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The day the sea came in

Last updated: 02 October 2007

Mary Wilson recalls the morning which turned her life upside down. You can also **get in touch** with your photos and memories of the floods.



I live right at the bottom of Towyn, near the Long Bar down by the beach. It was a weird old morning on the day of the floods. One of those days when the weather just feels iffy.

I used to go round to my son's house to look after the little one and I was on my way over when the rain just came from nowhere. He lives opposite the railway, and as soon as the weather got bad he called me over because there are steps up to his house and so he thought we'd be OK.

But the water still rose up and I was stuck in the house with the little one. I ended up being thrown into a lifeboat - with a lot of help, because I wasn't very good on my feet.

They took us down to the Seagull pub. They were great there, making us drinks and food. It was one of those times when you all pulled together.

Eventually, we were sent to a boarding house, but we were on the sixth floor, which was very difficult for me. I didn't have any family to go to because all my children live in Towyn and we were all in the same boat, as it were.

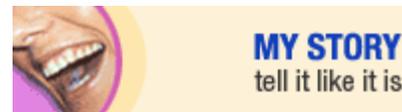
We'd come down to the community centre during the day. This place was a godsend. Everyone was here - social services, insurance - it's where this senior citizens group originated.

It took quite a while to get back into my house because everything had to be dried out. I didn't have anything left on the ground floor. Thankfully, I did have a box of photos of my children when they were little which I kept on top of my wardrobe, but everything else was ruined.

It wasn't that the water came up very high, but high enough to ruin everything because there was a lot of filth and debris in that water.

It isn't something I'd like to go through again though and I wouldn't want anyone else to either.

We weren't worried about the sea wall before the floods - never gave it a thought, even though there were floods in the 1980s. I suppose there might be some again, but I've got every confidence in the sea wall now - they did a damned



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good job. *Mary Wilson*

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The day of the deluge

Last updated: 19 February 2008

Sharon Lloyd of Kinmel Bay was a 14-year-old pupil at Ysgol Emrys ap Iwan when the great flood of 1990 created havoc in the area. Here she shares her memories of the first day.



I can remember the bad weather and it being windy, but thought nothing of it as February is known for its gales.

The first time I realised something had gone wrong was when a woman came into the school grounds with her huge dog - I think it was lunchtime - to ask where the evacuation centre was!

My friends and I looked at her as if she was mad, then I noticed the tide mark around her waist and asked what had happened. She said that the sea wall had broken and Towyn and Kinmel Bay were flooded!

Everything is exciting at that age. All my friends lived in Kinmel Bay, as did I, and panic set in. We went to find a teacher to ask if something had really happened, or had a mad woman with a rottweiler just wandered into school?

The alarm for end of break went early and we had to go to our form classes for afternoon registration. And it was confirmed then that the wall had broken and the coast from Belgrano to Kinmel Bay was flooded.

We were told that if we lived in Towyn we were to stay in school, if we lived in Pensarn, Abergele, Bodelwyddan or the far side of Kinmel Bay our parents were on their way.

Then we were asked if we had any siblings who were in Towyn Primary School - could we go to collect them from the dinner hall? So I went to collect my brother.

When I got there it was shocking how many people were there. I didn't know where to look. As the realisation set in I started to worry for my mum as well as my brother.

My brother wasn't there, the rest of his school was! Apparently he'd fallen into the water while the authorities were trying to rescue him and because he was so wet and cold a teacher's aid took him home.

But I didn't know that and panic really set in, even when I spoke to the teacher and knew he had gone home - it didn't reassure me that home was still dry and safe.



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- Sardinia: Cymry yn 'ddiogel'
- Pontio: Dim prif weithredwr

Anyway mum and a dry brother came to collect me, and through a lot of tears it was explained that home was dry, but the far side of the Foryd Road nearest the sea was under a lot of water and that it was only that road that was keeping us dry.

The electric was off for at least a week but we were lucky that we had a gas fire and cooker so we stayed at home, the water did seep over the Foryd but never made it over the pavement. We were very lucky to be on slightly higher ground.

We were checked on daily by the authorities who really wanted us to leave as we were an island of dry ground. But the threat of robbery was high and mum didn't want to leave.

The vast devastation took years to recover from. I can remember for years and years we were sent out to check the drains on the road whenever the gales hit and we had heavy rain. A lot of the flooding in Kinmel Bay came from the drains rather than directly from the sea wall.

Sharon Lloyd

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Flood memories

Last updated: 02 October 2007

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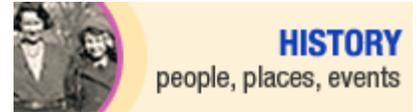
Caravan supplies shopkeeper Margaret Peake recounts her memories of the 1990 floods.

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With her business in danger from the rising tide and her grandchildren stuck in the low-lying playschool, Margaret Peake from Towyn was at the heart of the emergency when the sea wall gave way in 1990 and the lives of many Towyn residents were turned upside down.

◀ **Listen to Margaret's memories, illustrated by her pictures (above).**

More flood memories from Mary Wilson.



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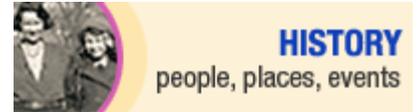
One of the flooded Towyn caravan sites.

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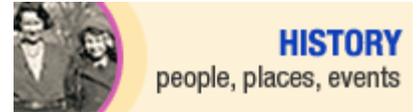
◀ An RAF rescue helicopter winches people to safety. ▶

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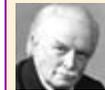
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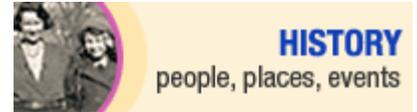
◀ The ambulance service Landrover comes to the rescue. ▶

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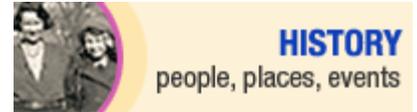
A fire engine drives through the floods.

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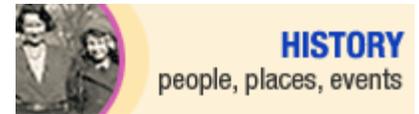
◀ All sorts of vehicles were called upon to help out. ▶

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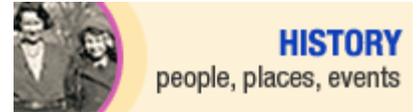
Margaret's front garden and drive under water.

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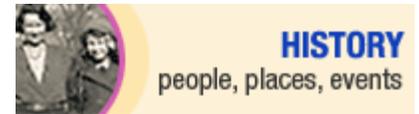
◀ The Army join other services in the rescue operation. ▶

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Shops on a flooded road.

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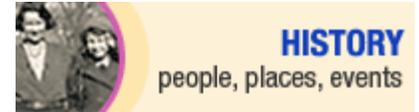
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- [Local public services](#)
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Hall of Fame



Public life
Meet heroes and historic figures raised in the region.

In Pictures



Slideshows
Our A-Z takes in everything from aerial views to zoos.

About this site



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Tai Hanesyddol

O blastai crand i ffermydd gwledig, camwch dros drothwy rhai o dai mwyaf hanesyddol yr ardal

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