

Pam's tourism work recognised with Lifetime Achievement Award

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A passionate ambassador for the tourism industry in Mid Wales for more than 40 years received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the inaugural Mid Wales Tourism Awards.

Pam Powell, MBE, from Rhayader, who is approaching her 95th birthday, collected the accolade from Powys High Sheriff David Peate at the glittering awards ceremony held at The Hafren, Newtown on October 17.

"The award is an absolute surprise," said Pam. "I still like to do things for Wales, but my tourism work was so long ago now. I was just being Welsh and promoting the country."

Awards compere was Welsh tourism personality Jonathan Jones, CBE, a good friend of Pam. "Pam reminds me constantly that, as chief executive of the former Wales Tourist Board, I should have done so much more for Mid Wales," he said. "And, you know, she's probably right!"

Born near Rhayader in 1924, Pam moved with her parents to Cardiff where she was educated at Cardiff High School and Cardiff University. After a period teaching domestic science, she married and moved to Cowbridge where she brought up her three sons.

Her role as president of The Welsh Ski Council ensured that all three boys were excellent skiers, with one representing GB and another becoming a ski instructor.

Widowed in her early 50s, Pam bought Blaen Cwm Farm near Rhayader where she established a pony trekking business and was a founder member of the Pony Trekking Society of Wales.

Because of her public relations and cooking ability, she was recruited by both the Wales Tourist Board (WTB) and the British Tourist Authority (BTA). She pulled

together a small number of Mid Wales farmhouse ladies and started supporting BTA and WTB tea rooms at tourism trade and public exhibitions all around the world.

She often drove to events using her own car towing a specially adapted Ivor Williams trailer full of tea, scones, Welsh cakes and bara brith. Mr Jones said: "When WTB/BTA raised the issue of customs duties, Pam's reply was: 'Who's going to stop a little, old lady with white hair?'"

"Even when she was promoting Britain and Wales, she never left anyone in doubt that she was from Mid Wales! For this amazing contribution to Welsh and British tourism she was awarded an MBE."

When the travelling became too onerous, she opened a B&B in her mother's former home and supported her son, Clive's mountain biking business in Rhayader, attracting mountain bike groups from across the UK and Europe.

Throughout this time, Pam has been a member and strong supporter of Mid Wales Tourism and was instrumental in establishing Rhayader 2000, which brought local tourism related businesses together.

Designed to celebrate and showcase the region's exceptional tourism industry, the biennial Mid Wales Tourism Awards are organised by MWT Cymru with support from Mid Wales Regional Tourism Forum, a public and private sector partnership and Visit Wales, the Welsh Government's tourism arm. A dedicated Tourism Awards Advisory Group was established specifically to assist with the awards.

Granted an Awards Trust Mark by the Independent Awards Standards Council, the awards were open to all businesses, organisations and individuals who contribute to tourism within Mid Wales.

MWT Cymru is the regional destination marketing and membership organisation for Powys, Ceredigion and Meirionnydd district of Southern Snowdonia. As a not-for-profit social enterprise company, MWT Cymru supports and represents more than 550 tourism businesses and organisations across the region.

Picture caption:

Pam Powell, MBE, receives the Lifetime Achievement Award from Powys High Sheriff David Peate.

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