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Piping up with artful gems I've unearthed

THESE are times when the editor of this newspaper fears I have lofty ambitions to be the West Wales version of Melvyn Bragg.

This column wanders off in the direction of the arts so often that it could be billed as The South Bank of the Tawe Show. Two events this week reinforced the opinion –

- I seem to have developed an interest in Uilleann Pipes ... and ...
- Worryingly, I spent an hour this week watching an online auction for a work of art.

Plainly, some of you will be fretting that I have too much time on my hands. But my defence is that time spent on such things is useful research.

It was the Roseberys of London auction house website that caught my attention this week with its sale of Modern British and 20th Century works of art from collections including that of the author John Le Carré.

The auction saw the sale of a work by James Dickson Innes, the Llanelli-born painter, who is widely recognised as one of the finest to be produced by Wales and who is reported to have influenced a whole host of artists, including David Hockney.

The oil on canvas (painted in 1909) was titled Land's End, Cornwall – and the auction was as exciting as a Premier League football match, with bids coming thick and fast until the paint-

ing sold for £7,800.

Innes was born in 1887 at Greenfield Villas, Murray Street, Llanelli, in a property which is now home to a firm of chartered accountants.

Thanks to the work of the Llanelli Community Heritage Group, a blue plaque marks his birthplace.

Innes was the son of the historian John Innes. Following his early education at Christ College, Brecon, he attended the Carmarthen Art School in 1904 and later trained at the Slade School in London.

Sadly, his life was cut short by tuberculosis (TB) and he died in 1914, at the age of just 27, at a nursing home in Swanley, Kent.

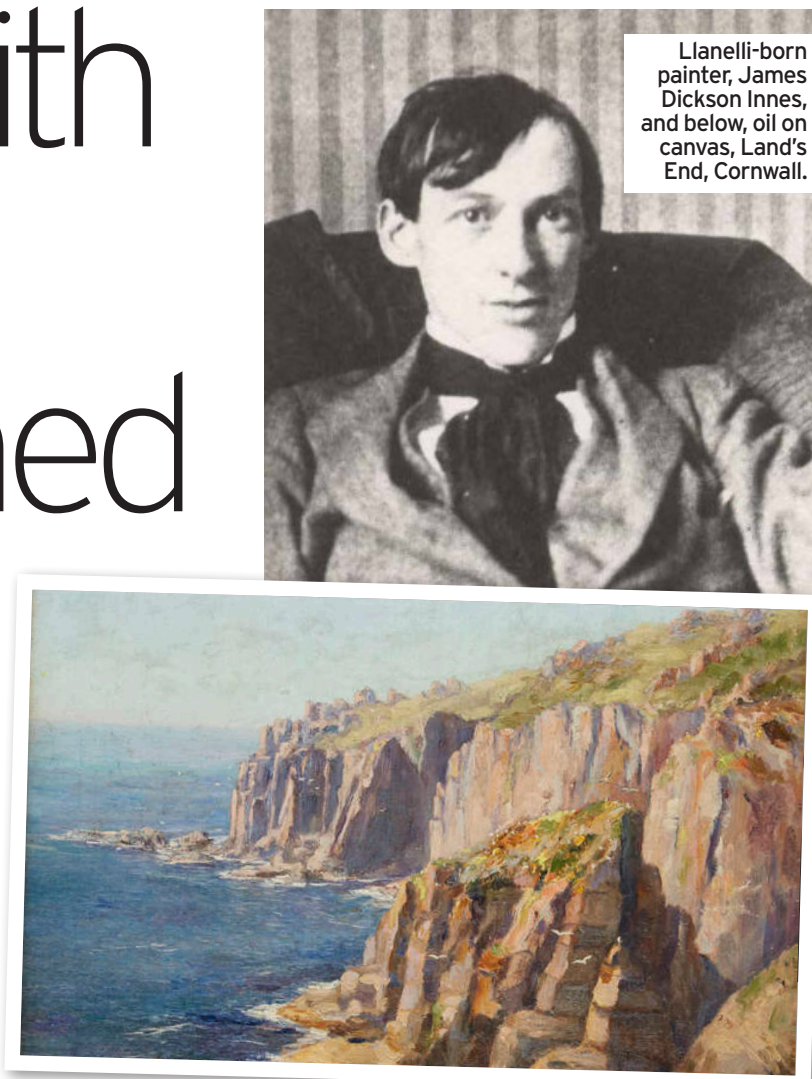
By all accounts, the good folk of Swanley are now planning a second blue plaque to mark the place where Innes died.

Innes was friendly with the famous artist Augustus John and is widely admired for landscapes painted in rich colours.

It's not recorded where Innes stood on the music produced by Uilleann Pipes, but the instrument seems to have led me down a few internet rabbit holes this week.

It's all because I have entered the dates May 12-14 in my diary for Gwyl Uilleann Glanyfferi – the Ferryside Uilleann Pipes Festival.

I am willing to bet good money (cash that I would otherwise have wasted on



Llanelli-born painter, James Dickson Innes, and below, oil on canvas, Land's End, Cornwall.

Use your loaf with our wildlife

IT'S enough to make me want to scream out loud, "Don't do it!"

The only reason I don't is because I don't want to frighten the wildlife.

It's probably a very divisive issue – but I see red every time I see someone feeding bread to swans and ducks.

Some of you do it with the best of intentions, thinking the birds are hungry.

But, trust me, they rarely are.

Feeding the swans and ducks bread is the equivalent of giving your child a fast food fix.

The RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) should know a thing or two about the topic.

They say: "All types of bread can be digested by birds, but ideally it should only be just one component in a varied diet. Bread does not contain the necessary protein and fat birds need from their diet, and so it can act as an empty filler.

"Although bread isn't harmful to birds, try not to offer it in large quantities, since its nutritional value is relatively low. A bird that is on a diet of predominantly, or only bread, can suffer from serious vitamin deficiencies, or starve."

So, there you have the sound advice.

I'll just leave it there as (bird) food for thought.

By the way, as annoyed as I get about feeding swans and ducks pieces of bread, just don't get me started on giving chocolate to your pet dogs!

TIDES (Height in metres)

Swansea King's Dock	
Friday	1.37am (9.84) 2.27pm (10.00)
Saturday	3.14am (10.41) 3.48pm (10.70)
Sunday	4.21am (11.27) 4.48pm (11.48)
Port Talbot	
Friday	1.29am (7.34) 2.22pm (7.36)
Saturday	3.06am (8.87) 3.50pm (8.06)
Sunday	4.17am (8.72) 4.50pm (8.88)
Llanelli	
Friday	1.27am (5.83) 2.20pm (5.85)
Saturday	3.03am (6.28) 3.46pm (6.43)
Sunday	4.13am (6.99) 4.45pm (7.11)

Lighting-up time: 5.53pm

Tidal predictions for Port Talbot, Llanelli and Swansea King's Dock (outer sill) computed by the National Oceanography Centre. www.noc.ac.uk. Swansea: 2.30 metres below Chart Datum; Port Talbot: 5.20 metres below; Llanelli 3.66 metres below

Weather Around the Country

	Friday	°C	°F	Saturday	°C	°F
Birmingham	rain	14	57	showers	13	55
Bristol	showers	15	59	showers	13	55
Cardiff	showers	13	55	cloudy	12	54
Carlisle	rain	13	55	cloudy	12	54
Exeter	showers	13	55	rain	14	57
Gloucester	showers	15	59	showers	13	55
Leeds	cloudy	15	59	rain	13	55
Liverpool	showers	14	57	cloudy	12	54
London	rain	14	57	showers	13	55
Manchester	cloudy	14	57	rain	13	55
Norwich	rain	13	55	rain	13	55
Nottingham	cloudy	14	57	rain	13	55
Plymouth	showers	12	54	showers	13	55
Swansea	showers	12	54	cloudy	11	52

Weather Around the World

	Friday	°C	°F	Saturday	°C	°F
Amsterdam	cloudy	13	56	rain	14	58
Beijing	cloudy	9	49	sunny	16	60
Corfu	rain	13	56	sunny	14	57
Majorca	overcast	18	64	cloudy	17	62
Mexico City	pcldy	23	73	pcldy	23	73
Moscow	snow	1	34	sunny	0	32
New Delhi	cloudy	32	90	rain	33	91
New York	rain	13	55	overcast	9	49
Paris	cloudy	15	59	rain	16	61
Rio	sunny	28	82	rain	28	83
Rome	sunny	16	61	sunny	17	62
Sydney	sunny	27	81	rain	26	79
Tokyo	overcast	16	60	rain	9	49

Today's Weather

Skies will be partly cloudy to cloudy today with widespread showers and rain. Afternoon highs will range from 12 to 14C.

Sun & Moon

Sunrise 6:22 a.m.
Sunset 6:19 p.m.
Moonrise 4:59 a.m.
Moonset 12:09 p.m.

Almanac

	Aberystwyth	Cardiff	Conwy
Yesterday's High (°C/°F)	11/52	11/52	12/54
Yesterday's Low (°C/°F)	10/50	9/48	10/50
Yesterday's Precip	0.00"	0.20"	0.00"
	Brecon	Carmarthen	Swansea
Yesterday's High (°C/°F)	11/52	11/52	11/52
Yesterday's Low (°C/°F)	9/48	9/48	8/46
Yesterday's Precip	0.10"	0.00"	0.30"

Wales' Four-Day Outlook

	Friday	Saturday
Partly cloudy. SSW wind 9 mph.	13°C/ 55°F	7°C/ 45°F
	Sunday	Monday
Cloudy. W wind 11 mph.	11°C/ 52°F	7°C/ 45°F
Scattered light rain. SSW wind 11 mph.	12°C/ 54°F	8°C/ 46°F
	Tuesday	Wednesday
Isolated light showers. SW wind 13 mph.	12°C/ 54°F	7°C/ 45°F

High Tides

	Friday	Saturday
Holyhead	4.5 6:08 a 4.5 7:06 p	4.8 7:27 a 4.9 8:14 p
Pwllheli	3.7 3:35 a 3.6 4:25 p	4.0 4:56 a 3.9 5:40 p
Aberystwyth	3.7 3:45 a 3.7 4:34 p	4.1 5:06 a 4.1 5:42 p
Milford Haven	5.2 1:31 a 5.2 2:24 p	5.6 3:06 a 5.7 3:48 p
Llanelli	5.8 1:28 a 5.8 2:21 p	6.2 3:03 a 6.4 3:45 p
Swansea	7.0 1:38 a 7.1 2:29 p	7.6 3:14 a 7.9 3:51 p
Port Talbot	7.3 1:36 a 7.4 2:30 p	7.8 3:12 a 8.1 3:52 p
Barry	8.6 1:51 a 8.7 2:46 p	9.1 3:33 a 9.5 4:15 p
Cardiff	8.9 2:03 a 9.0 3:02 p	9.5 3:51 a 10.0 4:31 p
Newport	8.8 2:12 a 8.9 3:08 p	9.4 3:56 a 9.8 4:37 p

PHARMACIES

The following are open tonight from 5.30pm to 6pm unless stated:

Clydach: *Lloyds, Heol y Nant, and High Street. **Cwmfelin:** Carmarthen Road, Swansea. **Cwmlllynfell:** Well, Gwyllym Road. **Llangennech:** *Gravelle Pharmacy. **Morriston:** Lloyds Pharmacy, Strawberry Place, 8.30am-6pm. **Penclawdd:** *Huw S Rees, The Pharmacy. **Swansea:** Swansea Sainsbury's Instore Pharmacy, Quay Parade, 8am-10pm; Tesco Forestfach, 8am-8pm; Boots Morfa, Morfa Shopping Park, 8am-10.30pm. **Uplands:** *Well Pharmacy, 55 Uplands Crescent. ***Oxygen equipment stocked.**

For details of pharmacies (including out of hours) contact NHS Direct on 111 or www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk

LOTTERY

Wednesday, March 15

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