

Llangollen 2016

Hands on @ Llangollen Eisteddfod e-newsletter

Edition 4

June 2016

A note from our Chairman

Not long to go now to Llangollen's 70th Eisteddfod and all staff and volunteers have been extremely busy putting the final touches to what promises to be a splendid festival. Again I'd like to be thank you all for your efforts and also thank people for taking a different view of the Eisteddfod and embracing change.

We've already had a successful fundraising concert in the Town Hall and on Saturday June 11th, we are going to mark our association with the Town Hall by having a celebration of the fact that the opening concert of the first Eisteddfod was held there on June 11th 1947. All are welcome to join.

I am sure you're all aware of the splendid concert stream we have this year, new competitions and greater number of overseas groups. I am very keen to welcome new volunteers, to re-engage with the local community and to promote to all that is available on the field for all. I am really looking forward to what is being presented on the outside stages this year.

Remember it's Llangollen's Eisteddfod, i.e. everyone's Eisteddfod. Let's make the 70th one of the best!

Dr Rhys Davies
Chairman

Dates for Your Diary

- **Saturday 11th June**
Celebration of the first day of the very first Eisteddfod on June 11th, 1947. Llangollen Town Hall, 10am to 4pm.
- **Sunday 19th June**
Help needed for marking out and putting out chairs in main arena.
- **Tuesday 5th to Sunday 10th July**
Festival week! ☺
- **Weekend of 16th & 17th July**
Litter picking on the field

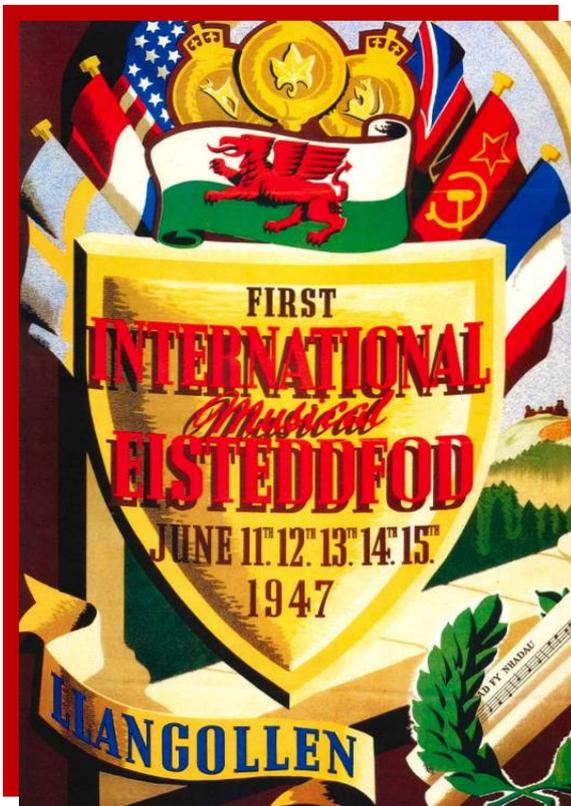
Llangollen 1947

11th June 2016 Llangollen Town Hall 10.30am – 4pm

As we approach the 70th Eisteddfod we are keen to mark this milestone in our history and recognise the efforts of those involved in the Eisteddfod over many years. On the 11th June 2016 we are having an event in Llangollen Town Hall to commemorate the very first day of the very first Eisteddfod which took place on that date in 1947. Whilst in the early years the Eisteddfod competitions were held in a marquee on the recreational field the actual opening concert was held at the Town Hall and so it is fitting that this should be the venue for this event.

This will be an opportunity to publicise the all aspects of Eisteddfod and we will have an exhibition of archive material, memorabilia from the competitors club, souvenirs, a floral committee stall, details of this year's event with a free prize draw and information on volunteering. We will also be showing some promotional DVDs and archive footage and there will be free refreshments.

Thank you to those who have already committed to volunteering to support this event at what is a very busy time of year. If anyone else is interested in assisting, for whatever time period during the day, then please let me know on siane@international-eisteddfod.co.uk. Even if you are not able to stay and help we would like to see as many volunteers as possible so if you are in Llangollen that day please come and say hello.



Also on this date.....

Llangollen Rotary Club and Llangollen Inner Wheel Club will be holding their annual garden fete with assistance from the newly formed Rotary Club of Dee Valley. These organisations have been strong supporters of the Eisteddfod for many years and a large number of Eisteddfod volunteers are also involved with these organisations. We wish them well with the event which is being held in the grounds of Plas Newydd from 2pm.

Fundraising event - Cheese, Wine & Musical Crackers

On Saturday 21st May, a fundraising evening of *Cheese, Wine and Musical Crackers* was held in Llangollen Town Hall in collaboration with local show choir, *Stage 2 Stage*, many of whose members are Eisteddfod volunteers.

The audience, who numbered around 120, were welcomed to the venue with a glass of wine and then treated to a two set programme of favourite tunes from musical theatre and screen. This was compered by Christine Dukes and accompanied by a live, five piece band led by *Stage 2 Stage's* Musical Director and Chairman of Music & Staging, Elen Mair Roberts.



During the interval, the audience then feasted on platters of cheese and biscuits kindly prepared by volunteers from the Hospitality Committee using food largely donated by local businesses.

Following the entertainment, an auction of memorabilia autographed by some of the Eisteddfod's recent celebrity artists was held, hosted by Chairman of Marketing, Ian Lebbon, and ably assisted by Gareth Edwards, who together with Adrian Farrel, had collected the items together over the past couple of years.

Of the 19 lots which were up for grabs in the auction, all but 1 was sold and a fantastic figure of over £1,700 was raised. A Welsh Rugby shirt signed by Status Quo in particular generated some interest and was eventually sold for £350.

A great evening was had by all involved and huge thanks should go to *Stage 2 Stage* and all the volunteers and staff who supported the event in so many ways to make it successful, from front of house, tickets, publicity, bar and food, to flowers, raffle, staging, lighting and sound. The final profit for the event has still to be confirmed but the forecast indicates this will be upward of £2,800, all of which will go directly to festival funds.



Photographs courtesy of
Barrie Potter

Volunteering Opportunities

Sponsor Hosts

The Sponsor team is looking for 4 new volunteers to assist with hosting sponsors and their guests, mainly at evening pre-concert receptions.

Sponsor hosts work in small teams and are responsible for greeting sponsors and their guests when they arrive at the pavilion, answering questions, resolving queries, escorting them to and from their seats in the auditorium and being on hand throughout the reception to ensure their experience is enjoyable.

This opportunity would suit people with a "can do" attitude, an ability to think on their feet and a willingness to learn. They should also be confident, comfortable with making conversation with new people and have an interest in the arts. It would be an advantage to be bi/multi-lingual but not a requirement.

The minimum age for this role is 18 years. Please also note that reasonable level of physical fitness is needed as hosts will be on their feet a lot of the time. Hours are from 4.30pm until typically the end of the evening concert. Smart dress is required.

If you fancy a new volunteering challenge or know of someone who would like to get involved, please get in touch with Louisa Jones for more information volunteers@international-eisteddfod.co.uk

Help needed!

The Grounds team is looking for volunteers to assist with the following tasks before and after Eisteddfod week:

- Marking out in the main arena on the morning of Sunday 19th June
- Putting out red chairs in the main arena on the afternoon of Sunday 19th June
- Litter picking on the field on the weekend of 16th & 17th July

If you are able to spare a couple of hours to help, please contact Ros Davies rosd Davies7@icloud.com or a member of Grounds Committee. More precise timings will be advised.

Volunteer News

Many congratulations to Music & Staging committee member Helen Belton on achieving her MMus degree in Performance from Bangor University. Helen studied for this as a part time student between October 2012 and October 2015 and the course included musicology, teaching, performance and performance practise.

Whilst studying, Helen took the lead role in Puccini's opera *Suor Angelica* in 2013 and was involved in another opera *L'Egisto* in 2014. She has been taught by local opera singer and Bangor university singing teacher, Anne Williams-King, for the past 8 years.

Helen has undertaken a number of roles with the Eisteddfod since she first became involved in 2003, most recently as copyright supervisor during festival week. This year however, she will take the helm as continuity supervisor for the main stage, alongside Siân Roberts.



Photograph courtesy of Helen Belton

Eisteddfod Ambassador Campaign

As part of our promotional work for the 2016 Eisteddfod, we would like to invite volunteers to join in our new ambassador scheme.

Volunteers are a vital part of the success of the Eisteddfod and we would like to hear your stories and at the same time spread the word about the Eisteddfod. We would like to hear from those of you who have a particularly longstanding commitment as a volunteer, an unusual connection with Llangollen, those of you who are out of the area or just feel happy to share your experiences. Your stories would feature in our social media or PR campaigns and as a Volunteer ambassador we would ask that you make your email address available so that people in your local area can contact you with questions about visiting or competing in the Eisteddfod.

If you are interested in being a Volunteer ambassador then please contact Siân Eagar on siane@international-eisteddfod.co.uk

Focus on...Front of House

Each edition, we ask a different committee or function to give us an insight into the role they play in making the Eisteddfod happen. In this issue, we focus on the Front of House team, led by Ros Davies.

As many of you probably know I live in Sun Bank, just outside Llangollen. Sun Bank has a long tradition of providing volunteers for the Eisteddfod going back to the original members, Colonel Cobbold, Mr Butler and Mr Reeves. At present we have 6 residents and 3 part time residents as Eisteddfod volunteers, not bad as we only have 25 houses!

I became a volunteer at the Eisteddfod at an early age, being taken along by my Grandfather who was a Steward and selling programmes when I was in my last year of Junior School. After a couple of years I became Albert's Messenger. Don't laugh, we had no phones and it was a long way to run to Penddol and back. If you were ever a Steward back then you will know what I mean about Albert's pink, blue and green cards, rickety benches and Kit-Kat sandwiches.



We have moved on, but the chairs still need stacking! There are 2 sides to "Front of House", the exciting side which happens during the week and the hard work which happens the 2 weeks beforehand and the week after.

My Eisteddfod starts 2 weeks before the opening concert helping sort and put the red chairs in with a lot of help from the Grounds and Tickets members and the Community pay back team. The following weeks are spent washing the red chairs, then we wash the green chairs and stack them on the sides of the flat area. While the cleaning is going on we put the row end letters on and Ysgol Dinas Brân pupils come in to number the red seats. At this time we check, double check and re-check that we have the correct number of seats per row.

Photograph courtesy of Gareth Edwards

When we finish it looks so nice, clean and organised looking up from the Ha Ha then when we turn around, oh no! Start again on the green chairs...! It is the green chairs on the flat area which gives us most problems as we are always having to work around other crews and find our slot and try to have the helpers available.

Now for the week itself. I usually come in for 8am and see that the pavilion is ready. Ysgol Dinâs Bran Conservation Group come in each morning to clear the litter. I meet with the Stewards staff and arrange for the doors to be opened when Stewards and Ushers are in position.

On days other than children's day, I have 3 people to help. During the day I make arrangements for the Adjudicators table to be moved in and out. Helped by the Stage crew and Grounds members. If we have a good day no chairs break and the visitors have the correct tickets and we are all happy and it is so nice to meet returning friends.

Once competitions are over, Ushers come back in to help check seats and Ysgol Dinâs Bran Conservation Group to remove litter etc. We put in special seat arrangements for the evening concert, communicate this with Ushers & Stewards and keep the pavilion secure for the sound checks.

In the evening the assistant front of house members oversee preparations and liaise with the Chief Steward and Stage Manager to announce the opening of the doors and see to the seating of the audience.

After the Sunday evening concert we start in earnest to get the green seats stacked away so another late night. A job which couldn't be done without the volunteers and it is amazing how many turn up and the speed at which they work after a long week.

Monday morning 8am it is a rush to get the row ends off the seats before the Sound and Lighting guys start to move chairs out of their way. Then it is back to the rota of a few Grounds members and Community pay back to stack the red chairs and litter pick the pavilion and whole site as the tents come down. This usually takes the week up to Friday.

So please, please come forward, bring a friend and come and give us a hand. The Grounds Committee needs you!



Hands On @ Llangollen Eisteddfod now has a Facebook page!



Join our group page to keep up to date with the latest news and information



Ysgol Dinas Brân Stand

As part of the 70th celebration Ysgol Dinas Brân, Llangollen will have a stand on the field during Eisteddfod week, located next to the Visitors Centre. During the week there will be an opportunity for past pupils and teachers to meet and share their memories of school and the Eisteddfod over a cup of tea.

Photographs will be on display so if anyone has any photos or momentos, which they would be willing to share, please leave these in the office for the attention of Ian Lebbon, Chairman of the Marketing Committee.

Thank you!

Youth Volunteers

We are fortunate to have a number of youth volunteers (aged 18 to 30) who come back every year from their universities, or take time out from their jobs, to volunteer during Eisteddfod week in a wide variety of roles. These young people are the future of the Eisteddfod organisation and we are very keen to engage more like them to help secure the next 70 years of our wonderful festival. Below is a contribution from Music & Staging volunteer Eluned Ashwood, whose journey with the Eisteddfod started since before she even knew what it was!

So this year, will be my 20th year at the Llangollen Eisteddfod. 20th because I have attended every year from birth, partly due to my younger years having being taken along with my mum who has stewarded every year. There is no doubt the Neil has probably got pictures of me every year with his trusty camera.

The first few years of my life it is honest to say that I can't actually remember attending. My years through primary school I can remember very well. In primary school the Eisteddfod meant to me 2 days off school. It wasn't until I was in my final year that my school made the trip to the field, despite being so close in Garth. I would spend with mum at the Eisteddfod watching the competitions, browsing the stalls, watching the evening concerts or just being a mini tag-along steward to mum.

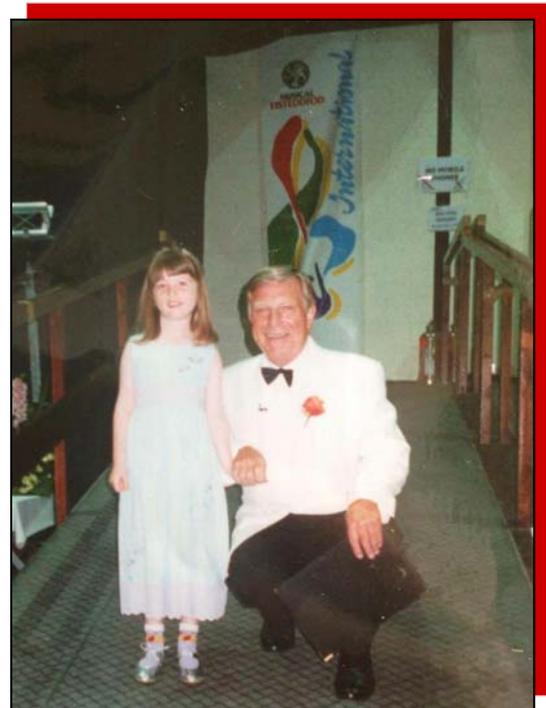
When I was eight I was honoured with the role of presenting flowers to Rhys Meirion. I can still remember that role - a white rose for him, a red rose for his pianist followed by a curtsy to the audience. It is the curtsy part I remember so well as after doing it the audience "awwwd" - the embarrassment hit me and still remains etched in my memory.

When I was 9 (Year 4), my school was part of the peace message. I was part of the choir. I can remember learning *Make Me a Channel of Your Peace* in Welsh and being so chuffed when we performed it on stage having learnt all the words. In addition our school had a drum part which we performed, consisting of various percussion instruments.

Entering Dinas Brân meant I was assigned to the role of Usher. Ushering was great fun - especially when you got assigned a door with my mates or some of the more "interesting" stewards.

The summer of 2009 I spent the Eisteddfod weekdays helping out in the friends tent making tea, coffee and serving biscuits to anyone who visited the tent.

From 2010 I have been volunteering backstage in the pavilion with the sound crew Wigwam Acoustics. The role doesn't just involve walking on and off stage with a mic or two but there is much more that goes on behind the scenes which you don't see. The week starts more than the first evening concert on the Monday/Tuesday. The weekend before I help the crew to set up all the



sound equipment that supplies the pavilion itself and the system that delays the main broadcast around the site. Then as the week begins I am on-site long days - from the competitions at 9am through to the get-out of an orchestra after the concerts are over in the evening. Working backstage has meant I am able to say I have worked with 'celebrities' from Lulu, Status Quo to Karl Jenkins and Jools Holland. Working so closely with the sound crew and other backstage crew for the last 6 years has created great friendships, united for same week of the year and it is like we have never been separated.

Now, at university in Manchester, the Eisteddfod is still part of my calendar booked out to the Eisteddfod.



Photographs courtesy of Eluned Ashwood

New challenge for Siân

At the beginning of May, Siân Eagar made the transition from Eisteddfod volunteer to employee when she was appointed to the newly created post of Operations Manager. Siân, who has held the role of Company Secretary for the past three years, will now be responsible for the day to day running of the Eisteddfod office and co-ordinating the work of the officers, staff and the army of Eisteddfod volunteers.

A volunteer since she was 12 years old, Siân comes from a family with close links to the festival. Her grandfather, Dr. Gwilym Benjamin, was a founder and several other family members have volunteered over the years, with both her mother and aunt still members of the floral committee.

A solicitor by profession, she is looking forward to a change of direction and is confident that her broad working knowledge of the Eisteddfod and previous managerial experience combined with her Business Studies degree will be helpful to her in her new challenge.

Congratulations Siân and best wishes for your new role!



Photograph of Rhys & Siân courtesy of Gareth Edwards

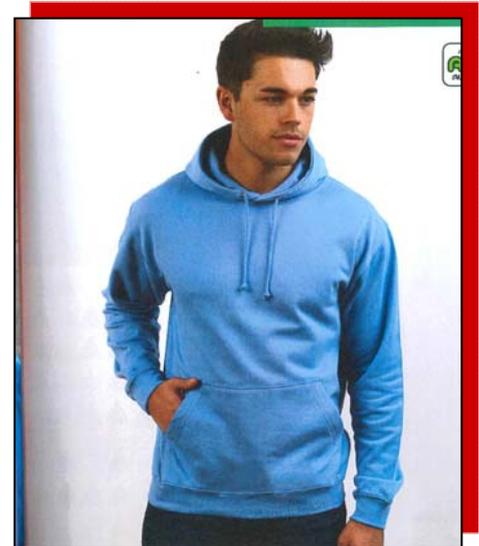
Volunteer hoodies

One of the ideas put forward by the Hands On @ Llangollen Eisteddfod team was to have a special range of branded Eisteddfod clothing for volunteers, which could be worn both during and outside of Eisteddfod week. Siân Eagar has looked into available options with a number of suppliers and we are now pleased to offer volunteers the chance to purchase an Eisteddfod hooded sweatshirt in time for Llangollen 2016.

The hoodie will be produced in the style shown in the picture to the right and will have the round Eisteddfod logo with the 'Byd Gwyn' motto embroidered on the left hand shoulder. The word VOLUNTEER will be printed across the back in black lettering.

The cost of the hoodie would be £14.00 and it is available in any of the colours shown below. You can also choose the colour embroidery that you want for the logo.

If you would like to check the colour choices, please call into the office where there is a colour swatch available. There are also examples of each size should anyone wish to try them.



JH001 AWD is College Hoodie
 80% ring spun cotton/20% polyester.
 Double fabric hood with self coloured drawcord.
 Front pouch pocket with small hidden opening for ear phone cord feed.
 Ribbed cuffs and hem.
 Twin needle stitching.
 Tear out label.
 WRAP Certified Production.
 Weight: 280 gsm
 Garment sizes are approximate and for guidance only.

Size:	XS*	S	M	L	XL	XXL	3XL**	4XL**	5XL**
Chest (to fit):	34	36	40	44	48	52	56	60	64

*Available XS.
 **Available 3XL.
 ***Available in 3XL, 4XL and 5XL.

RE-BRAND WRAP

If you would like to purchase a hoodie then please email Sian Eagar at siane@international-eisteddfod.co.uk confirming your name and contact details together with confirmation of the size, colour hoodie and colour embroidery that you require.

In order to ensure delivery before the Eisteddfod order should be placed no later than the **14th June 2016**. Please note that we will not be stocking the volunteer clothing in the shop, it will only be available by ordering in advance.

Friends of Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod (FLIME)

Supporting the Eisteddfod for over 40 years

The Friends of the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod, or FLIME as it has become known, was started in 1973 by Michael Fay and other members of the Eisteddfod Publicity Committee to support the Eisteddfod. As a result of its work, support has been given to Competitors from poorer parts of the world to help with the expense of their stays in Llangollen for the Eisteddfod.

Friends come from all over the world and have supported the Eisteddfod for nearly 40 years. Over this time £370,000 has been contributed. We would like this to increase significantly in the future – how about making it £400,000? About 500 new members should do it. We've never recruited that many in a year, but let's go for it! For more information, go to our web site: www.flime.org.uk (or try the QR code below for our membership form) – which is a part of the main Eisteddfod site – email us on info@flime.org.uk, phone us on 01978 862006, or if you're on the field during the week, simply call into our tent and have a chat and a cuppa.

Friends are a Registered Charity, distinct from the Eisteddfod itself. Subscription rates for the Friends are set at a level so that anyone who is interested may join. These subscription rates are minimum rates and many members generously pay a lot more. Many members also significantly increase the value of their subscription by paying by GIFT AID allowing their tax to be reclaimed.

On joining the Friends you will:

- keep in touch with the Eisteddfod through the year
- help the Eisteddfod put on more competitions with greater variation
- be able to express your views and ideas on what the Eisteddfod might do
- help spread the Eisteddfod's influence
- get priority early booking for all Eisteddfod day sessions and concerts
- be sent regular issues of the Friends' newsletter, Limelight
- have use of the Friends' Tent in Eisteddfod week, for refreshments and to meet other Friends
- receive an attractive badge featuring the Friends' handshake logo

Subscription rates are:

- Adults - £18.00 (overseas £24.00)
- Joint - £27.00 (overseas £30.00)
- Family - £32.00 (overseas £36.00)
- Student - £12.00 (overseas £14.00)

Barrie Potter
Chairman of FLIME



Volunteer Q&A

Our 750+ volunteers make a significant and invaluable contribution to the running of the Eisteddfod. This regular Q&A feature aims to give a light hearted insight into the individuals who make our festival possible. For this edition, Trefor Edwards, member of the Ground Committee and courtesy car driver during Eisteddfod week, takes us on a ride through his Eisteddfod journey.



- **What is your full name, where you were born and raised and where do you live now?**

Trefor Edwards. I was born in Welshpool and since I was 5 I have lived in Llangollen.

- **When was your first Eisteddfod and why did you visit?**

My first Eisteddfod was going up to see my father on the old gas board tent where he would be on the gate (where the Visitors Centre has been previously). In those days it was the main sponsor's tent.

- **What is your current role as a volunteer and what does it involve?**

My current role is courtesy car driver. It is my job to look after all the cars on the field and lead a small team of drivers to try and make sure the VIPs and disabled visitors can get around easily and hopefully stay dry.

- **What other roles have you had as a volunteer?**

In 1979 I started as most do as a program seller. In 1981 I moved to Music & Staging where I was the diploma runner, fetching the winning diplomas from the calligrapher Mrs Jardine at her town address and getting it back to the field. Then until 2008 I was an assistant to Pat Evans.

- **What is your most memorable Eisteddfod moment?**

Before choir of the world I used to love the old Saturday night concert. When more of the groups and choirs would perform some of what had gone on during the week. George Heald would play the piano and everyone would have a sing around. And then on Sundays you would have concerts like the Royal Marines band and it would be a big send off for the week and make you look forward to next year.

- **What is your funniest memory of the Eisteddfod?**

In 37 years there have been plenty of funny memories and a lot of them would get me shot if I spilled the beans! But I do remember a stage announcer once wanted a dressing table and as I could not drive in those days, we had to carry one from the chairman's house. On getting back to the field hours later someone said "she's not having that" and we had to take the thing back.

- **Please tell us something you have done that you might never have done if you hadn't been involved with the Eisteddfod?**

Meeting all the people. The VIPs, the public and groups from other countries who you see year after year and they remember you and you remember them.

- **What would be your perfect Sunday night concert?**

Got to be ELO, 10CC or something for us 40/70 year olds. Or Status Quo again.

- **Please tell us something that no one at the Eisteddfod knows about you?**

I am a big trivia fan and I love old films and TV shows.

- **Finally, please tell us what the Eisteddfod means to you?**

The Eisteddfod means so much to me. It's like a big clock, everybody is like a cog, from programme seller to back stage, from cleaner to chairman we all work to put on one big show. For 4 weeks WE all work as a team and even at the end when we're all tired, we can't wait till next year.

We hope you have enjoyed this edition of the Hands On@ Llangollen Eisteddfod e-newsletter! The next issue will be at the start of August 2016. Please send any contributions to volunteers@international-eisteddfod.co.uk by Sunday 31st July.