

Mawrth i Ebrill

2004



March to April

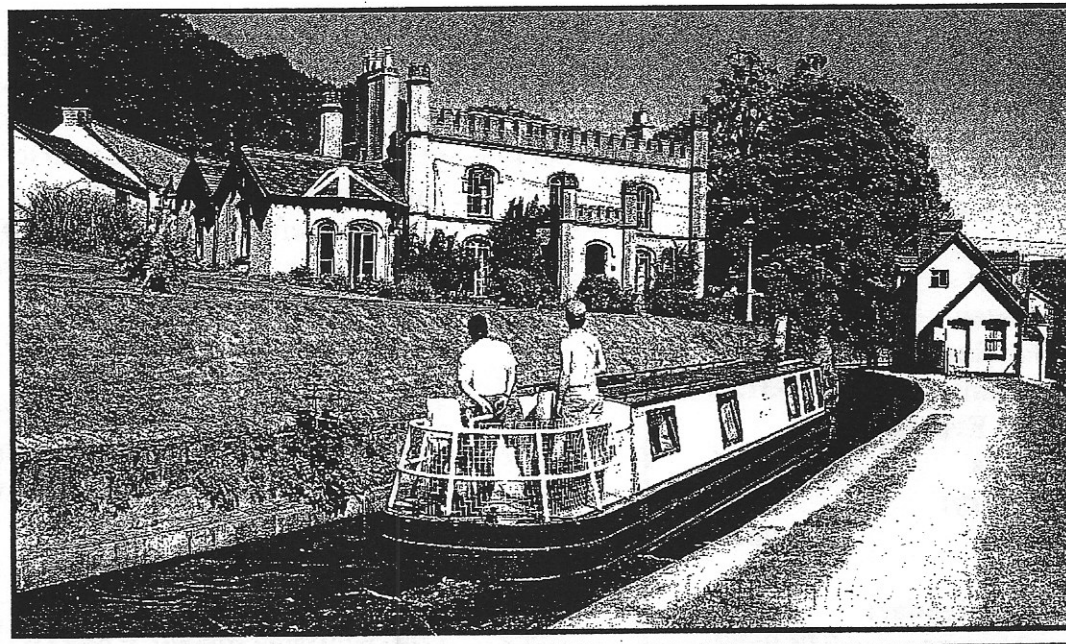
2004

Cymdeithas Gymraeg Vancouver

Cambrian News

Welsh Society Newsletter — Cylchgrawn Cymraeg

LLANGOLLEN



CAMBRIAN HALL, 215 East 17TH Ave, VANCOUVER BC V5V 1A6 Tel: (604) 876-2815

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The Cambrian News

From The Editor:

This edition includes an article on John Charles which I have patched together from articles in the Daily Telegraph and in the Guardian. I feel especially fortunate to be able to include David Davies' extract from his book "Watermill" published by Ceiriog Press in association with Cymdeithas Melinau Cymru c/o Museum of Welsh Life, St. Fagans, (1997) since it gives us such a personal insight into one of the founders of the Cambrian Hall by one of our own members.

I'm sure our good wishes along with those of Nerys Haqq go to Lara Evans as she embarks on her program of studies in Aberystwyth. We shall certainly miss her enthusiastic participation in the events of the Society. Pob hwyl Lara!!

David Llewelyn Williams

The Cambrian Singers

The Cambrian Singers are back with a busy schedule this Spring after all the health problems a year ago. The good news is that both Lucy and Margaret are in much better health today. We have a fairly full schedule and we have also been working hard on new pieces with a few brought back from the past. Bad news for the choir but Llongyfarchiadau to Lara Evans who left us at the end of February to start a Master's program in English at Aberystwyth. Hopefully she will return to Vancouver when she is finished and put her new costume, that her mother made for her, to good use.

Nerys Haqq

PROGRAM Spring 2004

Feb 14th 2.30 Queen's Park Hosp., New Westminster.

Feb 28th 2.00 BC Rehab Pearson Hosp. Vancouver

Mar 4th 7.00 Columbus Residence Vancouver

Mar 12th 7.30 Rehearsal

Mar 17th 6.30 Willingdon Park Hospital

Mar 24th 7.30 Rehearsal

Apr 2nd 7.00 Sunnyside Manor, White Rock.

Apr 14th 7.00 St. Jude's Anglican Home Vancouver

Apr 20th 6.30 Richmond Lion's Manor

Apr 28th 7.30 Rehearsal

May 7/14, 19/26 June 4/11, 16/23 7.30 Rehearsals

The Walking Group

The Welsh Walking Group started on Tuesday November 3rd 2003 with five walkers and we have continued weekly except when it rains. That first day we explored Queen Elizabeth Park and our next walk on Wednesday, Nov. 12th was along the Richmond Dyke. The day was then changed to Monday as this seemed to be the most convenient for all.

We have since walked around Stanley Park, Beaver Lake, Lost Lagoon and Jericho Beach. The group size varies from 4 to 8 and we finish with coffee or lunch. Should you be interested in joining us, please call me. We car pool and we welcome suggestions for new routes.

Mary Lewis 604-331-1573

Membership Dues

Please submit any outstanding membership dues before March 31st to our Membership Secretary, Mary Slaney at the Cambrian Hall. The Society needs your support!

From the Executive

Notice of Motion:

That Section 4 of the Constitution:

The purpose of the Society shall be carried out without the intent or purpose of gain for its members and any profits or any accretions of the Society shall be used for promoting its purposes and this section is alterable.

Be amended to delete the last five words, viz.

.....and this section is alterable.

This motion will be brought forward at the next General Meeting of the Society in April. It is important that a quorum be present to pass this motion.

St. David's Day Celebration

A lively group of 60 members gathered in the Red Dragon on the evening of Monday, March 1st to celebrate St. David's Day in a warm and friendly atmosphere. The theme of Caernarfon, featured in St. David's Day greetings this year from its Mayor, Helen Gwyn, was continued in a scale model of Caernarfon Castle by Nicolas Williams. The traditional fare of Cawl Cenin, Welsh Cakes and Bara Brith was enjoyed by all and we are indeed grateful to those members who made such tasty contributions.

The evening recognized the poetic successes of John Pritchard at the 2003 E-steddfod through a bardic ceremony. John's contributions were read out and after the appropriate calls by the Archdruid (Y Gwir yn erbyn y Byd. A Oes Heddwch? Etc.) and the responses from the audience (Heddwch!), John was seated in the Bardic Chair and awarded the Bardic Crown. The evening continued with enthusiastic hymn-singing under the leadership of Gwyn Evans and the spirited accompaniment of Ray Batten on the piano. Altogether a most enjoyable and sociable evening.

Thanks are certainly due to Jane Byrne and Gaynor Evans for arranging the food and to Elizabeth and Don Murray for tending the bar. Jane also provided the Crown for the ceremony!

D. Ll. W.

Forthcoming Events

Readers are reminded that the May Gymanfa Ganu will take place in the Hall on Sunday, May 2nd.

The Annual Golf Tournament will take place on Saturday, July 3rd. Please contact Tecwyn Roberts (604-464-2760) or Gwyn Evans (604-271-3134) to reserve your place. Numbers are limited!

St. David's Day Dinner

Over a hundred celebrants attended the Society's annual St. David's Day Dinner at the Cambrian Hall on February 28th. The proceedings began with a blessing in Welsh and English by Elizabeth and Don Murray. President Jane Byrne welcomed the guests and introduced the head table. The guest of honour, British Consul General James Rawlinson, proposed the toast to the Queen and read a message of good will from Rhodri Morgan, First Minister for Wales. Mr. Morgan also outlined recent political and economic changes in Wales and the innovative developments that point to a prosperous and sustainable future for the country.

Greetings from kindred Welsh societies from many parts of the world were read by Eifion Williams. Messages of good will were also received from Lieutenant-Governor Iona Campagnolo, Premier Gordon Campbell and Prime Minister Paul Martin. All congratulated the Society for its contributions to Canada's cultural diversity and the 75th anniversary of the building of the Cambrian Hall. The Prime Minister also said, "These special celebrations provide you with an opportunity to reflect upon the many and varied contributions made by Welsh-Canadians over the course of their history in Canada. Since its inception your

organization has worked to promote a greater understanding of the unique character of your community, thereby encouraging our society to grow and flourish."

The toast to Canada was proposed by Barrie Hancock. He praised the entrepreneurial spirit of Welsh immigrants personified by Vancouver businessman Grenville Thomas. The toast to Wales was proposed by Gareth Prytherch who entertained the audience with humorous reflections on his boyhood in Resolven, Wales.

A musical interlude was provided by noted harpist Gwyneth Evans, while the accompanist for the evening was Ray Batten. David Llewelyn Williams entertained the audience with a spirited recitation of two favourite Welsh poems for which he also provided English translations. The dinner concluded with some enthusiastic community singing conducted by Gwyn Evans.

Before the celebrants adjourned to the Red Dragon for further singing and socializing, Barry Hancock thanked Jane Byrne and Gaynor Evans for their organizational efforts in making the evening such a great success.

Eifion Williams

Y Llwynog

Ganllath o gopa'r mynydd, pan oedd clych
Eglwysi'r llethrau'n gwahodd tua'r llan,
Ac anhreuliedig haul Gorffnaf gwyth
Yn gwahodd tua'r mynydd, — yn y fan,
Ar ddiarwybod droed a distaw duth,
Llwybreiddiodd ei ryfeddod prin o'n blaen;
Ninnau heb ysgog a heb ynom chwyth
Barlyswyd ennyd; megis trindod faen
Y safem, pan ar ganol diofal gam
Syfrdan y safodd yntau, ac uwchlaw
Ei untroed oediog dwy sefydlog fflam
Ei lygaid arnom. Yna heb frys na braw
Llithrodd ei flewyn cringoch dros y grib;
Digwyddodd, darfu, megis seren wib.

R. Williams Parry

The Fox

A hundred paces 'neath the mountain's peak,
As the church bells of the foothills called to worship
And the inexhaustible sun of brilliant July
Beckoned to the mountain, — in that spot,
With silent trot on unsuspecting feet,
His rare magnificence stole into our view.
Ourselves motionless and out of breath,
For an instant paralyzed; as if a stone trinity
We stood, when in the midst of a carefree stride,
He too halted in surprise, and above
His hesitant front paw, the two stationary flames
Of his eyes fixed upon us. Then, without haste or fear,
His russet fur slid slowly o'er the crest.
He appeared, he vanished, like a shooting star!

(A translation by D. Ll. Williams for 28/2/04)

John Charles – The Gentle Giant

John Charles, who died February 21st, 2004, aged 72, was Wales' greatest footballer and arguably one of the most gifted players of all time.

William John Charles was born at Cwmdau, near Swansea. He signed amateur forms for Leeds at 15 and debuted for their first XI at 17. In 1950, Charles became the youngest player to be capped for Wales. He was picked at centre-half but in 1952 Leeds moved him to centre-forward where he soon broke the club's scoring record. His record still stands. In April 1957, he captained Wales for the first time and came to the attention of the owner of Juventus. Two months later Leeds sold him to the Italian club, in part due to their dire financial needs following a fire.

Charles' game was built around his powerful yet agile physique – he stood 6ft 2in and weighed over 200lbs – but he never used his size unfairly. He was never once booked in his career and to the supporters of Juventus he was "Il Buono Gigante" – the gentle giant. This reputation for decency started with his first match against Torino. As Charles rounded the opposition centre-half and headed for goal unchallenged, his elbow caught the defender under the chin and knocked him cold. With only the goalkeeper to beat, he stopped and kicked the ball out so that his opponent could receive attention. From that moment, Charles was a favourite of both Juventus and Torino supporters. In his first season in Italy he finished top scorer with 29 goals in leading Juventus to the league title and was voted the player of the season. Two more league titles and two Italian Cups followed in the next four years. The affection for Charles endured all his life. Whenever he visited Turin he was feted and in 1997 was voted the Greatest Foreign Player Ever in Serie A. When he collapsed in Milan on Jan 7th, Juventus paid for a private jet to transfer him to Pinderfields Hospital, in Yorkshire.

He won 38 caps for Wales and in 1958 played for the Wales team that qualified for

the World Cup finals in Sweden. Wales finished second in their group and met Brazil in the quarter-finals. Charles missed the game due to injuries received earlier and Wales succumbed to the only goal of the game, scored by Pele.

Fittingly, John Charles' funeral took place on St. David's Day. The parish church of St. Peter-at-Leeds was packed and hundreds stood outside. Abide With Me played softly as the pallbearers, former Leeds United players, carried the "Gentle Giant" on his last journey. His wife Glenda, his four sons, his grandson and his brother Mel (Arsenal and Wales) followed the coffin, itself bedecked with daffodils. Football's great names paid their last respects; Sir Alex Ferguson, Sir Bobby Charlton, Denis Law, Jack Charlton and Mark Hughes. Omar Sivori, with whom he once formed one of Europe's most feared goal-scoring partnerships, had flown in from Buenos Aires to say farewell.

His Welsh origins were represented by the Swansea Male Voice Choir, in the singing of Cwm Rhondda, and in the daffodils. A cloth bearing Juventus' magpie-striped shield draped over the communion rail recalled his great days in Italy as did the presence of general manager Roberto Bettega and by the singing of *Lascia ch'io pianga* from Handel's opera *Rinaldo*. Wales striker John Toshack read his own poem: "A giant with a gentle touch/Just watching him, we learnt so much" it went, and "In spite of his undoubted fame/ His character remained the same."

After the service the funeral party moved to Elland Road, where the fans stood silent in final homage. With the newly named John Charles Stand in the background, manager Eddie Gray told the people of Leeds they should be proud that "Big John" had adopted them as his own. Then they stood and applauded as the family and the first team squad followed the hearse around the pitch and out of the ground where John Charles laid the foundation of a legend.

*An Extract from Life Story of a Welsh Cornmill
Felin Lyn, Dyffryn Ceiriog, Denbighshire, North Wales.*

by
David Llewelyn Davies

The Canadian Connection

This is included because this book was composed in Canada and the author and his wife lived in Vancouver for some 15 years. It does not directly involve Felin Lyn but comes within yards of it where land stewardship is concerned.

One day in the 1960's the author was browsing in a Vancouver second-hand book shop and came across a rare volume titled "*History of Oswestry*", a 360 page history of a Shropshire town published in 1920. Because Oswestry was the nearest market town to his childhood home and was visited by his family each week, the book became the author's for the proverbial song.

The author was naturally curious as to why such a title would end up in Vancouver. On the inside of the cover of the book was a personalised and highly decorative bookplate which included a spreading tree, stoked grain in a field, a rising sun, the Welsh motto 'Bydd Ffyddlon' (Be Faithful) and the owner's name 'Elizabeth Rogers'. The name Rogers is quite well known in Vancouver for there are a sugar refinery, downtown office block, and a neighbourhood park, linked to that name. At the time the author presumed the book had come from an estate sale of this family and after that gave it no more thought.

The story moves forward twenty years to 1986 when the history of Felin Lyn was in first draft manuscript form. Dewi Jones, local historian, who lives in Llwynmawr and not a mile from the now demolished Mill, had sent the author some information about grain markets at Oswestry including quotes from the book "*Oswestry*". After thanking him for the information, "*I told him I also had a copy of the book and explained how it came into my possession.*" Dewi responded saying it must have a connection with the locally famous

Rogers of Plas-Onn, in the Gwryd, who emigrated to Vancouver in the second half of the last century and made a fortune. What was this connection between the Rogers of Plas-Onn and the Rogers of Vancouver? The City of Vancouver Archives quickly supplied the linking details.

In 1864 a second son was born to the Rogers at Plas-Onn and was named Jonathan; at that time six generations of Rogers had farmed the land there. Young Jonathan, like all his predecessors, grew up speaking Welsh and it was not until he was 16 that he started to acquire some English. At this time he emigrated to Liverpool and lived with an aunt there for seven years, getting involved in the business of rent collecting, tenant house repairs, and perfecting his English.

Living in a bustling seaport, the wanderlust gripped Jonathan and carried him across the Atlantic to Canada in 1887 aged 23. He landed at Montreal and by chance the very first train to cross continental Canada was about to make its inaugural run. He hopped aboard and in great comfort and in a few days he found himself on the shores of the Pacific Ocean at a tiny shanty settlement of about 2000 people, recently named *Vancouver*. Two weeks after he arrived, Jonathan attended a public auction where parcels of land within the new city were being sold. He purchased four lots in the dense and tall forest and only with difficulty did he reach and locate them later. These 1887 purchases now lie in the heart of downtown Vancouver.

This emigration interlude has all the hallmarks of 'young man has lucky break' but closer scrutiny shows this not to be the case. The six-day journey on the brand new Canadian Pacific Railway was very expensive, land purchase is never cheap, and the timing

was excellent. It is believed his aunt had died leaving him a tidy legacy and he astutely decided to invest it half way round the world. At this time British Columbia was one of the last totally undeveloped areas of North America.

The problem with Jonathan's purchase was that it had potential but he needed to exploit it immediately and neither he nor anyone else had the money, organisation, and equipment, to make anything of it. There followed a depression for ten years, as if the building of the transcontinental railway had exhausted all enterprise. Many land buyers sold out at a loss and moved on, but Jonathan was obstinate and had much faith in the fledgling city. He hung on, gained a precious foothold in the small community, created a tool and paint shop, and by 1895 had set himself up as a contractor and builder. From then on his rise was swift and he became involved in all kinds of construction work which included offices, manufacturing plants, hotels, banks, and even an electricity generating station. As a result he became a very wealthy man.

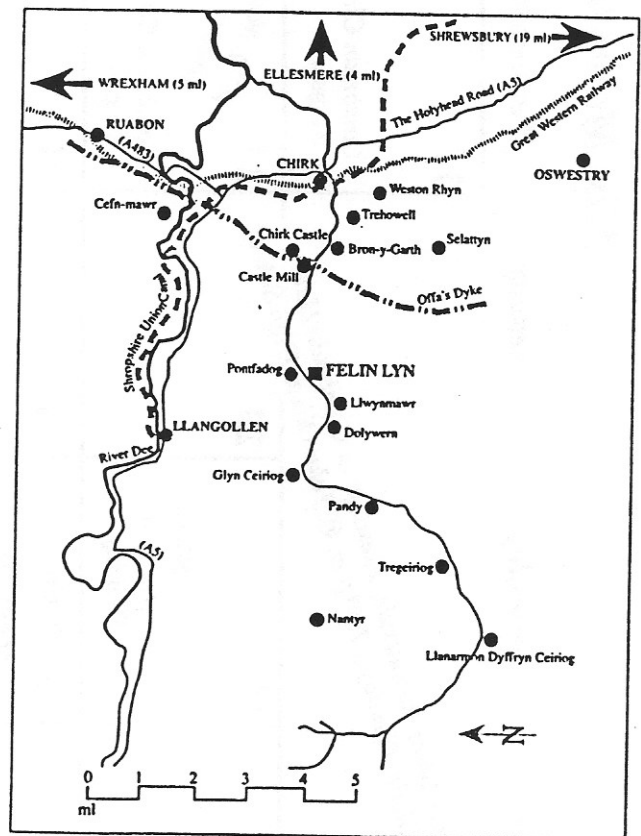
One of Rogers' enterprises was the building of a ten story block in 1911 at 470 Granville Street, called the Rogers Building. In one of its offices an urban encyclopedia of Greater Vancouver of 900 pages was assembled and published in 1996. Within this source book is a listing of 500 Vancouver citizens who achieved prominence between 1886 (founding year) and 1994. Each entry contains a photograph and a fifty word biography and amongst these elite is Jonathan Rogers!

Rogers ended that part of his life as a n active private entrepreneur during World War I and thereafter became a public figure and benefactor, helping to nurture Vancouver in a variety of ways. (Including the founding of the Cambrian Hall! - Editor) He held elected, public, and honorary offices in a diversified group of activities and amongst all of these, his 26 years on the Parks Board was probably his prime interest.

When Jonathan Rogers died in 1945 he was certainly a millionaire (in dollars) and he left a

quarter of a million to various deserving causes in Vancouver. It is significant that the largest single bequest (\$100,000) was given to the City to create a neighbourhood park in a poorer part of the city which was then without such a facility. Because of delays in property acquisition it was not opened until 1958 and is called Jonathan Rogers Park in his memory. Obviously this son of Gwryd and Ceiriog was quite an exceptional man!

In 1902 Jonathan married a girl called Elizabeth who hailed from Gobowen, which lies three miles north of Oswestry. This now explains who Elizabeth Rogers was and why she owned the book the author now possesses. They lived in a large, elegant house in what was then the best residential area, close to Stanley Park. They named it 'Argoed' which in Welsh means 'beside the wood'; aptly called because Stanley Part is created out of the virgin forest that once covered all of the land now occupied by the City of Vancouver.



G Nash

March 2004

Mis Mawrth 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			17	18	19	20
			Cambrian Circle Singers	Thursdays Welsh Folk Dancing		7:30 pm "Pig 'n Whistle" Red Dragon Open 8:30 p.m.
			24	25	26	27
			W.A. Mtg (noon) Cambrian Circle Singers			VWMChoir Surrey Bell Ctr 604 878-1190 Red Dragon Open 8:30 p.m.
			31	Cymdeithas Cymraeg Vancouver Welsh Society Cambrian Hall, 215 E. 17th Ave, Vancouver, B.C. V5V 1A6 Telephone:- (604) 876-2815		

Welsh Men's Choir Rehearsals, Tuesdays at Cambrian Hall
 Orpheum Choir, Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. @ John Oliver High School

21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Welsh Speaking Evening					
28	29	30				
	10.00 WALKING GROUP					

April 2004

Mis Ebrill 2004

4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	10.00 WALKING GROUP					
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
11 a.m. Church and "Tea"	10.00 WALKING GROUP		7:30 p.m. Exec Mtg 7:30 p.m. Gen'l Mtg		Cambrian Circle Singers Rehearsal	VWMChoir Van Isle Tour Comox, C River Red Dragon Open 8:30 p.m.

For your concert dates or later changes, notices for inclusion in this calendar display are requested by month-end 4 to 6 weeks BEFORE the event.