

THE WELSH SOCIETY OF VANCOUVER

Gymdeithas Gymraeg Vancouver

Cambrian News

Arst
2008

August
2008

Society Newsletter - Pylchgrawn y Gymdeithas



ABERGYNOLWYN

Abergynolwyn

CAMBRIAN HALL, 215 East 17th Ave, Vancouver B.C. V5V 1A6

VANCOUVER WELSH SOCIETY

Officers:

President:

Jane Byrne (604) 732-5448

Vice-President:

Lynn Owens-Whalen 266-2545

Secretary:

Lynne Shepard 879-6925

Treasurer:

Gaynor Evans 271-3134

Membership Secretary:

Heather Davies 734-5500

Immediate Past President:

Tecwyn Roberts 464-2760

Directors:

John Cann

Mary Lewis

John Morris

Alwyn Rogers

Eifion Williams

Contacts

Building Committee:

Lynn Owens-Whalen 266-2545

Cambrian Circle Singers:

Nerys Haqq 278-8978

Church Service:

John Cann 588-0249

Rentals:

Glyn Shepard 879-6925

(glyndwr@telus.net)

Social Events Committee:

Gillian Rogers 742-1378

(Gillian.Rogers@shaw.ca)

Welsh Folk Dancing:

Gaynor Evans 271-3134

Welsh-Speaking Group:

Ann Roberts 987-6996

Webmaster:

Alwyn Rogers 742-1378

(www.welshsociety.com)

Newsletter Editor:

David Llewelyn Williams 737-0305

(williams@phas.ubc.ca)

The Cambrian News

From The Editor:

By the time you receive this edition, both the National Eisteddfod and the Lorient Festival will be in full swing. I am grateful to Eifion Williams for his article on the latter which is highlighting Welsh culture. At the National this year the Leader of the Overseas Welsh is again from Canada, Myfanwy Bajaj from Toronto, well known us for her active participation in Richmond at the 2003 North American Festival of Wales. At this time we are celebrating the 60th Anniversary of *Undeb Cymru a'r Byd*. I have included John Pritchard's letter of congratulation and some early history.

You will also find advanced notice of the main events scheduled in 2008. Note especially the Llanelli Choir visit.

The picture on the front was sent to me by David Llewelyn Davies. The village of Abergynolwyn was built to provide housing for the quarrymen at the Bryn Eglwys Slate Quarry, one of whom was my maternal grandfather. The picture faces south, the direction of the trail to the now defunct quarry is through the pass ahead. To the east lies Tal-y-llyn Lake. Just to the west of the picture is the Abergynolwyn station at the start of the narrow gauge Tal-y-llyn Railway to Tywyn which was used in earlier days to transport the slate to the coast. To the north, a pleasant walk through the ferns takes you first to Castell Y Bere, the last Welsh stronghold to fall to Edward I, and then to Llanfihangel-y-Pennant, the home of Mary Jones who walked to Bala to buy a Bible from Thomas Charles.

David Llewelyn Williams

Forthcoming Events

Wednesday, September 3rd, Executive Meeting, 7.30 pm.

Wednesday, September 10th, General Meeting, 7.30 pm.

Sunday, September 14th, Bilingual Church Service 11.00 am followed by Tê Bach

Lunch at the Cambrian.

You are cordially invited to join us for convivial company and lively conversation, from 11.30 - 1.30 on the 4th Wednesday of each month. On **September 24th**, flower arranging will be featured and it is hoped, music on the Player Piano. A Bridge table will be an alternative for enthusiasts. A Book Exchange is planned, so if you are interested, bring a paperback or two which you have enjoyed and are prepared to exchange. Later in the year, we want to include topics of special interest to you. Please bring a packed lunch, which could be shared, if you wish.

Pat Morris

While Llanelli Male Voice Choir are in town:

Thursday, September 25th Noson Lawen. Anyone wishing to participate should call one of the executive.

Friday September 26th we are hoping Llanelli Choir members will join us for a quiz night.

Saturday, September 27th a Grand Concert at the Bell Centre featuring Llanelli Male Voice Choir and the Orpheus Male Voice Choir.

The Llanelli Male Choir (*Côr Meibion Llanelli*) is recognized as one of the best male voice choirs in Britain. The Choir last visited Vancouver in 1990 as part of a West Coast tour, although the Choir's Musical Director, Eifion Thomas, conducted the our Centenary *Gymanfa Ganu* at the Cambrian Hall last year in addition to performing as a tenor soloist at our Gala Concert.

The Choir has won many major choral competitions, including the competition at the National Eisteddfod of Wales on several occasions. The Choir has also sung in such prestigious venues as London's Royal Albert Hall, Festival Hall and Westminster Abbey, as well as Coventry, St. David's and Wells Cathedrals, the National Concert Hall in Dublin and St. Mary's Cathedral in Kilkenny. The Choir has also toured extensively abroad, including many visits to Europe, Australia, New Zealand and the United States. The September concert will be the Choir's third visit to Canada's west coast. **See the attached Poster. Members may contact Alcwyn Rogers for tickets (604-742-1378).**

Saturday, October 18th, Film night

Saturday, November 1st at 7pm Anniversary Dinner.

Sunday, November 2nd at 2pm, Gymanfa Ganu followed by Tê Bach.

Saturday, December 6th Carols and Mulled Wine and maybe a quiz night.

Sunday, December 14th Children's Christmas Party (numbers permitting)

Saturday, December 20th Christmas Dinner.

Celebrating the 60th Anniversary of Undeb Cymru a'r Byd.

The Summer issue of *Yr Enfys* featured the 60th anniversary of this organization. Contributions celebrating the event were encouraged from readers. The following was submitted by John Pritchard

HAWDDAMOR.

Ymlawenhawn ym mhenblwydd ein Hundeb yn drigain oed! Canmolwn y gwyr enwog gynt a gadwodd y fflam ynghyn. Clodforwn yn arbennig, T. Elwyn Griffiths am fod yn fywydwraig i'r mudiad, ac hyd heddiw, am ei waith fel rhiant ysbrydoledig. Cymeradwywn y fyddin o wirfoddolwyr a weithiodd mor ddeheuig i hybu'r achos gydol y blynyddoedd.

Mae'r gwaed Cymreig yn llifo drwy'n gwythiennau, ym mha le bynnag yn y byd y trigwn. Mae'r balchder yn ein gwreiddiau yn anhygoel yn ei faint a'i nerth. Mae delfrydau'r Undeb heddiw, fel yr oeddynt yn y dechreuad, ac fel y buont dros y degawdau: cadw dolen gydiol sicr rhwng Cymry led-led y byd, ac i hyrwyddo ein hiaith, ein diwylliant a'n brawdgarwch.

Plygwn lin mewn diolchgarwch am "Yr Enfys", sydd wedi bod yn un o'r dolennau cydiol cryfaf a mwyaf cyson yn y gadwyn frawdol. Ystormus fu hanes dolen gydiol bwysig arall yn ddiweddar. Cafwyd rhyfel gartrefol llidiog ynghylch seremoni croeso'r Cymry oddicartref yn Yr Eisteddfod. Bydded i ofaint medrus y ddwy garfan ail-lunio cadwyn newydd gref yn y cyswllt hwn.

Mae cysylltiadau cynnes a di-ffuant wedi bodoli cydrhwng Undeb Cymru a'r Byd â Chymdeithas Gymreig Vancouver. Yn y croeso swyddogol cyntaf gan Yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol,

ym Mhenybont ar Ogwr 1948, Thomas Edwards o Vancouver oedd yr arweinydd. Dilynwyd ef gan Angharad Lloyd Roberts yn 1955, Gwenfyl Jones yn 1982 a John Pritchard yn 2005. Yn y cyfeiriad arall, mae Cymry Vancouver wedi cael y fraint o groesawu cannoedd, os nad miloedd, o gyfeillion o'r fam-wlad i Neuadd y Cambrian. Maen't wedi dod fel unigolion, yn barau, yn finteioedd, yn dimau, yn ysgolion yn deithwyr ac yn gorau. Hyfryd odiaeth fu'r gyfathrach!! Hir oes i Undeb Cymru a'r Byd, diolch o waelod calon am bopeth a phen-blwydd godidog oddiwrth Gymry Vancouver. Tangnefedd,

John O. Pritchard

John pays tribute to those who worked so diligently to 'keep the flame alive' over the years. In particular, T. Elwyn Griffiths, the founder of *Undeb Cymru a'r Byd (Wales International)*. Wherever we live, Welsh blood flows through our veins and our pride in our roots is strong. The Undeb's ideals remain today as they have always been: keeping a secure link between the Welsh world-wide and promoting our language and our culture. We are especially grateful for *Yr Enfys*, one of the strongest fraternal binding forces between us.

The Vancouver Welsh Society has had warm and sincere connections with the Undeb, both through its four members who have served as Leaders of the Overseas Welsh and also through the multitude of Welsh visitors we have had the privilege of welcoming to the Cambrian Hall, as individuals, pairs, companies, teams, schools or choirs. Long life to the Undeb, with heartfelt thanks for everything and wishes for a splendid birthday from the Vancouver Welsh Society. D.L.I.W.

A Star that rose in the East

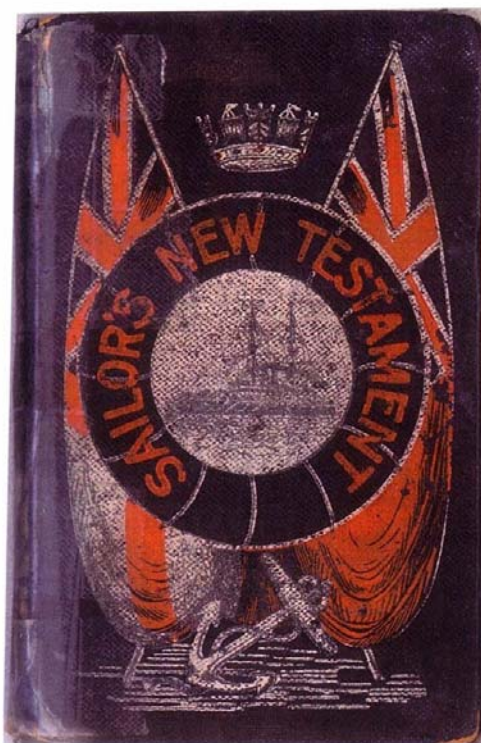
The Summer issue of *Yr Enfys* tells the story of its precursor, *Seren y Dwyrain* (The Eastern Star). A young RAF officer in Cairo during World War 2 had the idea of publishing a monthly Welsh language news magazine to be circulated amongst Welsh societies in Cairo, Alexandria, Jerusalem, Haifa and Casfarit in the canal zone. The young Welshman was T. Elwyn Griffiths, the Founder, now Honorary President of *Undeb Cymru a'r Byd* and formerly its longtime secretary and editor of *Yr Enfys*. He recalls "There was a very flourishing Welsh life in the Middle East with concerts, Sunday evening religious services and cymanfaoedd canu popular amongst servicemen." Two very successful eisteddfodau were held in Cairo in 1943 and 1944 and the regular appearance of the magazine from October 1943 on made societies aware of each other's activities and led to the formation of new Welsh societies from Italy to the Sudan. It was his firm belief based on this experience that Wales needed an organization that would connect with Welsh people worldwide.

Vancouver Society members will be interested to learn that in his reflections on the 60 years, T. Elwyn Griffiths was particularly grateful for the support of Angharad Lloyd Roberts, Vancouver, who distributed 110 copies of each issue of *Yr Enfys* at her own expense!

Coincidence?

Mr. John Cann asked me to do a reading in English at our Church Service in the Cambrian Hall on Sunday, May 11th. For some reason I did not choose to read from the English Bible at the Hall, but from a pocket sized volume entitled

"Sailor's New Testament" which has the White Ensign of the Royal Navy on one side of the cover and the Red Ensign of the Merchant Navy on the other.



This little New Testament book was given to my uncle, Henry Lampshire, by his mother Sarah (My Grandmother). He wrote his name and the date (Nov. 1911) on the flyleaf. He joined the Merchant Navy and took this little book with him throughout World War One and until he retired from the Sea.

I eventually inherited this New Testament and when I commenced my sea-going career in Nov. 1939 I took it with me throughout World War Two and until I retired from the sea in 1969 to take a position ashore in Vancouver as a Marine Surveyor.

Today is 11th May 2008. On arriving home after the service something made me check the Family Bible regarding my Uncle. He died 11th May 1947.

Capt. Ieuan Lampshire-Jones.

CÔR CYMRAEG DE CALIFFORNIA VISIT

The Welsh Choir of Southern California (Côr Cymraeg De Califfornia) charmed the audience at St. James Anglican Church, Cordova Street, on the evening of June 28th with a mix of secular, sacred modern and traditional music. The Choir's rendition of traditional songs and hymns in the Welsh language proved particularly popular with those members of the Welsh community in the audience.



The Choir in the Red Dragon

In the afternoon, the Choir was welcomed to Vancouver at a lunch in the Cambrian Hall provided by our Society, during which time Choir members entertained their hosts with a sample of their repertoire around the piano in the Red Dragon. On the previous two evenings the Choir sang to appreciative audiences in Seattle and Camano Island. Following the Vancouver Concert the Choir moved on to sing at St. John the Baptist Anglican Church in Cobble Hill on Vancouver Island.

Eifion Williams

Photos by Gwyn Evans



Singing for their lunch!



Cambrian Society Hosts



California leaving on a summer's day!

These pictures are on our website

WELSH CULTURE TO FEATURE PROMINENTLY AT BRETON FESTIVAL

There have been increasing ties in recent years between Europe's Celtic nations. The biggest showcase for the traditional and contemporary cultures of these nations is the Lorient Festival in Brittany, which has emerged as one of Europe's leading events, attracting over 700,000 people each year.

It has become a tradition for the festival to feature one of the Celtic nations prominently each year. This year Wales is the featured nation at the event, which was officially launched in Paris in May. The Festival will run from August 1-10 and will feature the best of Welsh music, art and culture.

The focus of activity during the Festival will be a Welsh pavilion where Welsh performers will be featured. During the Festival, a wide variety of Welsh artists will also perform at venues across the city, with music ranging from the traditional to the contemporary. There will also be an opportunity for visitors to sample Welsh food and drink and buy Welsh products.

On Friday, August 1st, the Welsh rock band **Sibrydion** will perform (Sibrydion means Whispers, a curious name for a rock band!).

On August 2nd a **Gala Celebration of The Year of Wales** will mark the official opening of the Festival. The Gala events will be presented by the Welsh/Breton poet and television presenter **Aneirin Karadog** and writer and critic **Sian Melangell Dafydd**. It will feature **Clerorfa**, the fifty-strong folk orchestra of harps, fiddles, flutes, hornpipes and bagpipes, the dance group

Dawnsywyr Môn (Anglesea Dancers), **Sidan** (Silk, a folk music group whose recent hits include *Gobaith* (Hope) and *Ar Goll* (Lost)), harpist and singer **Bethan Nia**, who won the Celtic Connections Open Stage competition this year and the **Dowlais Male Voice Choir**.

A Concert on August 4th will feature world-renowned harpist, **Catrin Finch**; **Crasdant** (Triple-harpist Robin Huw Bowen, Ar Log's Stephen Rees, Andy McLauchlin and guitarist and champion clog dancer Huw Williams), **Clerorfa** and the **Dowlais Male Voice Choir**. Throughout the Festival an exhibition of the visual artists **Iwan Bala** and **John Uzzel-Roberts** will be held in the Market Hall in the town centre.

The Lorient Festival promises to reap big benefits for Wales as visitors will be able to learn more about Wales as an ideal tourism, business and educational destination. Welsh Heritage Minister Rhodri Glyn Thomas said: "This festival will show Wales as the confident, forward-looking, multilingual nation that it is. The events that have been organized as part of Wales's featured nation status will whet the appetite of visitors to the festival and hopefully persuade them to come and see Wales for themselves."

Eifion Williams

(with a few notations by D.L.I.W.)

Welsh Proverb

Gwell goddef cam na'i wneuthur.

**It is better to suffer an injustice
than to inflict one.**

Readers may recall from the October 2007 newsletter that *Salvage* by Gee Williams was the first book to be published by Alcemi, the English language imprint of Y Lolfa which has been publishing in Welsh for 40 years. Many of you will have read her short story, *Dinner on the Roof*, of which I received an advance copy.

As you will see from these press releases Gee's book is receiving great acclaim. Maybe we should buy a copy!

Aur Pur / Pure Gold Award for Gee Williams



Libraries across North Wales launched a new reading promotion called Aur Pur/Pure Gold to introduce readers to the good reads available at local libraries. Librarians from *Estyn Allan y Gogledd*, the reader development network, chose twelve books, six in Welsh and six in English, all set in Wales but which take the reader to many different places. Readers were invited to read the books, then vote for their three favourites. Reading groups in libraries across North Wales also read and discussed the books. The aim of the promotion is to show the wide range of stimulating books available free of charge in libraries in Wales, and has been funded from the Welsh Assembly Government's National Marketing Strategy for Libraries. The winning books are **Hogan Horni** by **Menna Medi** (a stimulating read? Ed.)

and **Salvage** by **Gee Williams**. Both fought off competition from books which have won, or been short-listed for, major literary prizes.

Top writers in running for literary prize

A Man Booker Prize nominee, an award-winning poet, and a best-selling American author have been shortlisted for Britain's oldest literary award. Mohsin Hamid, John Burnside and Daniel Mason have been nominated for the James Tait Black Memorial Prizes, along with Rosalind Belben and newcomer **Gee Williams**.

The Prizes are awarded annually by the University of Edinburgh for the best work of fiction and the best biography published during the previous year. The novels competing for the £10,000 prize are:

Our Horses in Egypt by Rosalind Belben;
The Devil's Footprints by John Burnside;
The Reluctant Fundamentalist by Mohsin Hamid;
A Far Country by Daniel Mason;
***Salvage* by Gee Williams.**

Readers should note that four Nobel Prize winners in literature have previously won this prize which was inaugurated in 1919. Many other distinguished authors such as E.M.Forster and Graham Green have also won, so even to make the short list is a tremendous achievement for Gee. It might also be of interest that last year's winner of the biography prize was Welsh journalist and essayist **Byron Rogers** for his biography of R.S.Thomas *The Man who went into the West*. Byron is Alwyn Rogers' first cousin.

VANCOUVER ORPHEUS
MALE VOICE CHOIR

and
the Vancouver Welsh Society

present a joint concert with
from Wales

Llanelli Male Choir



We'll Keep a Welcome

Saturday, September 27, 2008 7:30 pm
The Bell Performing Arts Centre,
6250 144 Street, Surrey

Tickets: \$22.00 Seniors/Students: \$18.00

Available from: the Orpheus Choir hotline 604 515-5686 or
the Vancouver Welsh Society Ticket line 604 742 1378 or
the Bell Box Office 604 507-6355

* add \$1.50 per ticket for credit card purchases

www.vancouverorpheus.org