

Chester man cleared of historic sex offences

Michael Hanwright, of Sedgefield Road, was found not guilty of nine charges

BY **ELWYN ROBERTS** 19:00, 11 JAN 2017



Mold Crown Court

A Chester man has been cleared of a series of historic child sex offences.

Defendant Michael Hanwright denied that any such thing had happened.

At Mold Crown Court this afternoon, Wednesday, January 11, a jury found Hanwright, 59, not guilty of nine charges – two charges of rape, two charges of indecency with a child, and six charges of indecent assault.

Hanwright, of Sedgefield Road in Chester, was told by Judge Niclas Parry that he entered the court a man of good character and he now left court with that character intact.

The defendant, then an ice cream man, was alleged to have committed the offences in the Deeside area back in the 1970s when the complainant was aged under nine.

After she had grown up she challenged him after seeing him on the Friends' Reunited web site and called him a paedophile.

It was in September 2015 that the complainant, by then a woman in her 40s, went to the police and made a formal complaint about what she alleged had happened to her as a child, said prosecuting barrister Kim Halsall.

Arrested and interviewed, the defendant denied any sexual impropriety.

Sion ap Mihangel, defending, told the jury his client denied that he had any physical contact with her at all, let alone sexual contact.

The defendant said that he did remember being called a paedophile on the website at one stage and could not understand why.

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