

## OLD D'VORIANS ASSOCIATION

### REPORT OF PRESIDENT 2025-26

In his President's Report for 2024-2025, Andrew Clemes, my predecessor talked of handing over the reins to myself. With the recent weather it has sometimes seemed as though Andrew has handed over the reins. It is fair to say that we have more than our fair share of rain during my reign. I think for now that it has rained/reined/reigned enough so I'll move on.

I'd like to start by taking the opportunity to thank all the Committee members for their support during my term of office. Your wisdom and knowledge have been invaluable to me and the Association during the past year.

I should however like to pass on my particular thanks to Pam as Secretary. Her devotion to our cause never ceases to amaze me and others. It has been particularly onerous since February 2025 when sadly Steve Way, our Treasurer passed away. Despite the Committee's best efforts, we have been unsuccessful in securing a Treasurer for the Association. This has only served to place even more pressure on Pam, but she has coped admirably. On behalf of the members, Committee and the Association, many thanks to you Pam.

Whilst we have seen 2 new members join this year, overall, our membership numbers have declined. This is an issue that has occupied my mind during my Presidency, and I will return to this issue later.

Well, that's enough about the association for now, so we will move on to me!

It has been a pleasure to have served the Association over the last year, and I will be sorry to hand over to Steve Balsamo who I know will serve the Association well. I wish him well in his year of office as I'm sure we all do. I look forward to supporting Steve in any way I can during my year as Immediate Past President.

My year started with the Annual Dinner held at the Village Hotel, where we were entertained by the actor, writer and producer Steve Spiers. Steve was good company and gave us a speech about his life in the entertainment industry. He also recalled his first venture into pantomime where he played alongside Barbara Windsor. I was particularly grateful to Steve for standing in at short notice for Caroline Sheen who was unable to attend as she had been asked to understudy a role in the West End.

In February I had the pleasure of attending Brynhyfryd Primary School, along with Pam and David Taylor, to present them with a cheque for £2000. The pupils had some ideas about how they would use the money on an educational visit. On the day following the presentation, the pupils were going to spend their maths lesson planning an activity. They have promised in due course to prepare a presentation which will be uploaded to the Dynevor Days website.

On 6th March, Pam and I attended the YMCA to present a cheque of £100 to Y-Hub. Y-Hub is a charity that engages with young adults to try to ensure that the more vulnerable amongst them are not drawn in to a life of crime. They do invaluable work and I know that our donation will be well spent.

On the 19th March I attended the Annual Lecture which this year was delivered by our past pupil Andrea D'Ambra. Andrea told us about his father's life in Italy in the Second World War. The lecture was a moving account of Andrea's father's war-time experiences, written over time on separate

pieces of paper, which have been turned into a book, 'The Prime of My Life: The Saddest of My Years – A War Memoir'. His life was under threat at various times from the Fascists, Communists and Nazis. It was indeed a fascinating story. The book is available to purchase on Amazon.

A number of events are in the planning stage including a wine tasting evening, further coffee mornings and a trip on the Tawe.

In light of our falling membership numbers, the Association's annual accounts have again shown a deficit. This presents the Association with serious challenges going forward. During the last year the Committee has reviewed our costs with a view to eliminating future deficits. This has proven challenging. Our thanks must go to John Summerwill for his efforts for reducing our costs with regard to TOD. We would again appeal for members to give serious consideration to accepting future editions of TOD online. This will enable us to make further savings. This may well help to extend the life of the Association.

To that end, demographics are against us. The vast majority of members are now above 60 years of age and it's no surprise that they aren't getting any younger. In order to consider long-term planning that will ensure our Association's legacy is preserved, promoted and protected, we have decided to set up a Working Party. Members from all year groups will be asked to join the Working Party. The Working Party will be given an opportunity to report on progress at committee meetings, with a final report produced no later than the end of 2029. Planning is also in hand for what will be our Centenary Dinner in 2030.

My final plea is for anyone who is interested and is able to help the Committee to contact [Pam](#) and let us know what assistance you can offer your Association.