went close with Jones played in behind Rhyl's high line, but he was pushed wide by the defender and can only produce a weak shot which goalkeeper Ramsay easily saved, leaving the score 0 - 0 at half-time.

Bangor City manager Neville Powell's words at half-time must have done the trick, as Bangor began to start spreading the ball around on the deck, rather than trying to win the ball in the air against Rhyl's tall back-line, as they tried to do in the first half. The first real action of the second half is another late challenge by Peter Dogan, who already on a yellow card, is shown another for a red. Rhyl FC down to 10-men.

Bangor could have lead soon after, when Rhyl defender Chris Rimmer missed his clearance, but Jones failed to gamble and the ball rolled out harmlessly for a goal kick.

Bangor's periods of pressure soon told, as they won a throw deep in the Rhyl half on the right. The initial ball in is cleared, but only as far as Les Davies, who takes one touch before slotting the ball left footed into the bottom right hand corner of the goal from 22 yards. Bangor lead 1 - 0.

Bangor pressed for a second, as substitute Jamie McDaid caused Rhyl problems down the right hand side. A cross from McDaid resulted in a handball from a Rhyl defender, and the referee awarded

a penalty, much to the delight of the vocal home crowd. Goalkeeper Ramsay and midfielder Mark Cadwallader protested, and received yellow cards for their troubles. Chris Jones was the man to step up for City, and he fired down the middle to surely send The Citizens into Europe. Rhyl FC began to lose their heads in the last ten minutes, and a rash challenge from substitute Tom Donegan resulted in another red card, and the away team were to play out the last ten minutes with nine men. After a scrappy final few minutes, the referee blew for full time and Bangor City returned to the Europa League and European football for the first time in a year.