

THE WELSH SOCIETY OF VANCOUVER

Cymdeithas Gymreig Vancouver

*Cambrian News*

**Ionawr  
2019**

**January  
2019**

*Society Newsletter - Cylchgrawn y Gymdeithas*



Castell Dolwyddelan, Birthplace of Prince Madoc. From a watercolour by Rhodwyn Sykes, 1985

CAMBRIAN HALL, 215 East 17<sup>th</sup> Ave, Vancouver B.C. V5V 1A6

## **VANCOUVER WELSH SOCIETY**

### **Officers:**

#### **President:**

**Lynn Owens-Whalen**

#### **Vice-President**

**Paul Lievesley**

#### **Secretary:**

**Antone Minard**

#### **Treasurer:**

**Wynford Owen**

#### **Membership Secretary:**

**Jackie Chapman**

#### **Immediate Past President:**

**David Llewelyn Williams**

#### **Directors:**

**Ruth Baldwin**

**Jane Byrne**

**Patricia Morris**

**Kathy Thomas**

### **Contacts:**

#### **Building Committee:**

**Paul Lievesley**

#### **Church Service:**

**Various**

#### **Welsh Speaking Group:**

**Roy Beavon**

#### **Rentals:**

**Alcwyn Rogers**

**Wynford Owen**

#### **Social Events Committee:**

**Kathy Thomas (Coordinator)**

**Gaynor Evans (Secretary)**

**[www.welshsociety.com](http://www.welshsociety.com)**

#### **Webmaster:**

**Alcwyn Rogers**

#### **Newsletter Editor:**

**Ruth Baldwin**

**[youcanreachruth@hotmail.com](mailto:youcanreachruth@hotmail.com)**

**Cambrian Hall**

**604-876-2815**

## ***The Cambrian News***

### **From the Editor:**

As I write this editorial during the last days of the old year - those lovely quiet reflective days between Christmas festivities and New Year's parties - I remember that the longest day of the year has already past and the evenings are growing - just perceptibly - lighter! I look back on a host of wonderful events at the Red Dragon - it has been truly one of the best Autumns since I became a member - and forward to the exciting events being planned in celebration of the Cambrian Hall's 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2019. Keep an eye on the events page of the Website and look out for email announcements of the festivities at present in their planning stages!

If you read **Antone Minard's** piece on the **Mari Lwyd** ritual in the last issue, you'll be well prepared to enjoy the YouTube videos of the Society's staging of this South Wales folk custom that was introduced for the first time in Vancouver during the Welsh Weekend in November. See also the Photos in the "Recent Events" section. With the dark rainy evenings of winter in mind, and the many other reasons that daytime events best meet the needs of so many members, **Pat Morris** has begun a series of "Welsh Spirit" Saturday afternoons. At the final "Welsh Spirit" of the old year, **Hugh Lupton**, master story-teller and great-nephew of **Arthur Ransome**, writer of the famous and much-loved children's novel, *Swallows and Amazons*, held us spellbound. These special afternoon "Welsh Spirit" events, in the form of films and talks - and always followed by a têt bach, of course! - have proved very successful and will continue in the New Year.

**Ruth Baldwin**

**[youcanreachruth@hotmail.com](mailto:youcanreachruth@hotmail.com)**

## Forthcoming Events

*Please note there may be date and time changes from time to time, so it's best to check the monthly page on the website before attending events.*

### *Friday 1 March*

#### *St. David's Day Open House*

Doors open at 7:00 pm. Mark your calendar!  
Watch the Society website for details!

### *Saturday 2 March, Annual St David's Day Dinner*

Cambrian Hall, 215 East 17th Avenue,  
Vancouver

Bar opens at 6:00pm for dinner at 7:00pm  
prompt.

Cost: \$45.00 dollars per person (includes tax  
and gratuity)

Catered by Granville Island Caterers. (see  
menu below)

Leek soup served at table

Kale and Romaine Caesar Salad

Pasta Salad

Roast Beef tenderloin with gravy

Mini Yorkshire puddings

Roast Chicken with lemon caper gravy

Scalloped Potatoes

Glazed Carrots

Vegetarian dish, Portobello Mushroom with  
Avocado

Dessert: Individual Creme Caramels

Tea and Coffee

Please reserve your tickets early to avoid  
disappointment by contacting Gaynor  
Evans [fgevens@telus.net](mailto:fgevens@telus.net) or 604 271-3134

here to access the full [Schedule for the term](#).

### *Bilingual Service*

**Sunday 13 January** and **10 February** at  
11.00 am in the Red Dragon, followed by t    
bach (light refreshments).

### *Genealogy Group*

**Wednesday 16 January** and **Wednesday  
20 February** at 10:30 am to 12:30 pm in the  
Red Dragon.

### *Pub Night*

**Friday 18 January** and **Friday 15  
February** at 6:0 to 10:00 pm. This will be  
held, as usual, in the Red Dragon.

*Hello Welsh Society Members and Friends!*

***It's a PUB and***



***Friday, January 18***

*Cambrian Hall/ Red Dragon 7:30 PM*

***Quizzes prepared by our very own quizmaster***

*Eifion Williams*



*Prizes for winning teams*

*For more information: [www.welshsociety.com](http://www.welshsociety.com)*

### *Welsh Classes*

First class of Winter term **Thursday 10  
January** from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. Click

*Welsh Speaking Group*  
**Monday 21 January and 18 February** at  
10:30 am. *Siarad Cymraeg y bore 'ma.*

*Welsh Spirit Event:*

*St. Dwynwen Celebration*

On **26 January** at 2 pm in the Red Dragon we will hold our traditional celebration of St. Dwynwen, the Welsh Patron Saint of Lovers. A brief history of her life and church will be followed by romantic songs and videos, humorous recitations and delectable desserts. To further enhance the levity of the event, it will also feature the **Annual Limerick Challenge**. This year the town in the south is BRECON and in the north it is RHYL. So there will be two separate competitions. Competitors can choose the gender and the age of the character! So, **There was a young fellow/maiden or old man/lady from Brecon/Rhyl could be the first line.** but boy, lad, girl, gent, woman are also acceptable if they fit the rhythm! It would be helpful to receive the entries about a week early, say the weekend of January 19th, but last minute entries may be added for variety!

*Work Party Days*  
**Monday 28 January and Monday 25 February** from 10:00 am until 3:00 pm. A delicious lunch will be provided. Looking forward to seeing you there!

*Executive Meeting*

**Monday 4 February** at 7:00 pm in the Red Dragon.

*Cambrian Bookworms*

**Wednesday 13 February** at 12 noon. This months book is Ruth Hogan's *The Keeper of Lost Things*.

*Annual General Meeting*  
**Saturday 16 February at noon**  
**In the Red Dragon**

*Board members for 2019 will be selected,  
so please plan to attend this event.*

*Lunch will be served and a film shown*

*Pig 'n' Whistle*

**Saturday 23 February at 7:00 pm**

The Vancouver Orpheus Choir will hold their evening fundraiser of music and comedy in the Hall. Admission \$20. All are welcome. Come along and join in the fun. Tickets from **Alcwyn Rogers** by phone (604 742-1378) or email [Alcwyn@shaw.ca](mailto:Alcwyn@shaw.ca).

**... and coming up very soon:**

**St. David's Day events!**

**Typical Monthly Events**

*Everyone is invited to join us at these events but please note there may be changes from time to time, so it's best to check the monthly page on the website*

*before attending. For further information please contact [mail@welshsociety.com](mailto:mail@welshsociety.com).*

**Sundays:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month: Bilingual Church Service. The exception is in November when the service is on the Sunday of the Welsh weekend.

**Mondays:** 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month for Board Members only: Executive Meeting at 7:00 pm.

**Mondays:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month: Welsh speaking group meets at 10:30 am.

**Mondays:** 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month: Volunteer working party: 10:00 am till 3:30 pm.

**Wednesdays:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month: The Book Club meets at 12:00 noon.

**Wednesdays:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month: The Genealogy Group meets from 10:30 am – 12:30 pm in the Red Dragon.

**Thursdays: Welsh Language lessons:** A new term has just begun! Most but not all Thursday evenings from 7 to 9 pm. The schedule varies and details are shown [here](#).

**General Meetings:** The dates of the General Meetings will be decided upon by the executive. The **AGM** for year #1 is held in February of year #2, e.g. the 2018 AGM will be held in February 2019.

### *Vancouver Orpheus Male Choir*

#### **SPRING 2019**

**Saturday 23 February** at 7:00 pm (?). Pig and Whistle Fundraiser at the Cambrian Hall auditorium.

**Friday 15 March** at 7:30 pm “Celtic Concert at New West Christian Reformed Church, 8255 – 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Burnaby.  
**Sunday 17 March** at 3:00 pm. “Celtic” Concert at West Point Grey United Church.

**29 April to 3 May.** Participation in Fraser Valley Kiwanis Festival. One day only. Details TBA.

**Saturday 25 May to Sunday 26 May:** Weekend Tour. Concert venues TBA.

**Tuesday 4 June** at 7:30pm (?) Mini Concert. Location TBA.

Please visit the choir’s website for details of upcoming concerts and events:  
<http://vancouverorpheus.org>

### *Vancouver Welsh Men’s Choir*

Please visit the choir’s website for a fuller list and for details of upcoming concerts and events: <https://vwmc.ca>

### *Cambrian Hall Parking*

Some members, especially those with mobility issues and others who are bringing parcels or bags for social events or building maintenance have been having difficulty getting parking close to the hall when they arrive. In the past couple of years, there have been more “resident parking only” signs appearing and pay parking meters as well. The result has been that our parking lot has been full more often than previously. So, in response to this, we have an agreement with **Hillcrest** to have some parking available in our parking lot specifically keeping in mind members and friends with mobility issues and those



bringing bulky or heavy items required for that event. We ask that other members and friends remember to allow time to find street parking nearby when coming to the hall. Throughout the next year, please let us know if this new initiative is working for you.

**Lynn Owen's Whalen and Paul Lievesley**

## *The Spring Sale*



### **The Spring Sale and the Silent Auction are on the horizon! Volunteers are needed!**

It's the beginning of a new year and the Spring Sale and Silent Auction are on the horizon. First, we need to see the signs of spring with the daffodils rising about the rest of the spring blooms. But, soon after, on Saturday, April 27, the Vancouver Welsh Society holds its biggest fund raiser of the year, The Annual Spring Sale.

Members will have lots of opportunities to volunteer just before, after and on the day of the sale. Please give your name to **Gillian Rogers** as soon as you can and let her know the best time for you that you can contribute to the success of our sale.

The Silent Auction is a huge financial contributor to the profits of the sale and is a great way for us to reach out to our community with information about both the Welsh Society and the Cambrian Hall, which in 2019 will be 90 years old!

We need you to volunteer now, if you can, in preparation for the Silent Auction. The biggest tasks are visiting and securing donations from businesses and individuals over the next few months. At our first meeting we will review the list of community organizations and businesses and then you will receive letters to invite businesses to contribute prior to canvassing. From experience, we know that several and sometimes more visits are required. As there are close to 100 businesses to visit, the more volunteers that we have, the easier it is for all. The phrase is mind is that "many hands make light(er) work."

There will be an organizational meeting on Wednesday, January 17 at noon in the Red Dragon, after the Welsh Genealogy group meet earlier in the morning. Please contact **Lynn Owens-Whalen** as soon as you can to indicate a willingness to contribute to what has become a huge financial contributor to the Welsh Society and also to the upkeep of the Cambrian Hall.

**Lynn Owens-Whalen**

**Society membership secretary, Jackie Jones-Chapman would like to remind members that**

**it's time to**



**pay your dues!**

Annual membership runs from January to December. You can renew on-line or by cash, cheque, eTransfer ([bmo@welshsociety.com](mailto:bmo@welshsociety.com)) or money order.

Regular membership	\$35
Family membership	\$70
Seniors	\$35
Students	\$20
Out-of-towners	\$20

Cheques or money orders should be made out to "THE WELSH SOCIETY OF VANCOUVER" and mailed to:

Jackie Chapman,  
Membership Secretary,  
Cambrian Hall,  
215 East 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Vancouver BC  
V5V 1A6

### *Welcome to New Members!*

Steve Crowley  
Rhys Lloyd  
Susan Thomas  
Diane Walker

### *Wales Around the World*

Have you heard of the digital magazine, [parallel.cymru](http://parallel.cymru) that presents Welsh-language magazine articles side by side with English text, together with a number of resources such as grammar guides, idioms, Book of the Month and lots more? All the content is available free, from any browser anywhere in the world, and is updated several times a week!

**Neil Rowlands**, who runs the magazine, has just completed a list of 70+ Welsh groups and societies around the world, and has

included the Vancouver Welsh Society and many other groups in Canada: <https://parallel.cymru/world/www.parallel.cymru> provides a great way for people outside Wales to keep connected with the language and culture. Check it out!

### **Our enjoyable time at the North American Festival of Wales (NAFOW ) in Alexandria, Virginia, by Edward Rogers-Jones**

On Monday, August 27<sup>th</sup> my sister **Elizabeth** and I took the Monday night red-eye flight to Washington via Toronto. This year's NAFOW was held in Alexandria, Virginia, which is about 5 miles from downtown Washington, DC. While driving from the airport to our hotel we passed the Pentagon. It's the world's largest office building and covers over 5 acres with 17.5 miles of corridors.

We spent the first two days walking around "Old Alexandria," the historic section of the town. **Washington, Jefferson** and many other prominent people in American history were long associated with Alexandria many years before Washington, DC was finally chosen to be the capital of the new republic. We visited Christ Church which was built in 1767. **George Washington** purchased a pew there for £36 when the church first opened. As we wandered around the town (very slowly I might add, since it was humid and over 95°F) we passed the Lee-Fendall House. The last resident owner of the house was **John L. Lewis**, the fiery labour leader and president from 1920 to 1960 of the United Mine Workers of America. Both his parents emigrated from Llangurig in Wales, which is about 25 miles inland from Aberystwyth.

There was a plaque on one of the streets – "Alexandria Library Sit-In" -- commemorating the sit-in by 5 young African Americans in August, 1939 after

they were denied a library card for the “whites only” library. In protest they each selected a book from the shelves and sat down quietly and proceeded to read. They were charged with disorderly conduct. Desegregation of the library began in 1959. On our second day we took the Metro to downtown Washington, toured the National Gallery and viewed the only painting by **Leonardo da Vinci** in the Americas, along with many Old Masters. We then crossed the street to visit the National Archives, which is where the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights and the United States Constitution (along with a copy of the 1597 version of the Magna Carta) are on view. On viewing the Declaration of Independence, I could only see 12 signatories – there were 13 Colonies at the time – and I asked one of the guards which state was missing. He said it was Rhode Island; it was a holdout but signed 2 years later.

On our third day we joined a bus tour organized by the NAFOW committee to places of interest around Washington. We toured the National Cathedral, which is the second largest in the US. At the time we were there they had removed most of the chairs from the nave and our guide said we were fortunate to see the grandeur of the cathedral without the usual clutter. TV cameras were being installed in preparation for the funeral service for **Senator John McCain** on the following Saturday.

A member of the tour who came from Tampa, Florida, mentioned that we should make sure we viewed the statue of St. David (the patron saint of Wales) in the Cathedral. Neither the tour guide nor the Cathedral guides had any knowledge of it. So we made sure we followed her and, naturally, we all took photos.

One of the many beautiful stained glass windows is dedicated to the astronauts and the exploration of space. It has a piece of moon rock at its centre.

We then toured Dumbarton Oaks, a huge mansion surrounded by extensive lawns and gardens. Its main claim to fame is that it was the sight of the diplomatic conference that took place following the end of the Second World War at which the draft for the formulation of the United Nations was signed.



We also toured Tudor Place, another large house, now a museum, which was once owned by the step-daughter of **George Washington**.

The next three days were taken up with NAFOW events – singing and poetry competitions and conferences about various subjects with a Welsh connection. The Eisteddfod Competition for Solo Voice – Semi Professional - was of special interest. The winner competes for the David Morris Award, a cash award of \$3,500 for travel to compete in the following year’s National Eisteddfod in Wales. This year for the first time in its 25 year history, there were *two* winners – **Synyeop Hwang**, a baritone from Jersey City, NJ (2<sup>n</sup> from left) and **Katherine Crusi**, soprano from Ambler, Pennsylvania (4<sup>th</sup> from right). The compulsory Welsh song that Synyeop Hwang had originally meant to sing was “*Calon Lân*,” however, this was rejected by the adjudicating committee since the chosen song had to be an “art song.” He chose to sing instead “Gwynfyd” (Paradise)



by **Meirion Williams**. Since he is not a Welsh speaker, it is amazing that he learnt the song in just three weeks by listening to **Bryn Terfel**'s recording. The judges praised both the winners for their excellent pronunciation. It will be interesting to learn how successful they are at the National Eisteddfod in 2019 (being held in Llanrwst, North Wales).



We also went to see a one-man play called "Grav," which is the story of the Welsh rugby player **Ray Gravell** with **Gareth John Bale** acting the part of Ray Gravell. It was excellent and very moving; I could hear a number of sniffles from the audience. We were very lucky to have such great talent come over from Wales to entertain us. First there was "Trio," a male singing group from North Wales, which sang a number of Welsh and English songs in harmony. Second there was baritone, **John Ieuan Jones**, who sang several arias, songs and Broadway melodies to great applause. Finally, we heard a choir called "**Eschoir**," made up of young Welsh men living in London, England. They sang beautifully and, in addition to singing as a group, four of the members sang solos or duets and performed some very energetic skits. It was generally agreed that they were one of the most entertaining choirs to perform at NAFOW since they provided so much variety. On Sunday morning we had a

bi-lingual Chapel Service and in the afternoon and evening we had the Gymanfa Ganu (Community Singing) led by conductor **Eilir Owen-Griffiths** from Cardiff, Wales. For me, it's really the main reason for attending the NAFOW. This year it was held at a church in Church Falls, Virginia, about 5 miles from our hotel in Alexandria. We all sang our hearts out and it sounded pretty good to me. Each evening many attendees gathered together around the piano in the hotel lobby for more communal singing. We were late getting to bed every night!

The NAFOW officially ended on the Sunday evening. On Monday morning we joined another bus tour organized by the committee. Our first stop was to a large estate called Woodlawn Plantation, once owned by the Lewis Family.



It's a beautiful house but is not being shown to its best advantage, in my opinion. It now houses an art school and each room has been decorated with strange art pieces – mobiles hanging from the ceiling, several wigs placed on pieces of furniture, etc. There was one point of particular interest - an original bed in one of the bedrooms was covered with a blanket. One member of the tour, **Cefyn Burgess**, said the blanket was of Welsh origin. Cefyn, who has his own design studio and shop at the Rhuthun Craft Centre in North Wales (which just happens

to be our Home Town) gave a couple of lectures about textiles during the festival. The guide said that she believed it was an Amish blanket. Cefyn said it might well be since the Amish copied the patterns of the Welsh immigrants. The tour guide said she'd make sure to have the house guides mention the Welsh connection when taking visitors around the house in future.

Located on the vast property is one of **Frank Lloyd Wright's** houses. His parents came from Ceredigion in Wales. It's a small 1,200 square foot house built in 1939. It's called the Pope-Leighey House (after two families who owned it).



It was moved to this estate in 1965 since it was on the verge of being demolished to make way for a freeway. Realizing the historic importance of the house, **Mrs. Leighey** made strenuous efforts to save the house from demolition. Originally costing about \$7,000, it was renovated in 1995 to preserve its foundation at a cost of more than \$700,000!

We then drove the 25 miles or so to George Washington's estate of Mount Vernon, overlooking the Potomac River. We toured the house with a guide and then the grounds on our own.

Here, the NAFOW Vancouver contingent pose with **George Washington** and his family at the entrance to Mount Vernon, George Washington's home on September 3:



Recently, there has been a greater emphasis on the fact that Washington was (like Jefferson at Monticello) the owner of numerous slaves and the slave quarters in both Mount Vernon and Monticello have been renovated to show their harsh living conditions compared to the owner's living quarters.



Eventually we all headed down to the ferry dock on the Potomac for a cruise back to Alexandria. I took a number of photos of the "Vancouver Contingent," this one on the ferry ride on the Potomac River heading back to Alexandria (from left to right: **Elizabeth Rogers-Jones, Edward Rogers-Jones, Pat Morris, David Llewellyn Williams and Kathy Thomas**).





Elizabeth and I checked out of our Alexandria hotel on the following Tuesday and we transferred to a hotel in downtown Washington. I'd rented a car and, on the first day, we drove around Northern Virginia through what is referred to as "Horse Country," said to be one of the wealthiest areas in the US. It's an area of vast estates with manicured lawns, all very pleasant and beautiful. It's quite reminiscent of England and Wales. The two main towns we visited were Leesburg and Middleburg, both very pleasant historic towns. The next day we drove the 125 miles to Charlottesville in southern Virginia and we visited the Monticello estate, the home of **Thomas Jefferson**, which he designed himself.



It has glorious views of the Blue Ridge Mountains in the distance. The gardens are lovely and there's a vineyard on the estate. We were told that the law doesn't allow them to produce their own wine; they have to sell the grapes to a vintner and can then sell the bottled wine in their gift shop! Bureaucracy!

On our last day we took a taxi to Georgetown, the wealthy Washington suburb, and walked around the town. We saw **Jacqueline Kennedy's** last residence among many other interesting places. We then wandered around Washington, past the White House, the Washington Memorial, Lincoln Memorial, etc. While in Washington we had a couple of meals at "The Old Ebbitt Grill" where it's said the "movers and shakers" of Washington meet. We enjoyed our time at NAFOW and the rest of our stay in Washington and Virginia. We haven't decided yet if we'll be going to the next NAFOW which is to be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in August, 2019. We'll see how it goes!

### Photo Gallery of Recent Society Events

The autumn is a busy time at the Welsh Society and if we were to feature all events in this section, the newsletter would be very long indeed! For this reason, the editor has omitted all events for which no photos were submitted – for example, the Welsh Weekend Saturday Cultural Event (3 November), the Cambrian Bookworms Christmas Lunch (13 December), and the Anniversary Dinner on 13 October (for which the editor was out of town).

*Welsh Weekend:*  
The Noson Lawen on Friday 2 November

Members of the Portland Folk Group, **Three Pound Note**, **Andrea Wild** and **Hugo Glanville**, returned this year to entertain us:



Below, a group comprising Society members and Welsh learners perform the **Mari Lwyd** for the first time in Vancouver – A historic moment! Those present were hugely entertained, teased and tormented:

**Jamie Webster** and **Jeff Lewis** sang some lovely duets:



And member **Graham Baldwin** introduced the Mari Lwyd with a poem by British Story-teller **Hugh Lupton** that he had set to music:



To see the full Vancouver Welsh Society Mari Lwyd ritual on two YouTube videos, click on the links below:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C6kkMI-ZTvo>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYJbnoTU6yk>

### **Sunday 2 November Gamanfa Ganu**

This year's Gymanfa Ganu was led by **Emyr Honeybun**:



The Soloist was **Sarah Henderson**:



and **Ray Batten** was the accompanist for the communal singing:



### **Friday 9 November Twmpath**

In recent months, although very much enjoyed by participants, the twmpath has attracted fewer dancers. However, this last twmpath of the year was not only a huge success; it also attracted a gratifyingly large number of enthusiastic dancers. The next twmpath is pencilled in for 23 March 2019. Keep the evening free!

Next column: A view of the November twmpath



### **Tuesday 13 November West Vancouver Genealogy Day**



Genealogy Day at West Vancouver Public Library was represented by the B. C. Genealogical Society, an affiliate of the Welsh Society. The tables set up included the Welsh Group of BCGS representing Wales, England, Ireland, Scotland, Canada, Quebec, the U.S.A., One Name Study, Beginners' Genealogy, Jewish Genealogy, DNA, and Cemeteries.

**Daphne Kelly, Mary Lewis, Pat Morris, Lynn Owens-Whalen and Carole Smythe** set up the Welsh Group table, aided visitors at the library with questions about their family history and helped guide them in their research:



**Saturday 17 November  
“Welsh Spirit”**

Members enjoyed talks on two major Welsh poets: **R.S. Thomas** (given by **David Llewellyn Williams**) and **Dylan Thomas** (given by **David Webb**, below):



**26 November  
Deck the Halls!**

**Jane Burne and Beti Darvell-Jones** pause during their hard work at the Deck the Halls work day for a little lighthearted frivolity:



## Saturday 8 December Welsh Society Christmas Dinner

This year, since **Tim Jordan** has retired and we can no longer enjoy a delicious Christmas dinner prepared and cooked for us by Jordan's International Food Designs, our dinner was catered by Granville Island Caterers, who did a fine job. **Tim Jordan** and his wife, **Lorraine**, were honoured guests at the dinner and Society president **Lynn Owens-Whalen** gave a speech in which she thanked Tim and Lorraine for all the wonderful festive meals they have prepared for the Society over many, many years. Tim replied that he had thoroughly enjoyed his working relationship with the society and is looking forward, now that he has retired, to enjoying as a member all the events he once catered.

Below: **Lorraine and Tim Jordan** pose for the camera and an impromptu male voice choir renders a carol during the carol singing after dinner:



## Sunday 9 December The Children's Christmas Party

**Gaynor Evans** and her elves again provided a most magical Christmas party for members' children and grandchildren, as she has done for many years. This is an event the children look forward to all year. They love the party games, the tea and the visit with Santa – just the sort of activities their parents and grandparents enjoyed when they were children. Each child spent special time talking to Santa and received a gift chosen especially for him or her. As the photos show, the Christmas party was a huge success:







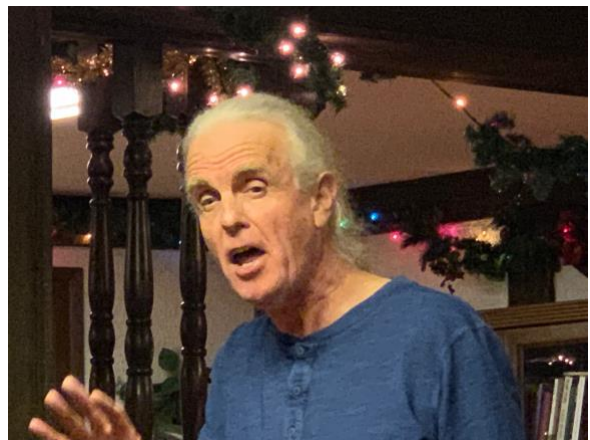
### 15 and 16 December A Child's Christmas in Wales

This yearly event has gone from strength to strength! The show was a sell-out as devotees returned for this annual holiday favourite that includes live original music, well-loved carols and **Dylan Thomas's** famous Christmas story. The evening featured **Russell Roberts, Brian Tate, Colleen Winton** and **Gower Roberts**. Book early for this event next year when the tickets are issued; it sells out very quickly!



### Saturday 29 December "Welsh Spirit" Hugh Lupton: Storyteller

At the last Society function of the year, a large audience gathered in The Red Lion to hear famous story-teller, **Hugh Lupton**. As Hugh recounted stories from the Mabinogion, the audience sat spellbound. Two great legends were vividly brought to life. Hugh, who comes from the UK and is half Welsh, is the great nephew of **Arthur Ransome**, who wrote *Swallows and Amazons*.



## The Voyage of Prince Madoc

When I was a small boy in Llandudno and Deganwy, in Gwynedd, I was sometimes taken to Rhos, where I played upon the beach. A plaque now there reads: "Prince Madoc sailed from here to Mobile Alabama." Many years later, I drove to Mobile from Florida. There, on the beach, is a similar plaque "in memory of Prince Madoc, who landed on the shores of Mobile Bay in 1170 and left behind, with the Indians, the Welsh language."

Madoc was the son of **King Owain** of North Wales, in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. Madoc was reputed to have learned seafaring in Dublin from the Vikings, who no doubt told him of their voyages to the New World. The wars and strife of Gwynedd at that time may have sent him on a quest for a new land. He took a southern route aided by the ocean currents. Three hundred years later, **Columbus** sailed the same way! Of course, it was a coincidence; he never had a chart made by Madoc (did he?!) As a small boy, I knew – as everyone knew – that Columbus didn't discover America! Especially the folks in Port Madoc! We even knew the name of Madoc's ship, the Gwenan Gorn.

Now the story becomes more questionable. Some maintain that Madoc returned home, gathered a large group of settlers and returned to the new land, penetrating to the heart of the continent. Over the centuries, the Welsh became a tribe called the Mandan. The explorers **Lewis** and **Clark** believed this, as did **Catlin**, the famous painter of the tribes.

Did this tale I've outlined motivate the Welsh to emigrate to America and Canada? I believe that it did. Perhaps, one day, new evidence may be found to put the doubt to rest.

Rhodwyn Sykes

Editor: **Rhodwyn Sykes** is a former Vancouverite who was a very active member of the Society. His beautiful artwork is still very much in evidence on the walls of The Red Dragon. He's now an out-of-town member living with his wife **Betty** in Goderich, Ontario. See the cover photograph of Rhod's painting of Castell Dolwyddelan, birthplace of Prince Madoc, on page one.

### Quiz: Part 2 (from walesbooks.com)

11. Which Welsh cathedrals predate those of Canterbury, Winchester and Westminster?
12. Who was called 'the modern world's first Socialist'?
13. Where is the world's largest camera obscura?
14. What is the link between Wales and the Boston Tea Party that sparked the American War of Independence?
15. Which American-Welshman revolutionised cinema techniques?
16. What is the link between the 'mini-skirt' of the 'Swinging Sixties' and Wales?
17. What is the origin of the 'V'-sign?
18. Who gave the world the Peace Union, the precursor of the United Nations?
19. What is the 'Iron Ring'?
20. Who was the most famous buccaneer in history?

### Answers to part 1:

1. Japan.
2. Owain Glyndwr, in 'Henry IV Part 1'.
3. Elizabeth David, born Elizabeth Gwynne (1919-1992).
4. The Ffestiniog Railway, running from Porthmadog to Blaenau Ffestiniog, on a 23.5 inch gauge.
5. Nicky Wire of the Manic Street Preachers was followed by Kelly Jones of the Stereophonics and James Dean Bradfield of the Manics.

6. The great John Charles from Swansea, when playing for Juventus, where he scored 93 goals in 155 games, winning 3 championship and two cup-winners cup medals. His statue stands outside the ground, and he is still a legend in Italy.

7. Powis Castle, home of the family of Gwenwynwyn, the Princes of Powys. They were forced to change their name to 'de la Pole' by Edward I in order to keep their lands.

8. The Royal Mint.

9. Mary Jones from Llanfihangel-y-Pennant walked barefoot over the mountains to Bala, in 1800, to buy a Welsh Bible, using all her savings. This inspired the foundation of The Bible Society, and its London headquarters still displays her Bible.

10. George Everest from Crickhowell, after whom Mount Everest was named, was India's Surveyor-General.

*Answers and part 3 of the quiz in the next newsletter.*

### **Victoria Welsh Society**

We were sad to learn that the Victoria Welsh Society has decided to dissolve this year, since membership numbers have diminished and the society is no longer viable. The editor recently met with **Nerys Hughes** of the Victoria Welsh Society to pass on our President, **Lynn Owens-Whalen's** invitation to the members of the Victoria Welsh Society to join us in our activities when they can. It's hoped that a contingent from the Vancouver Society will be able to cross to Victoria in 2019 to enjoy a social visit with Nerys and other members of the now-dissolved society.



Alfred the great finally finds a way to unite all the tribes of England.

A Russian spy was dropped by parachute in the Welsh hills with instructions to contact a Mr Jones in the small village of Llanfair and give him the coded message: "The tulips are blooming well today."

Arriving at the village he asked a small boy where Mr Jones lived and was directed to a small cottage.

He knocked on the door and the owner emerged: "Are you Mr Jones?"

"I am."

"The tulips are blooming well today."

Mr Jones stared at him in amazement then smiled: "Ah, you must have the wrong house; it's Jones the Spy you want."

From WalesOnline

### ***The Vancouver Welsh Society***

***Newsletter*** is issued three times a year, in January, May and September.