

ELERI LOSES HER FEAR OF HEIGHTS

For most of us, a visit to the Eiffel Tower, the London Eye, or even a seat in the upper circle at the theatre would be quite a treat, but for primary school teacher Eleri Hughes, her fear of heights often made her feel sick, dizzy and out of control – until she underwent a few key sessions with Rhyl-based hypnotherapist Wynne Roberts. Don Hale reports on her unusual experience. *Photographs by Stéphanie Durrant.*

In the January edition of North Wales Living magazine, we featured the extraordinary life and times of stage hypnotist and consultant hypnotherapist Wynne Roberts. The former Holyhead man, who resembles a cross between Billy Connelly and Rolf Harris, is well known for his stage performances and television work with S4C.

The Welsh-speaking TV star, has since put his experience to good use by working part time at several North Wales hospitals, and is a member of the Hypnotherapy Council, providing valuable advice on a number of lifestyle problems.

Via the magazine, we ran a special competition prize, offering three free treatment sessions for one lucky reader, to discuss their fear of flying, spiders, snakes or other key concerns.

The eventual winner was Elin Huws, from Ruthin, who nominated her mother Eleri Hughes from Llanysnillysni, in-between Porthmadog and Caernarfon for the prize, as for decades, she has suffered from a fear of heights.

Elin said: "I didn't have any particular fears, so I asked my mother. She has always had this fear of heights – and these sessions have made such a

difference."

Her mother Eleri explained: "I cannot pinpoint exactly when I first became aware of my fear of heights, but it had an uncanny way of making my life very uncomfortable at times. Going to the theatre was fine – as long as I was able to sit in the stalls.

"And the Millennium Centre was great too, if I could sit at ground level, but of course you don't always have a choice, and when I found myself up in the skies – I just froze! It made me feel sick, dizzy and out of control.

"I'm not suggesting that situations like these can't be avoided but there have been times when I have found myself in such situations, unexpectedly, and the way I felt was not nice.

"When the opportunity arose for me to have the hypnotherapy sessions with Wynne Roberts, it was very difficult to know what to expect at first. After the initial visit, I was faintly beginning to think 'Yes, there might be something in this.'

"The second visit proved to be much more positive, and my faith in what Mr Roberts was doing, grew. And on arriving for my third and final session, I could hear myself confidently

saying: 'Yes, I can even climb the Marquis of Anglesey Tower. I am going to do it – and more than this I want to do it!'

"This was something I hadn't dreamt of before, and I have actually stood at the foot of the Eiffel Tower and London Eye, whilst members of my family have enjoyed the experience. From now on, I too shall be in 'on the action.'"

Wynne, who has travelled the world, and is much in demand for his skills and services, says the majority of problems usually relate to smoking, diet, drink, or a fear of flying – coupled with a wide range of phobias.

"Some even relate to childhood worries," he said. "I invite people to discuss their concerns, and sometimes use a mild form of regression to make them address their fears. But I take them back as an adult, not a child."

With Mrs Hughes, he knew she had a lifelong fear of heights. He arranged three sessions with her and gradually helped her to face up to reality.

Wynne said: "We were going to try to go up the Anglesey Tower but ironically on the day in question it was closed due to high winds – so I asked Eleri if she wanted to walk on the Menai Bridge instead.

"She was determined to have a go. And I was amazed how she walked with such confidence as we approached the bridge. She had no fear of what she was about to do and even looked right over the edge and way down to the water.

"Eleri admitted to me with pride, that it was something that she could not have contemplated just three weeks before."

Wynne confirmed that it was blowing a gale, and doubted whether she would attempt this walk because the bridge was so open and exposed. He said: "I knew that if she could do this, then she could go anywhere – and ironically, I was more concerned for the photographer - who was also frightened of heights!"

Eleri praised Wynne's sympathetic treatment and said this bridge ascent and perhaps one day, the ascent of the Marquis of Anglesey Tower, will be the first of many other similar challenges she will overcome.

She concluded: "I would like to thank Wynne so very much, and to North Wales Living magazine, for making such a difference to my life." ■

