

## **Report from the Secretary 2026**

The year since the last AGM has once again been a busy and eventful one, with much to celebrate alongside some notable challenges for the Association.

### **Annual Dinner 2025**

The Annual Dinner held on 9th May 2025 at The Village Hotel was a great success. Although Caroline Sheen had been booked as our guest speaker, she was unfortunately unavailable at the last minute and was replaced by Steve Spiers. With 99 members and guests joining us for the evening, the dinner broke even financially, a pleasing result given the pressures on Association funds, and our thanks go to Jeff Vaughan and Margaret Llewelyn for their exemplary organisation of the event and to John Walters for his continuing role as Master of Ceremonies.

### **Vice President and Incoming President**

We were delighted that Steve Balsamo accepted the invitation to become our Vice President for 2025, and we look forward to welcoming him as President at the Annual Dinner this May. Steve's offer to entertain members at the event alongside Mal Pope reflects his enthusiasm and commitment to the Association. The name of the new Vice President will be announced soon.

### **President's Award**

Once again, the President's Award proved to be a high-profile and moving occasion at the UWTSD Graduates' Summer Show on 16th May 2025. The ODA donated £1,500 shared between five very worthy students who have successfully completed their year of study whilst facing significant personal challenges. Two students chose to receive the award privately but both wrote warmly to thank the Association. With the financial pressures facing the ODA in mind, the committee has agreed that for 2026 the award will be reduced to £1,000.

We are grateful to Caroline Thraves for her continued support in administering this initiative.

### **The Dy'vorian Magazine**

Two editions of The Dy'vorian have been published since the last AGM, with the savings achieved by John Summerwill nothing short of remarkable. John, Year of 1955, not only undertook the design of the editions but arranged for it to be printed, delivered to his home in Leeds, and personally packed and posted copies to members in the UK and overseas. His contribution, and that of Phil Stone as proofreader, have been invaluable.

### **Dynevov Days**

The Dynevov Days project continues to go from strength to strength. School visits in 2025 year were, in the words of those who participated, an experience of a lifetime, Reports from schools confirm that the impact of the donation on pupils and their parents has been significant.

In January cheques were presented to the five participating schools for this year's outdoor experiences. Pupils continue to be amazed that the sum will cover all the expenses for an outstanding trip.

A further £1,000 was received for the additional President's Award. The full sum of

£2,000 was donated to Brynhyfryd Primary School to fund an outdoor experience for their Year 6 pupils. A presentation was made at the school on 24th February by Gareth Payne, attended by David Taylor and myself.

We continue to encourage members to visit the schools' section of the [Dynevor Days](#) website, where photographs and pupils' comments bear testimony to everything the initiative has achieved. If you would wish to make a donation to the project please [contact me](#).

## **Events**

A tour of Dynevor Campus took place on 5th September 2025 for ten ODA members and non-member past pupils, timed to coincide with the Year of '55 reunion weekend. Ian Simmonds gave generously of his time to lead the tour and has been warmly thanked for doing so.

Coffee mornings were held in October 2025 and February 2026. The latter, held at Stiwdio Griffith, saw a lower than hoped for attendance, potentially due to being held mid-week. We are exploring moving future coffee mornings back to a Saturday morning.

The ODA Annual Lecture for 2026 was delivered by Andrea (André) D'Ambra, Year of 1973. His talk described many of his father's harrowing wartime experiences and outlined how his memoir came to be published. Faith in Families received a £100 donation from the ODA as a gesture of gratitude to Andrea for giving his time. The planned recording failed to materialise, at this time we are exploring the possibility of him re-recording it.

## **Annual Donation to a Local Charity**

This year's annual donation of £100 was made to Y-HUB, an open-access project for young people aged 11 to 25, offering a safe and friendly environment with professional support, hot food, music and workshops. Y-HUB was specifically created to support those at risk of involvement in County Lines, antisocial behaviour and exploitation, and operates from the YMCA in Swansea. Gareth Payne and I were delighted to visit Y-HUB on the evening of 6th March to make the donation on behalf of the Association.

## **Website**

The Dynevor Revisited website has continued to develop. Phil Stone worked closely with Mark Seal at NetBop to redesign the home page, which now features an attractive slider of images together with items highlighting Dynevor Days and What's New.

## **Archives**

Hard copies of school magazines have been delivered to the West Glamorgan Archive Service to better ensure they are stored securely and for the long term. Only material, already available on our website, will be moved there.

## **Finances and Forward Planning**

The committee has worked hard to manage the Association's finances carefully in what has been a challenging year. Gareth Payne, Peter Samuel and I reviewed

income and expenditure last summer; the projected shortfall for 2025 was reported to the committee in September. The savings achieved on TOD by John Summerwill have been particularly significant in limiting the potential shortfall.

We are very grateful to Keith Ferguson for taking on the not insignificant task of preparing the accounts for 2025. He will report on them at the AGM. Additionally, he has arranged for Stuart Hancock, from the Year of '52, to take over as auditor, and we are most grateful to them both. A great debt of thanks is owed to Robert Howells who has served as the Association's auditor for many years and who has retired from the role due to ill health.

Hywel Davies has prepared a thoughtful paper on the Association's legal identity and long-term funding, which has been the subject of discussion at recent committee meetings. In light of these the committee will bring forward proposals at the AGM.

### **Membership**

Increasing our membership continues to be a significant challenge. Peter Samuel and I have explored ways to simplify the process of joining the Association, including advertising on Facebook as a means to reach a wider audience. Proposals will be brought forward for discussion at the AGM.

### **Communication and Technology**

Regular Mailchimp emails continue to keep members regularly informed of news and events. If you think you can help by taking on this role please [get in touch](#). Phil Stone continues to share news on Facebook, where the number of followers continues to grow. Zoom remains the platform of choice for committee meetings. Our thanks to Phil for his continuing support in administering these platforms.

### **Looking Ahead**

Events under consideration include a wine tasting evening and a river Tawe boat trip. Details will be announced in TOD and via newsletters as soon as details have been confirmed.

*As Hon. Sec. to the Association, I wish to end this report by thanking all committee members for their time, dedication and hard work over the past year. The Association remains active and forward-looking thanks to their efforts, and I am grateful to each of them. Nihil Sine Labore!*