

Hywelian Guild  
Magazine 2021

Appendix

As we explain in the print version of the magazine, we are limited by space and weight, which means that some of your articles of necessity have to be judiciously pruned. We think it is important that when you have taken the trouble to write to us that we should not discard parts of your contributions. This Appendix contains the complete versions of your contributions.

You will also find here the internet links that many of our contributors have provided to give you even more information about what they have been up to.

*Lyn Owen, Editor*

# Who, What and Where

*Nina is obviously a very busy lady. Below, she tells us in full that she is still enjoying her life.*

**Nina Shoroplova** (née McGregor, left HSL 1964) has lived in Canada for some time. She writes: 'I'VE COME FULL CIRCLE and am spiralling onward and upwards. For me, life has been all about healing and writing, writing and healing. And, as someone recently commented, reinventing myself.



Photograph by Silmara Emde

My first career at the end of the 1960s was in the human health field as a physiotherapist, training in Wales and working in England. When I immigrated to Canada as a physio, and later married, I became a writer - an author of a non-fiction book about the ranch I had moved to. For eight years, I researched and wrote *Cattle Ranch*, the history of Douglas Lake Cattle Company, Canada's largest cattle company (half a million acres for a wintering herd of 10,000 head of cattle). The book was a Canadian best seller and a finalist in the Eaton's book award of 1979.

I have been editing books since 2013, and nowadays I work on a contract basis with the author. My

editorial services include structural editing, substantive editing, copy editing, and proofreading. Being well-versed in the fields of alternative healing modalities, Western healing, spiritual and soul growth and counselling, psychic and spiritual arts, the near-death experience, other spiritually transformative events, metaphysics, and holistic nutrition, I edit the manuscripts of authors who are raising human consciousness. I have also edited financial texts, novels, art books, and books on brain health and psychotherapy.

In between writing and publishing *Cattle Ranch* and *Legacy of Trees* (my most recent publication), I have been raising a family, growing, cooking and preserving food, and writing about food, including how it is grown and raised. I have written and self-published four books, two on self-awareness and two on becoming an author, and training in many alternative healing modalities. I have also been performing as a singer, musician, and actor; I've directed a few performances - a hat show in Washington State, several Christmas pageants and children's plays in British Columbia, and a music hall when I lived on the land in Australia for five years. In 2006, I started building websites.

And - I am enjoying life!

*Gabriella Howell and her sisters Emily and Isabella were certainly very busy in the earlier part of the year, as the pandemic took hold. Below, Gabriella enlarges on the contribution the family business made to the efforts to provide enough protective clothing to those needing it.*

**Gabriella** writes:

'I have some news to love to share with readers of regarding my two sisters and I:

Emily, Isabella and myself were all in very different careers at the start of this year, before the pandemic hit.

In March we were all working for the family firm, BCB International, which usually produces life-saving and survival equipment for the government, military and outdoor enthusiasts. Our parents have worked hard to build up the company over the past 40 years; however, as in the rest of the world, everything changed in March. When we began seeing reports about COVID19 in China, our father arranged for one of our factories to convert to making 80% strength hand sanitiser, tested against viruses (one of the few which is).

Our Dr. Brown's hand sanitiser, and other essential PPE items, became one of two main supplies for the Welsh NHS, and other frontline workers such as nursing homes, fire and emergency responders, schools, GP surgeries and government offices across the country. We were working closely with multiple police forces providing protection packs for officers. With normal supplies unable to enter the country from China, it was a race against time to get the goods to all our key workers in the UK. Our two factories were working seven days a week, one of them working 24 hours a day. This went on for five months.

Emily, my older sister, worked tirelessly with pharmacies, nursing homes and local government authorities across the country.

I worked in running logistics for the production and procurement of hand sanitiser and other PPE items (masks, face shields and, unfortunately, bodybags)

under contracts with the NHS and police forces.

Isabella, my younger sister, worked in the media and design department and developed key life-saving kits as requested by key front line workers, modified to provide maximum suitability and durability.

The three of us also led in ensuring we were giving what we could to those who needed it during the pandemic. We arranged weekly donations to businesses and charities in the region, the biggest donation being to Yemen in August.

As Logistics Director, I was fortunate enough to be in a position to work with the Muslim Charity in arranging a large donation of masks and shields to the country. We were interviewed by ITV Wales, Cardiff TV and Sky Islam.

Following that, I was able to arrange a donation to Lebanon after the catastrophic explosion, in a bid to help the PPE shortages in the badly damaged hospitals. Thousands of masks were sent.

For the work undertaken at BCB, I have been shortlisted as a finalist for Cardiff Business Awards as a Young Business Person of the Year.

My younger sister, Isabella Howell, was in Australia completing a course in graphic design when the pandemic started earlier this year. Catching the last flight back to the UK, she joined us in Cardiff to work at BCB. However, she also decided she wanted to use her skills for something bigger and worked to create a fundraising video for the Welsh NHS. The video raised £20,000 for the front line workers in Wales. Not only did she create the idea, she arranged and worked with the famous faces involved, and pulled together and produced the final product.

The fundraising was covered by the BBC, ITV and

other media outlets. Isabella will be finishing her course in London next month.

My 'normal' job is building, and now directing, our family home which we converted into a boutique hotel in the Caribbean. The main hotel is a 350 year-old sugar plantation, Buff House, which closed as the island went into lockdown and flights stopped. We are now re-opening the hotel following a long eight month closure, with a new restaurant and our garden suite cottages. Following the work undertaken in creating the hotel I applied, and was accepted for, a PhD program in early March to complete my thesis on the main house and the work and lives associated with it.

With the work at BCB and the closure of many archives and museums, the start of the research has been slow, but I am excited to see where the work takes me.

Emily was continuing to tour with her political drama *Looking for Mummy* which covers the incarceration of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe in Iran, as well as her acting school. Though there was a slight pause in this work, she is resuming again with classes taking place from August and the re-write for the tour underway.

To see more information about the schemes mentioned by Gabriella, use Ctrl + Click to visit the websites below:

<https://www.bcb.in.com/news>

# A Young Trailblazer

*Chloe Smith won this year's GDST Alumna of the Year Trailblazer Award. In December 2019, Chloe was interviewed by Rachel Eling, Communications and Engagement Officer at Howell's and herself an HSL alumna (class of 95).*

*Below is the full version of the transcript of Chloe's interview with Rachel.*

*"I SPENT TWO YEARS saying, 'Somebody needs to do something about this!', then realised that somebody was me."*

Chloe Smith's lightbulb moment came after she had been supporting the homeless population in her hometown of Cardiff for two years, volunteering at a soup kitchen and persuading local restaurants to deliver hot meals, and barbers and hairdressers to provide haircuts to rough sleepers. Chloe was one of dozens of volunteers providing a nightly service, taking a nightshift every four weeks to deliver support to the city's homeless population.

She explains, "I left Howell's in 2013, and went to the University of South Wales to train to teach primary school, but I got really poorly in my second year with fibromyalgia, a joint and muscle pain. I was bedridden, and it started to affect every part of my life, I was on my second teaching placement when I really started struggling. I came to the conclusion I wasn't well enough to keep going. I couldn't carry the books, couldn't stand up all day, and I made the decision overnight to leave, I was only nine months away from qualifying, but I knew it wasn't right for me. I left, and I trained to be a very average graphic designer, working for my Dad's company. I felt I needed to do something else, and began volunteering with a group supporting the homeless people sleeping on the streets in Cardiff.

"My dad and I did that for two years, and found that we kept seeing the same faces, hearing the same stories. We wanted to make long-lasting change. It seemed that every month we were just putting a plaster on the problem, then going back the next month and changing the plaster - and nothing got better. We weren't creating a change to help people move forward to turn their lives around."

*"Three people have said to me that they would not be here if it wasn't for us. That's why I do what I do."*

At the time, Chloe's sister, also a former Howell's student, was working at The House of St Barnabus, a private members' club in London that has the vision 'to create a future where sustained employment is a reality for those affected by homelessness.' The club runs a scheme in which participants work in the club, in hospitality and administrative roles, alongside attending workshops, before graduating with a City and Guilds qualification. Graduates are provided with a minimum of one year post-programme support to help them back into lasting paid work and to help break the cycle of homelessness.

"We loved the concept of giving people skills and the opportunity to make a change for themselves," Chloe explains. "We knew that a members' club wouldn't work in Cardiff, and we came up with the idea of a coffee shop. The people at The House of St Barnabus were really generous with their time; they helped us with interview processes, with recruitment, and they are still really supportive now."

After a Kickstarter fundraising campaign raised £30,000 in a week, the Bigmoose coffee shop opened in 2018, just off the main pedestrianised shopping street in Cardiff's city centre. Today it's all whitewashed bricks, artfully scuffed furniture and an Instagram-ready plant wall, but when Chloe first looked at the building it had recently been a dingy gambling arcade, with mirrored walls and grotty, stained carpets. There was a lot of work to be done, and very little budget to do it with. An online Kickstarter fundraising campaign yielded £30,000 in a week: enough to renovate the space, and also buy a van which could be converted into a mobile Bigmoose coffee shop, which Chloe's father now drives to festivals and sporting events.

“We have been open since March 2018, and we now have a fully operational coffee shop and event space employing 22 staff. We employ, train and mentor people who have experienced homelessness, and other disadvantaged, vulnerable people. People who have struggled with their mental health can come to us for support, and when they are ready we give them barista training and career mentoring. Sometimes it can be hard to get people to understand that they need to be at a certain stage before they will be ready for work, before we can help them. We have a counsellor, Graeme, who works with us, providing support and a safe space to anyone who needs it. At the moment we’re working with one young person who has experienced many addictions. They are not ready to start work yet, but we are working hard to get to that stage.

“We became a registered charity last year, and our three point plan is: Homelessness, Mental Health and the Prevention of Suicide. We have many of people on the team with severe mental health issues, and three people have said to me that they would not be here if it wasn’t for us. That’s why I do what I do.

"It’s a lot of pressure on the 26<sup>th</sup> of the month to pay 22 members of staff: people who are relying on us to pay their rent, take care of their kids and so on. It’s a big responsibility, but I wouldn’t change it. I can’t imagine working for someone else or having a normal job.”

*Interview by Rachel Eling  
13<sup>th</sup> December 2019*

[To see the full awards ceremony, Ctrl + click on the link below:

[GDST Alumna of the Year 2020 \(full version\) - YouTube](#)

For the winners awards, Ctrl + click here:

[GDST Alumna of the Year 2020 - YouTube \]](#)

# Life under lockdown

*This is Eloise's account of her experiences during the early stages of the pandemic. It is both thought-provoking and entertaining, and merits appearing here in full.*

## SHOCK

WHEN I CAME HOME that Wednesday afternoon, I stepped off the bus with no small amount of trepidation. There can be no denying that, even though sheltered in school away from the terrifying news and new developments each day brought, we had all been able to sense a shift, a kind of change in everyone around us: with averted eyes and whispers. I already knew that everything I had worked for these past five years meant nothing anymore. Even while I sat at home with my mum beside me, watching those solemn-faced officials step up to their imposing lecterns, I knew what they intended to say: 'All GCSE and A-Level examinations will be cancelled.'

Knowing that I had just two more days at Howell's, it felt as if somebody had pulled the plug on my future, and now the unstoppable current carrying all my dreams and hopes, gathering momentum, was spiralling away. I do not know if this will be understood, or judged as egotistical, but I felt as if I had lost my identity, and felt bereft.

I have always thought of myself as a hard-worker. Although I would complain about revision and schoolwork, I think I secretly enjoyed it and was even somewhat excited for my GCSE exams, particularly so that I could finally prove that the past years had paid off and that I could actually achieve what I had set out to do. When we were told that none of this mattered compared to the needs of the country, that none of it would continue, it felt as if the opportunity to make my teachers proud was stolen.

And I did feel robbed; robbed of the security the experience would give me, the confidence I could carry forward through the next years of my life, robbed of the day in August when I could receive

proof of whatever I had earned. In that moment, despite the knowledge that so many people were facing so much worse, I could feel nothing but all-consuming self-pity. I was furious with everyone, but especially the government that in my eyes had acted too rashly, too quickly. I did not understand why something so important, that seemed so far away, needed to be decided in what appeared to be a split-second, offhand way.

## SADNESS

Going into school on our last day, the bus journey giving the illusion of a normal school day exacerbated my despair. The last thing I wanted was to face my teachers and friends, with that impending finality. I knew that seeing my friends as completely devastated and frustrated as I was would only rekindle everything I had tried to work through the previous night, and I was almost too cowardly to face them. Ultimately, after we had cried and laughed and decided to end our time at school as determinedly as we had started, I found comfort and strength in being with them. I told myself again and again that if we could not change what had happened, we certainly should not let it ruin our precious time together. We spent the day reminding each other how and when these strong friendship bonds were formed, and that we had got through a far worse time when we lost our dear friend Martha. We shared memories and promised that being apart would only be a minor hiccup in our lives. We made plans for the summer and parted ways almost cheerily, despite a deep sadness that I still feel even now, at the abrupt end to everything normal and the sudden loss of all the constants I had come to rely on. As I cleared out my locker for the very last time, anger began to swell again at the frivolous chatter regarding a doubtful



prom circulating among the leaving crowd.

Despite feeling I had exhausted all my emotions, I had not considered the final blow of saying farewell to my bus driver, whose good-natured musings had been a comforting part of every day.

However, watching the news later that evening, I started to understand that the decision that I had been adamant was nothing more than bowing to media pressure was probably the right one. With the death count rising steadily, seeing the greed of people and shortages in shops, I understood that this virus was not something to be ignored.

I wonder sometimes if things felt so strange and different in part because of my mother. She has always been a constant source of support and reassurance for me, and I have always known that if I am ever in need of guidance I could turn to her. My mother is also a teacher in a secondary school that was equally affected by COVID-19 as anywhere else in the country. I feel sometimes as if I have grown up with the children she teaches, hearing about her day when she comes in each evening. I realised that they too would be shocked and upset in equal measure by the sudden news, as was my mum. All her tireless and determined work to help her pupils achieve *their* goals also felt wasted, and we found that we were both sorrowful for each other. I think that understanding of how my teachers might have felt helped me remember that in such strange times, we all have to work together and that it was foolish to waste my sadness on something that would not change.

#### ANGER

The weekend before the introduction of lockdown passed in a blur of phone calls and preparedness for the unknown as the inevitable end of normal life drew closer. Between my shock at the abrupt end to my time at school and witnessing the grief of my peers, I had not noticed how others were handling this *Coronavirus* outbreak. In truth, the answer is 'Not well'.

Already the worst aspects of human nature had

become evident. I am certain that a single neighbour of mine, living alone, did not need the twenty-four pack of toilet rolls she seemed to be unloading from her car every few days! While the occasional light-hearted news reports showed that some people seemed to understand that it is important to care for each other and offer a helping hand (while maintaining social distancing, of course), the many acts of selfishness I saw in brief encounters with other humans filled me with disappointment. The greed witnessed in shops, people buying endless supplies and items they would never use due to simple panic; people pushing the boundaries of lockdown to the extreme, making the efforts of countless others futile; numberless complainers bemoaning their own hardship in being stuck at home, while every day horrific reports on the news showed that poorer countries could not manage the costs of COVID-19. Some seemed to have limited recognition of the suffering of others and through their actions conveyed little respect for the terrible losses that many were facing. Partying and playing blaring music, while not against the lockdown rules, seemed incredibly inappropriate and not in the general spirit of things.

#### RESIGNATION

One week into lockdown, I had an opportunity to attend a video call session with one of my classes, and seeing all my friends eased some of the strain I was starting to feel from being confined by the lockdown guidelines. I had started to feel increasingly frustrated and useless as other family members were starting to help in the community. I'm asthmatic, so I had to stay at home, shielded. I thoroughly enjoyed the hour of relative normality and was disappointed when it came to an inevitable end.

At some point in the past few weeks, as lockdown was extended beyond the original suggested timeframe, I finally recognised that things would not be the same for quite some time, even after life might appear to return to normal. The effect of this

virus on economy, trade, and tourism has been devastating. On a personal level, my own uncle, having recently left the air force to secure a new job as an airline pilot, faces an uncertain future. My own woes have honestly now begun to pale in insignificance. I understand entirely now why our government acted as they did, and if anything I would praise them for it. The whole world is doing its best.

## HOPE

In times like this, I find it best to have something concrete to aim for. I have always been the sort of person who might idle around for hours achieving absolutely nothing unless I have a goal or a purpose. However, as communities have settled into the new routines of lockdown, positive, heart-warming, unexpected altruism has renewed my optimism about the future and restored my love for life and learning.

I am now able to start concentrating on the future, looking forward to seeing my friends and family again. Such dreadful and testing times cannot last forever, something I have decided to focus on, as I am sure everyone has. I am also excited to begin my A-Levels, and another new objective for me is to work within the ARCH programme being offered by my school. I hope it will give me some sense of purpose and some much needed motivation to keep going.

Even simple acts of kindness lift my spirits: charitable donations and communities pulling together, neighbours (now friends) dropping off groceries for those the elderly or frail. Cherishing phone calls with family is no longer a chore but a reason for joy. The camaraderie that applauding our NHS together brings is almost enough to make me momentarily forget the sadness we all face. Nature too has a way of warming the soul, with sights of spring all around and reports of long overdue breathing space for wildlife.

This time has also given me the opportunity to learn new skills, to value older crafts such as sewing,

baking, gardening, and creative writing. The best sight of all is undoubtedly our incredible postman, still delivering a much needed, exciting brown paper parcel full of books. It is wonderful to see the newfound appreciation for workers of all kinds, be they staff in supermarkets, delivery drivers or any of the other men and women keeping the county running. Their dedication and tirelessness has inspired me more than anything else to refocus on my learning.

Things are actually beginning to feel hopeful. I like to think that my friends and I, and others of my generation, will not allow this cruel and devastating world event to define the rest of our lives. Just maybe, clichés about mankind after the virus being changed for the better might come true.

I have found writing this account cathartic and it has helped me to understand two things. The first is that life is not a straight or easy path. No matter how many times we are told this, no matter how much I thought I could comprehend it, it is actually something I realise you have to learn for yourself. It is guaranteed that there will be twists and turns through the rapids as life meanders on, even sometimes a sudden drop, where everything you were certain of falls away, but the second fact I know now to be true is that, however long and arduous the journey, the river, like life, always gets where it is going.

*Eloise M*

## ***In memoriam***

*The obituaries on the following pages are the full versions of those which appear in the printed magazine.*

**Dr Rosalind Irene Bearcroft**  
(née Chamberlain, 1926-2020)



Rosalind was born in Cardiff on 16 May 1926, joining Howells School in 1934, where she received a wonderful education and where she spent many happy years.

Although Rosalind had a lifelong love of animals, she decided at a young age that she wanted to be a doctor rather than a vet and so, after a successful school career, she studied Physiology, Anthropology and Anatomy at University College, Cardiff in 1943. She then went onto Somerville College, Oxford, where she met her future husband, Peter. So excited was she by this momentous event that when she was next in Cardiff she made a special trip to Miss Lewis, the headmistress of the time, to tell her the glad tidings. It was well after Midnight by the time she got there but, nothing daunted, she threw pebbles at the window until Miss Lewis woke up and, very graciously, let her in for a chat!

Never one to pass up a challenge, Rosalind hitchhiked to Rome with Peter shortly after the war, the first of many travels around Europe. After two years at Oxford, she continued her medical training at University College, London, gaining her MBBS in 1951. She and Peter were married in 1952.

Rosalind soon entered the rapidly developing field of psychiatry, becoming a consultant in 1966 and moving to Barming in Kent. When a local primary school was threatened with closure, Rosalind and

Peter bought Barming Place, intending it to become both their family home and the new school site. Life at Barming Place was extraordinary. There were animals: dogs, cats, horses, goats, polecats, a tortoise, stick insects. There were concerts, weddings, and even a Plymouth Brethren church, which was given a temporary home by these two devout Catholics.

Over the years Rosalind was an active member of a large number of groups, including the Catholic Union, the Association of Catholic Women, the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, the Friends of the Holy Father, the Council of Christians and Jews, the St Augustine Society, the Catholic Medical Association, and many more besides. If anything, her contribution to these groups only increased as she grew older, as did the attention she gave to her many pet projects, including her longstanding attempts to obtain a dog for Pope Benedict XVI!

Rosalind's energy was legendary, as was her generosity and kindness. She continued working into her late eighties and was awarded Catholic Woman of the Year in 2018. She always went the extra mile: taking on a primary school while also raising a family and being a consultant child psychiatrist was only the tip of the iceberg. Her dedication to family, faith and work was truly impressive. She will be greatly missed.



## Enfys Ann Brown

(née Jones, HSL 1936 – 1943)

Enfys's daughter Jane, who was at HSL from 1969-1976, remembers her mother in this tribute:

'Enfys was born in Treforest on 12 November 1925; when she was four, the family moved to Cowbridge. Enfys started in Howell's on 6 May 1936, according to the letter offering her a place from the then Headmistress, Miss Trotter [*see below*]. She loved school and boarding in Oaklands. She was very good at games, enjoying hockey, lacrosse, cricket and swimming; she captained the First Eleven in lacrosse. During the war, boarding was reduced and Enfys became a day-girl, travelling by bus from Cowbridge to Victoria Park and then walking to school. She had special permission to miss Assembly and came into the Hall afterwards with the Jewish girls. Enfys was in school under three Headmistresses: Miss Trotter; Miss Knight, and Miss Lewis. She very much enjoyed going back to school for Hywelian meetings and was for many years Secretary of the Bridgend Branch of the Guild. She regularly attended the Bridgend branch meetings until just a few years ago. She made many friends from school with whom she kept in touch with for life.

On leaving school, Enfys studied pharmacy at Cardiff University, graduating in 1946 with a Bachelor of Pharmacy degree. She worked in the Glaxo Laboratories in Middlesex as a Pharmaceutical Chemist before moving back to Cowbridge in the late 1940s to live with her mother. She then worked in the pharmacy departments of The Royal Gwent, East Glamorgan and Bridgend General Hospitals.

In 1956, she married Cowbridge printer, Alan Brown. Enfys gave up work to concentrate on family life: they had two children, Jane and Paul. She was also actively involved with many local groups and societies: Cowbridge and District Local History Society and Mothers' Union and as Brown Owl for Llanblethian Brownies.

She took immense pleasure in the interests and careers of her family, particularly sports and the arts. Alan was a very keen golfer (which rubbed off on Jane!), and they introduced their children from an early age to theatre, opera and ballet.

After 34 years of happily married life, Alan died in 1990 and their daughter, Jane, who was a Physical Education teacher, retrained as an accountant and came back home to live with her mother. They holidayed together, making trips to see performances of opera and other theatrical works that Paul had designed as his international career brought him worldwide recognition. In 1997, Enfys travelled to the Oscars ceremony in California when Paul was nominated for Best Designer.

In her later years, in spite of the debilitating effects of arthritis, osteoporosis and respiratory problems, Enfys never complained and continued to take an active part in the community until her failing mobility meant she was confined to a wheelchair. Even then she would still enjoy going to Holy Cross Church, Cowbridge for the Friday morning service whenever possible. She listened to the daily service on the radio and maintained her Christian belief all her life, a source of stoicism and great courage which would be tested severely by the untimely death of her son, Paul from cancer in 2017.

Enfys had an excellent memory, a great sense of humour, loved conversation and kept in regular contact with friends, some from as long ago as her early childhood.

In bed, next to an open window, with the sun streaming in and the birds singing outside, Enfys passed away very peacefully at her home in Cowbridge on 14 June 2020, aged 94.'

*[Jane kindly sent images of Betty's letter of acceptance to Howell's and a page of the prospectus: they will be passed to the Archives.]*