

THE WELSH SOCIETY OF VANCOUVER

Cymdeithas Gymraeg Vancouver

Cambrian News

Mai

2017

May

2017

Society Newsletter - Cylchgrawn y Gymdeithas



The Society Honours Past-President, David Llewelyn Williams

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

VANCOUVER WELSH SOCIETY

Officers:

President:

Lynn Owens-Whalen

Vice-President

Paul Lievesley

Secretary:

Antone Minard

Treasurer:

Gaynor Evans

Membership Secretary:

Jackie Chapman

Immediate Past President:

David Llewelyn Williams

Directors:

Ruth Baldwin

Tim Darvell

Patricia Morris

Kathy Thomas

Wynford Owen

Contacts:

Building Committee:

Patricia Morris

Cambrian Circle Singers:

Nerys Haqq

Church Service:

Various

Welsh Speaking Group:

Roy Beavon

Rentals:

Alcwyn Rogers

Social Events Committee:

Gillian Rogers

www.welshsociety.com

Webmaster:

Alcwyn Rogers

Newsletter Editor:

Ruth Baldwin

youcanreachruth@hotmail.com

The Cambrian News

From the Editor:

At last, Spring has sprung! - after what seemed a very long winter. Lighter nights and clement weather have brought members out of hibernation! Read below about the events that have taken place at the Hall since the last newsletter was sent out, including the St. David's Day Open House and dinner, the quiz night, our St. George's Day social, (celebrated in the Red Dragon with other Celtic groups and members of the Royal Society of St. George) and the SCANA Conference. Soon to come are the (third) Welsh Society Twmpath Dance and the Spring Sale.

Because April this year marked the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, **Eifion William's** interesting *sgwrs* on the conflict has been included. Look out, too, for Eifion's article on the Welsh in Vancouver in a special edition of the newsletter later this summer.

The social committee urges you to hunt out those items/ heirlooms you no longer want or need but that will be *absolutely irresistible* to bargain hunters, and drop them off at the Red Dragon on the assigned dates. Do call someone on the social committee to find out how you can participate in other ways, too.

Enjoy the articles, photographs, reports and news items in this edition, but – most important – come out and celebrate with us at the many Society events that celebrate and keep alive Welsh life, language and culture in Vancouver!

Ruth Baldwin

Cambrian Hall 604-876-2815

Forthcoming Events

Note: Please consult the Society Website for a detailed and frequently updated list of forthcoming and regular events.

Grand Spring Sale

Saturday 13 May from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. In the upstairs hall. *Please see the box on page 19 for details.*

Welsh Lessons

Classes have finished for the term; however, it is hoped that an informal conversation class will meet during the summer at the usual time and venue. Further details will follow.

Bilingual Service

Sunday 14 May at 11.00 am. This will be followed by a têt bach (light refreshments).

Welsh Speaking Group

Monday 15 May at 10:30 am. Siarad Cymraeg y bore'ma.

Genealogy Group

The Welsh Genealogy Group meets on the **third Wednesday of each month** from 10:30 am – 12:30 pm in the Red Dragon.

The schedule for upcoming meetings in 2017 is:

May 17

June 21

No meetings in July and August

September 20

October 18

November 15

December 20

There will be a special guest speaker at the October 18 meeting. **Diane Rogers**, genealogist extraordinaire, will be speaking on the subject of DNA. All members are most welcome to attend.

Ceilidh/Twmpath/Barn Dance

Friday 19 May from 7:30 to 10:30 pm. *Please see the printable poster on page 20 for details.*

Work Party Day

Monday 22 May from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. A delicious lunch will be provided. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Pub Night

Saturday 17 June: A pub night in the Red Dragon is in the planning stages. Mark your calendar! Details will follow.

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 is best to check the monthly page before attending. For further information please contact mail@welshsociety.com.

Sundays: 2nd Sunday of the month: Bilingual Church Service. The exception is in November when the Service is on the Sunday of the Welsh weekend.

Mondays: 1st Monday of the month for Board Members only: Executive Meeting at 7:30 pm.

Mondays: 3rd Monday of the month: Welsh speaking group meets at 10:30am.

Mondays: 4th Monday of the month: Volunteer working party: 10:00 am till 3:30 pm.

Mondays: Monday following the executive meeting: General Meetings are held at 7:30 pm in February, April, June, September and November. The **Annual General Meeting** is held on the 2nd Monday in December at 7:30 pm.

Wednesdays: 2nd Wednesday of the month: The Book Club meets at 12:00 noon

Wednesdays: 3rd Wednesday of the month: Genealogy Group meets from 10:30 am till 12:30 pm.

Welsh Language lessons: The schedule varies and details are shown [here](#).

Choirs

Vancouver Orpheus Male Choir

Sunday 7 May: Starting at 3:00 pm, a concert at Ladner United Church, 4960 – 48th Avenue, Delta.

26 – 28 May: Mini tour to Vancouver Island.

Saturday 27 May: Starting at 7:30 pm, a joint concert with the Canadian Military Wives' Choir in Comox.

Sunday 28 May: Starting at 2:30 pm, a concert at Knox United Church, Parksville.

Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir

This choir is presently on tour and there are no more concerts scheduled for this season.

Links to the two choirs can be found on the Society Website under "Events."

Forthcoming Events: Other UK Groups

BC Highland Games

17 June: at Percy Perry Stadium in Coquitlam. Visit this Website for details: <http://bchighlandgames.com>

Welcome to our New Members!

Peggy Benson, Phillip Bernhardt-House, Dorothy Bray, Myra Booth Cockcroft, Barb Coulter, Tudor Davies, Charlene M. and Joseph Eska, Joanne Findon, Maura de Freitas, Brian Frykenberg, Mary Gavan, Alicia and Brian Hagerman, Elissa R. Henken, Willeen Keough, Jim Kirk, Jennifer Knight, David McCallum, Siobhan McElduff, Catherine McKenna, Michael Meckler, Brent Miles, Graham Morgan, Beth and Terry Probert, Alan Sanderson, Robin Stacey, Eve E. Sweetser, Patrick Wadden, Joanne Westman and Casey Wolf.

Recent Society Events

St David's Day Open House

Tuesday 28 February

On the Eve of St. David's Day, the Society celebrated an Open House with traditional hospitality and "Hwyl" at the Cambrian Hall. The evening began with a visit from **Councilor Geoff Meggs**. After a trumpet fanfare by **Roy Beavon**, **Councilor Meggs** processed through the Red Dragon Lounge, led by flag bearer **Antone Minard**, to read the Proclamation of March 1st as St. David's Day in the City of Vancouver, whereupon the assembled members and guests sang *Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau*.

The trumpet sounded again as the **Vancouver Welshmen's Choir** arrived at the south end of the room singing *Men of Harlech* (accompanied by **Karen Lee Morlang**), while the Bards prepared to enter from the north. **Mathew Parry** carried the flag of St. David, preceding Archdruid **David Llewelyn** and The Great Sword Bearer, **Paul Lievesley**. The bards wore traditional white robes, David's bearing the coat of arms of Llewelyn Fawr. After the Bards came **Jackie Chapman** and **Pat Morris** in traditional Welsh costume, bearers of water and leeks for the solemn ceremony to honour St David.

As the question "A Oes Heddwch?" was posed three times, the Great Sword was unsheathed; when the response "Heddwch" resounded, the sword was resheathed. Leeks were eaten and the toast was given in water - at this time! Later, Penderyn was much in evidence! The Choir performed *Ar Hyd yn Nos* and *Myfanwy* with soloist **Jonathan Quick**. The famous poem by **Eifion Wyn** - *Os wyt Gymro* - was recited in Welsh and English by **Wynford Owen** and **Jackie Chapman** and then everyone was invited to enjoy Cawl Cennin and Welshcakes. The evening concluded with community singing accompanied by **Rhuannedd Meilen** at the piano.

Pat Morris



Visit to Arbutus Manor Wednesday 1 March

At the request of **Barbara Paige**, I visited the Arbutus Manor at teatime on March 1st, when residents had a taste of Welsh Hwyl, celebrating St. David's Day. Barbara's mother and several other residents had been born in Wales and appreciated the chance to reminisce about their childhood. I was also able to briefly chat to long time Welsh Society member **Irene Evans**, now a resident there. Part of the Vancouver Welshmen's Choir, **The Llareggub Boys**, also invited guests, presented rousing folk songs in English and Welsh, while I passed out a daffodil and a welshcake to each resident present.

I enjoyed the visit and felt it was appreciated by both the seniors and the friendly staff who had organized this event.

Pat Morris

St David's Day Dinner Saturday 4 March

Our annual St. David's Day Dinner was held on Saturday March 4th, this year, at the Cambrian Hall. We enjoyed a pre-prandial drink in the Red Dragon before taking our seats at tables decorated all around with daffodils and Welsh flags. Vice President **Paul Lievesley** welcomed everyone. Before the meal, grace was said in English and Welsh by **Marilyn Hames**. As usual, the delicious repast was prepared by Jordan's Catering and **Tim Jordan** and his team were recognized with much applause later in the evening.

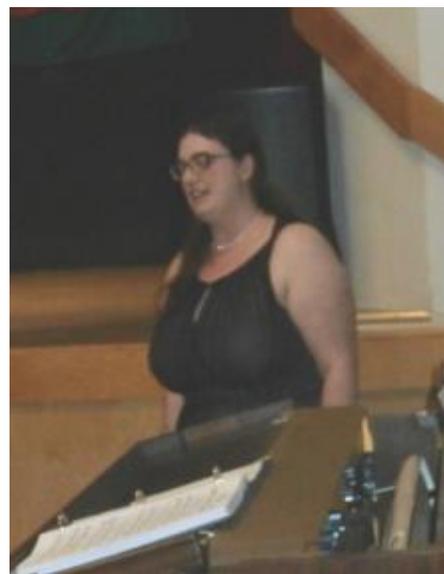
The toast to Canada was ably presented by **Christine Hunter** in an interesting speech that included a poem about Canada.

After Christine's toast, *O Canada* was sung, with **Ray Batten** at the piano. The toast to Wales, with the theme of the importance to Wales and Welsh people everywhere of the hymn *Cwm Rhonda*, was given by **Eifion Williams**, and *Hen Wlad fy Nhadau* was sung.

A prayer to St. David, was then offered by **John Cann**, followed by a toast to St. David. Afterward, our soloist for the evening, soprano, **Sarah Henderson**, performed classical works in English and Welsh - well suited to her voice and a beautiful musical treat! (See photograph.) Towards the end of the program, Vice President **Paul Lievesley** presented **David Llewelyn Williams** with a locally crafted glass Inukshuk, set on a base of Welsh slate, with an inscription in Welsh and English, a tribute to his years of

service to the Society as President (See photograph below).

The evening concluded with community singing and some socializing in the Red Dragon.



Church Service Sunday 12 March

The *sgwrs*, given by **Ruth Baldwin**, briefly explored the life and work of Welsh poet, author and physician, **Dannie Abse**. For readers unfamiliar with his work, and to bring tears to the eyes of expatriate Cardiffians, here's a poem from his collection entitled, *Welsh Retrospective*, first published in 1997:

Return to Cardiff

'Hometown'; well, most admit an affection for a city:
grey, tangled streets I cycled on to school,
my first cigarette
in the back lane, and, fool, my first
botched love affair.
First everything. Faded torments; self-indulgent pity.

The journey to Cardiff seemed less a return than a raid
on mislaid identities. Of course the whole locus smaller:
the mile-wide Taff now a stream, the castle not as in some black,
gothic dream, but a decent sprawl, a joker's toy façade.

Unfocused voices in the wind,
associations, clues,
odds and ends, fringes caught, as when,
after the doctor quit,
a door opened and I glimpsed the white,
enormous face
of my grandfather, suddenly aghast with certain news.

Unable to define anything I can hardly speak,
and still I love the place for what I wanted it to be
as much as for what unashamedly is now for me, a city of strangers, alien and bleak.

Unable to communicate I'm easily betrayed,
uneasily diverted by mere sense

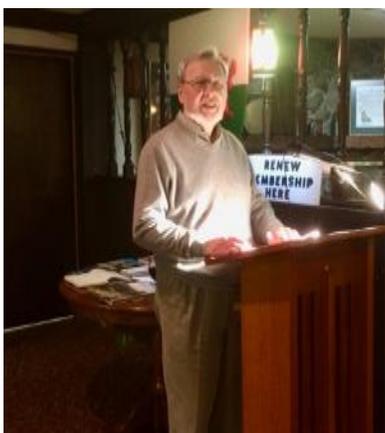
reflections
like those anchored waterscapes that wander, alter, in the Taff,
hour by hour, as light slants down a different shade.

Illusory, too, that lost dark playground after rain,
the noise of trams, gunshots in what they once called Tiger Bay.
Only real this smell of ripe, damp earth when the sun comes out,
a mixture of pungencies, half exquisite and half plain.
No sooner than I'd arrived the other Cardiff had gone,
smoke in the memory, these but tinned resemblances,
where the boy I was not and the man I am not
met, hesitated, left double footsteps, then walked on.

During the offertory, **Ray Batten** sang "Beautiful Saviour."

Quiz Night Friday 7 April

A break in the clouds – at long last – seemed to encouraged people to venture out again; the first quiz night of the year, hosted by our excellent quiz-master, **Eifion Williams** (below) was very well attended. The questions were varied and well-researched and none of the teams was able to get all the answers right – although the A-Team, chaired by **Edward Rogers-Jones**, managed to get fourteen out of a possible fifteen in one round (see photograph). The over-all winner was the team led by **Pat Morris**, which won four of the five rounds.



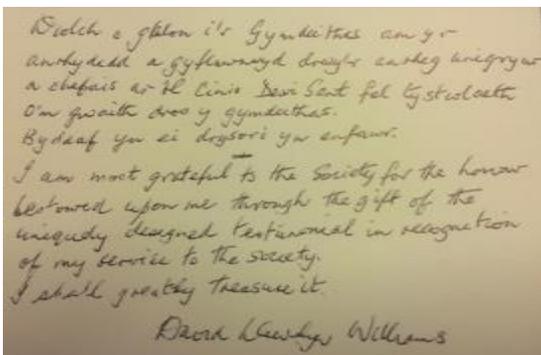
Wade) led an interesting discussion on the new partnership evolving among “Canuk” nations – Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the UK - and the implications for immigration from the UK to Canada post Brexit and the General Election.

St George’s Day Social
Friday 21 April



Meat pies and Morris Dancing – a combination certain to create a fun evening! Welsh Society member **Kathy Thomas** and **Steve McVittie** of the Royal Society of St George organized this social in celebration of St George’s Day and invited the other UK groups to join us in the Red Dragon. A number of members of the Royal Society of St George attended and a couple of representatives of Scottish organizations also came. Everyone enjoyed the delicious pasties, pork sausage rolls, cheese and onion bridies, scotch pies, bakewell tarts and empire biscuits that were for sale. All agreed that the performance by the **Vancouver Morris Men** was the highlight of the evening. They danced for us, sang, and performed a very amusing mummings’ play.

During the evening, **David Llewelyn Williams** gave a beautiful card of thanks to the society for the glass Inukshuk presented to him at the St David’s Day Dinner in recognition of his years of service to the Society as president:



Luncheon and Discussion
Wednesday 19 April

Pat Morris attended a lunch at the Vancouver Lawn Tennis Club hosted by the Royal Commonwealth Society and the Royal Society of St George. The speaker (the president of the RCS, Shawn



“St George”

The first dance performed by the Morris Men, entitled *Step and Fetch Her*, comes from the English village of Bampton,

Oxon. The second, called *Old Tyler*, was from Ducklington, Oxon. They followed this with the popular folk song, *Hal 'n' Tow*, and then danced *The Cuckoo's Nest*, with its rather ribald lyrics, which is from the village of Sherborne, Glos. Their next dance, *Figure Eight*, is from the village of Eynesham, Oxon. While the Morris Men changed their costumes, dancer **Steve Cleary** sang a pace-egging¹ “calling on” Song.

The Mummers’ play involved much loud and vigorous mock combat between St George and the dragon, the death of the dragon and his return to life thanks to the ministrations of a quack doctor.

Members and visitors were welcomed in English by **Lynn Owens-Whalen**, Vancouver Welsh Society president, and in Welsh by **Jane Byrne**. Vice-president **Paul Lievesley** won some scented bath goodies in the raffle.

One of the Morris Men’s songs exhorted the audience to ply them with beer – which of course it did! Alas, the dancers were bought more beer than they could drink – although they really did try!



Scrumptious!

Celtic Studies Association of North America Conference

The 39th annual Celtic Studies Association of North America (CSANA) conference took place at the Cambrian Hall from **27–30 April**. CSANA is an academic organization that promotes the study of all aspects of the cultures of the ancient Celtic-speaking peoples and the modern Celtic countries: Brittany, Cornwall, Ireland, the Isle of Man, Scotland, and of course, Wales.

¹ “Pace,” meaning “Easter,” is derived from the Latin “pascha.”

Although the conferences are usually held on university campuses, this year's meeting was hosted by the Vancouver Welsh Society. The papers were roughly evenly split between Irish and Welsh topics, with a few on the Continental Celts and on Scottish Gaelic traditions. The first speaker was our own **Eifion Williams**, who set the tone of the conference by providing an excellent paper on the history of the Welsh in British Columbia, with a particular focus on the Vancouver Welsh. Eifion's content and delivery were both excellent, and the paper was very well received by the audience of academics from Toronto, Harvard, Cambridge, and elsewhere. The paper was part of a panel on "Celts in the Community," where **Katie McCullough**, Director of SFU's Centre for Scottish Studies, talked about Scottish Heritage Societies in B.C., and **Jennifer Knight** talked about the University of South Florida's efforts to connect university students and the local Celtic communities.

Many of the other papers delved deeper into Welsh history and literature. **Myra Booth-Cockcroft** of the University of Glasgow presented a paper entitled "The Image of the Hall in Medieval Welsh Poetry," from which we learned that the institution of the Hall is consistent throughout medieval Welsh literature and culture. It is a central feature from the earliest Welsh poetry (*hengerdd*), most famously in the Welsh seventh-century epic *Y Gododdin*, right up through the poetry of the *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* (poets patronized by Welsh noblemen after the English conquest). She pointed out that the Hall was a centre of communal and political power, where leaders provided a space to hold feasts, perform poetry, and socialize (plus the alcohol to facilitate that socialization) in exchange for the community's loyalty. In that sense, although the building only dates to 1929, the Cambrian Hall continues an ancient

cultural institution that is over a thousand years old.

Other papers detailed the relationship between Wales and Rome, and the way that the Welsh remembered their Roman history from the time the Romans withdrew in the fifth century, and kept that memory alive in their poetry and prose narratives. Several dealt with Latin-language material about Wales, including keynote speaker **Paul Russell** of Cambridge University, who detailed the way in which a close examination of medieval Latin poetry shows the specific ways that Welsh people spoke Latin. One example was that the Latin word *caelum*, Medieval Latin *cælum*, was borrowed into Welsh as *Celi*, meaning "Lord God," even while *cælum* continued to be used alongside in its ordinary Latin meaning of "heaven." The upshot of these papers was that Wales retained close connections with the Latin world, independent of what was going on in England or elsewhere. Still other presenters spoke on more contemporary topics. **Diana Luft** of the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies in Cardiff and Aberystwyth talked about an ongoing project to re-examine the evidence for Welsh medical vocabulary, arguing (for example) that the word *iddw* historically referred to gout, not St. Anthony's fire (erysipelas) as the dictionaries currently report. **Katherine Leach** of Harvard and **Elissa Henken** of the University of Georgia each talked about Welsh folklore, the former about healing charms and the latter about legends of hidden treasure. Conference attendees were encouraged to join the Society as out-of-town members, and 23 people did so, including fluent Welsh speaker and chaired bard **Tudor Davies** of Red Deer, Alberta, who treated us to a recitation of some of his poetry on Friday evening. Earlier that night, filmmaker **Robert Humphries** had screened his short documentary *Pobl y Paith*, about the Welsh in Nebraska. He

donated a copy of his film to the Welsh Society, and will be sending ten additional copies on DVD for any members who are interested.

All in all, the conference was a great success. This is thanks in no small part to the energetic volunteers of the Welsh Society who staffed the registration table and the Red Dragon, helped with the audio-visual technology, and lent their considerable organizational skills to the event. Several of the attendees expressed their appreciation for the warm welcome provided by the Welsh community. I will give the final word to the other keynote speaker, **Joseph Nagy** of Harvard, who writes, “you and your crew put on a spectacular program and event, which will be hard to forget or to match. CSANA and all of us participants will always be grateful for the hospitality, hard-hard work, and jollity that were put into this meeting.”

Antone Minard



The Cambrian Hall was the perfect venue for the conference, which attracted scholars from across the world



A rapt audience



*Following is an abridged version of a talk given by **Eifion Williams** at a bilingual service in the Cambrian Hall on April 9, 2017, the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge.*

BATTLE OF VIMY RIDGE CENTENARY

Over the past few weeks there has been a great deal of coverage in the media on the First World War Battle of Vimy Ridge. On April 9, 40,000 people attended the commemorative ceremony at the Vimy Monument site in Northern France, among them **Prime Minister Trudeau, Prince Charles, Princes William and Harry and French President Fillion**. Exactly 100 years before, the Canadian Corps gained a memorable victory at

Vimy Ridge, an achievement of great significance in Canadian history because it was the first military victory gained entirely by Canadian troops.

The ridge was seven-kilometers long with a commanding view over the enemy-occupied land to the east. British and French armies had previously failed to capture it, suffering heavy casualties in the attempts.

Following months of meticulous planning and rehearsing, four Canadian Divisions stormed the ridge at 5:30am on the morning of Easter Monday, April 9, 1917, a cold day with a mix of rain and snow. The operation was a success. Within 12 hours the highest point of the ridge, Hill 145, had been captured and final victory was assured after three days of fighting.

The Canadian soldiers who took part in the battle on that cold, rainy April morning in 1917 were almost certainly unaware of the significance that their efforts would hold for the future of their nation. So why has this particular battle become such an iconic event in Canadian history?

One reason is that the victory brought Canada greater recognition and respect from the rest of the world, including making the front pages of *The New York Times* and *The London Times*. The world-wide attention paid to the victory made Canadians proud and that pride has continued to this day.

It was significant that the troops were also led by Canadian Officers who proved to be among the most competent in the entire War. Canadian Generals like **Arthur Currie** and **Allan McNaughton** took leading roles in planning and carrying out the attack. One officer, **Brigadier-General Ross**, declared after the battle: "In those few minutes I witnessed the birth of a nation."

The victory came at a heavy cost. Of the 100,000 Canadian troops who fought

there, 10,600 were casualties, 3,600 of them fatal.

After the War, the Canadian National Vimy Memorial was erected on the highest point on the Ridge. It is Canada's largest and principal overseas war memorial and is dedicated to the commemoration not only of the Battle of Vimy Ridge but to the entire Canadian Expeditionary force members killed in France during the First World War.

The impressive monument is inscribed with the names of 11,285 Canadian soldiers who were listed as "missing, presumed dead" in France during the First World War. It was designed by architect and sculptor **Walter Allward**, who described his masterwork as "a sermon against the futility of war." It took eleven years to build and cost \$3 million, the equivalent of \$20 million today.

The monument was unveiled on July 26, 1936 by **King Edward VIII** in the presence of 50,000 Canadian and French veterans. The soaring white monument has attracted millions of visitors over the past 80 years, impressing not only Canadian visitors but tourists from many nations who wish to honour those who died in the War.

The Vimy memorial has become a symbol for all Canadians of the sacrifice and dedication of these soldiers from what was then a relatively young country. In 1922, a grateful French Government presented Vimy Ridge and the land surrounding it to Canada in perpetuity. During the 1990's I visited the Vimy Memorial on two occasions with groups of students and I was struck by their emotional response to the battlefield and the monument. These Canadian teenagers of many ethnic backgrounds were genuinely moved by the towering war memorial and the names inscribed on its base, many of them not much older than themselves.

The Canadian government funded several student representatives to attend this

year's ceremony. Exposing young Canadians to monuments like this is one way of assuring that significant events in the nation's history are passed on and safeguarded for future generations. In 2007, I attended the 90th Anniversary of the Battle and the re-dedication of the monument by **Her Majesty the Queen, Prime Minister Stephen Harper** and the French Prime Minister, who all spoke of the courage and resilience of the Canadian troops in gaining a victory where the forces of other nations had failed. The thousands of Canadians present at the Ceremony included hundreds of Canadian schoolchildren carrying maple leaf flags. It was a very emotional experience.

Having lived in Canada for over 50 years, I must confess to never having felt more Canadian than when visiting the Vimy Memorial and others have said they felt the same way. There is something about this monument and the circumstances surrounding it that brings out in Canadians the love and appreciation for this country that no other experience seems able to do.

I have a personal interest in the Battle of Vimy Ridge because my Welsh-born great-uncle, **Major Ben Williams**, won a Military Cross for bravery during the battle. He had emigrated to Saskatchewan and joined the Canadian First Division in 1914. He served for almost the entire War, seeing action in some of the bloodiest battles on the Western Front, including Vimy Ridge and the later Battles of Hill 70 and Passchendaele.

Ben Williams was one of the many Canadian soldiers who were awarded medals for gallantry at Vimy Ridge. Fortunately, he survived the War while many others did not. This year, the nation honors all those men and women who contributed to a victory that has become an important part of Canadian history.

The sense of national pride and confidence in this country following the Battle of Vimy Ridge has lasted to this day. The Battle is rightly seen as Canada's coming-of-age event and the start of establishing its independence from Britain.

In addition to the April 9 major ceremony at the Vimy Monument in France, commemorative ceremonies were also held at the War Memorial in Ottawa and in communities across Canada and in Canadian facilities overseas.

To quote the words of Canadian author **Bruce Hutchinson**: "Canada entered World War 1 as a colony and came out a nation."

Members' News

In this account of her recent visit to Addis Ababa, Society member Beti Darvell-Jones' strong sense of humour and her adventurous spirit are evident throughout:

On the Go!

We were a little nervous, but excited, as we boarded our flight for Ethiopia. We had had our inoculations. We had had our pills, too – for you know what! The flight was a long one: twenty hours over two days.

From Vancouver, we flew to Los Angeles and then via Ireland to Addis Ababa:

Tim, Sera, Adrienne - and me, Adrienne's grandma and Tim's mum. Sera is from South Sudan and hasn't seen her mother for twenty years. Adrienne is Sera and Tim's four-year-old daughter. This was to be a great adventure for Adrienne to meet the other side of her family.

During the long flight, we ate and slept and watched the usual television.

Understandably, we arrived a little exhausted. There was a long wait at customs and sometimes we had to go through three lots of security checks,

taking off our shoes at each one. When we arrived in Addis Ababa, the heat hit us. It was about 30-35 degrees. We bartered over the taxi fare to the apartment hotel (there are no buses). In fact, we bartered for everything in Addis Ababa! 300 birr (Yes, birr, not “brr,” as in “cold”!) is the average fare. A birr is about 5c US. Everything is extremely cheap.

The two-bedroom apartment in the hotel was pleasant. We cooked our meals in the apartment with food we purchased locally. In Addis Ababa, there is construction everywhere. The workers perform acrobatics on the scaffolding to entertain onlookers! I noticed that they wear neither hard hats nor steel-toed boots.

After four days of rest and looking around, taking in a restaurant or two and shopping in this huge city, we caught a flight to Gambella to meet up with Sera’s nephews, cousins, uncles and aunts who would walk from their refugee camp on the border to visit us. The walk is about twenty kilometers!

We took another taxi – this time, a minivan - from the airport to a hotel. We were all packed in, like sardines, with all kinds of folks. We crossed vast spaces that seemed to be a mix of desert and jungle and Tim saw a gelada baboon cross in front of the van. After a bumpy ride of one hour we were dropped off at a hotel with a courtyard, a locked gate and a guard. We took two one-bedroom suites with bathrooms, side by side. A mosquito net was draped over the bed and there was a fan, too, which was cleaned daily. We took siestas about three times a day because it was so hot in Gambella – 40 degrees with no wind. But there were shady trees and a chair outside. Everyone bought bottled water continuously. In the village of Gambella I felt very safe.

On our second day of six in the village of Gambella we enjoyed ourselves more. The fourteen or so relatives arrived. They were of all ages – youths, young mothers, and older men and women. There was great rejoicing and lots of hugging. It was quite overwhelming! We had never seen Sera laugh so much. Adrienne, with her light brown skin, was the star and a pleasure to everyone with her entertaining dancing. I was escorted and helped everywhere by a young man, especially across the rough cobbled streets and curbs. Tim spoke with an intelligent cousin (some of the young spoke English) whom he assigned to be our guide, and we became great friends.

We bartered at the markets for dresses. 200 birr is about \$7.00. A dress might be 350 birr, but you could barter down to 200. It was fun and it reminded me of past experiences.

We all walked down to the river where men washed themselves naked in the muddy waters. I, alas, couldn’t see anything because I have low vision.² What a pity! We walked through a wooded area where we saw little native huts that were made of earth and stalks of corn and bamboo straw. The children and their mums crowded around us. We saw cattle, donkeys drawing wood, strange birds and monkeys. We ate *engerra* in local courtyard bars and restaurants with lots of bottled juice or water. Every day we bought mangoes.

Finally, we went to the church, where the singing was so inspiring, the choir master jumping up and down and sideways, the children, girls and women singing their hearts out. The sermon was lengthy and the heat was strong, the eight fans above us overworking. Tim and Sera each made a speech, then, afterward, the congregation lined up to shake hands with us. Some had never before seen a white person like Tim or me. I felt like the

² Beti is certified blind.

Queen! Some older women touched my face and our eyes met with understanding. I depended on body language. Then it was time to return to Addis Ababa. Before we left Gambella, we took lots of photos and videos, said our byes byes and wished each other good luck. Then, before the flight back, there were more customs and security checks. Back in the apartment hotel in Addis Ababa, we toured the city, the Museum of Anthropology, and the cathedral. We learned a lot of history, from the famous skeleton of Lucy the *Australopithecus Afarensis*, which is approximately 3.2 million years old, to the early emperor buried in the crypt of the church. When we checked out of the apartment hotel, the kind owner was sorry to see us go. We treated ourselves to the last night at the Ramada, then went to a salon for braid extensions, haircuts, styling, a massage and a facial. We visited local shops, including a jeweler and novelty shops selling ebony. There were little children begging for money, their mothers standing a little way off holding babies and watching their children run alongside us. Some boys were selling CDs and videos. There were a few tourists from China and the USA or perhaps some other country. All in all, I preferred the rural countryside. It felt like being in National Geographic. I could relate to that! The people are happy and carefree in Gambella but the people are busy and “anything to make a deal” in Addis Ababa. One must have a sense of humour, lots of affection and a realistic understanding of two places far apart. I would not have missed this experience but have no desire to go back since I’ve been to Africa twice now and would rather try somewhere else for my next trip.



AND NOW FOR SOME LIGHTHEARTED FUN!

Here are the answers to the quiz in the last edition:

- 1) What flower is used as an emblem of Wales? *Daffodil*
- 2) Which vegetable is used as an emblem of Wales? *Leek*.
- 3) Which three colours are used on the Welsh flag? *Red, white and green*.
- 4) Name the highest Welsh mountain. *Snowdon*.
- 5) On the border of England and Wales is an ancient earthwork which is also a well-known walk. What is this called? *Offa's Dyke*.
- 6) Which English king was born at Pembroke Castle? *Henry VII*.
- 7) On which part of the coast can Pwllheli be found? *Cardigan Bay*.
- 8) Which animal is Wales famous for breeding? *Sheep*.
- 9) Name the setting for the TV series called The Prisoner. *Portmeirion*.
- 10) What was the ancient Roman name for Anglesey? *Mona*.
- 11) Where was Welsh singer Shirley Bassey born? *Cardiff*.
- 12) Name the Welsh boxer who won Joe Lewis's world crown? *Tommy Farr*.
- 13) What was the original name of famous Welsh actor Richard Burton? *Richard Jenkins*.
- 14) Which well-known Welsh entertainer is known for having women's underclothes thrown at him whenever he sings? *Tom Jones*.
- 15) Name the popular Welsh TV presenter and singer who first shot to fame as a child, with her album "Voice of an Angel". *Charlotte Church*.
- 16) Name the politician who was born in Port Talbot, and who became Foreign Secretary and Chancellor for Margaret Thatcher's government? *Geoffrey Howe*.
- 17) Who is Wales's most famous poet and playwright? *Dylan Thomas*.
- 18) Which Welsh comedian used to march around the stage holding a giant leek? *Max Boyce*.
- 19) Name the Welsh singer and TV presenter who first won acclaim with "Walking in the Air"? *Aled Jones*.
- 20) The TV series, Torchwood, is filmed in which Welsh city? *Cardiff*.
- 21) What is the Welsh name for St David? *Dewi Sant*.
- 22) When is St David's Day? *1st March*.
- 23) If you were born on St David's Day, what would your star sign be? *Pisces*.
- 24) Which town was St David a bishop of? *Mynwyn*.
- 25) What was St David given as a surname? *Waterman*.
- 26) What did St David insist that his monks do for themselves, rather than use farm animals? *Pull the plough*.
- 27) Which bird is often depicted as sitting on St David's shoulder? *A dove*.

28) What did St David allegedly do when people at the back of the crowd he was preaching to complained that they couldn't see or hear him? *Levitate.*

29) Which group of people is St David said to be the patron saint of? *Poets and vegetarians.*

30) Where is St David's shrine? *St David's Cathedral, Pembrokeshire.*

31) What is the Welsh name for Wales? *Cymru.*

32) What was the old Latin name for Wales? *Cambria.*

33) Where was the Prince of Wales invested as the Prince of Wales? *Caernarfon.*

34) Name the annual Welsh festival of the arts. *Eisteddfod.*

35) What is the name of the medieval collection of ancient Welsh folktales, some of which possibly date back to the Iron Age? *The Mabinogion.*

36) In the 15th century, who briefly restored Welsh independence from England? *Owain Glyndwr.*

37) What is the capital city of Wales? *Cardiff.*

38) What infamous deed by the Romans took place on Anglesey? *Slaughter of the Druids.*

39) Who became the first British Prime Minister in 1916? *David Lloyd George.*

40) What are The Seven Wonders of Wales? *Snowdon, the Gresford bells, Llangollen bridge, St Winefride's Well, the Wrexham steeple, and ancient*

Overton yew trees, and the Pistyll Rhaeadr waterfall.

© 2012 Adele Cosgrove-Bray from Holidappy.com

If you got most of them right, give yourself a pat on the back – and come to the next quiz night, where your skills will be much appreciated!



When the Roman legions were attacking Wales, they were set upon by one brave Welsh warrior with a club. Eventually, with hundreds of men at their disposal, they managed to force him to retreat into a nearby cave. They followed him in before running out, bleeding and screaming, "It's a trap! There's two of them!"

An Englishman travelling on a very dark night in the Welsh mountains heard a cry for help from someone who had fallen into a ravine near the road. "Who is it?" he replied cautiously, fearing a trap. "Dafydd ap Gwilym ap Rhys ap Gruffydd ap Ifan ap Jenkyn," came the response. "Well," rejoined the Englishman, "if there's half a dozen of you down there you can jolly well pull one another out!"

Create a caption for this photograph!

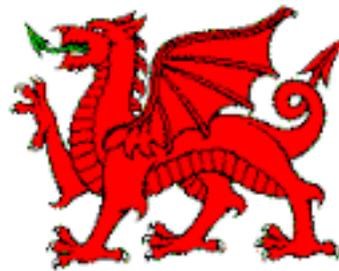


Submit a caption (or several) for a chance to win a prize! All entries to the editor at youcanreachruth@hotmail.com by 1 August 2017. The winning caption and runners up will appear in the next edition.

The next Newsletter will hopefully reach you in September. Please send your photographs of Welsh Society events – not forgetting to give the names of the people in them! – to the editor, Ruth Baldwin, at youcanreachruth@hotmail.com

Articles on events and issues of interest to the Welsh community for inclusion in the society newsletter are also very welcome. A big *diolch!* to the contributors to this edition.

Your views and participation are very important for a thriving Welsh Society in Vancouver, so please come out and join in!



A message from the membership secretary:

A number of members have forgotten to renew their membership dues and it's already May! Renewal can be done on-line at the Welsh Society Website <http://www.welshsociety.com> or by sending your cheque to:

Jackie Chapman,
Membership Secretary,
Cambrian Hall,
215, East 17th Avenue, BC
V5V 1A6

Membership Fees:

Regular:	\$35
Seniors:	\$35
Family:	\$70
Out of town:	\$20

Grand Sale!

Saturday, May 13th from 10:00 am till 2:00 pm

In recent years, this has been the most successful fundraiser for the society and, with your help, this will be the best yet. Spread the word amongst your friends!

The stalls will include:

Home-made baking and preserves, China, Collectibles, Pre-owned Books, CD's, DVD's etc., Kitchenware, Linens and Jewelry, "White Elephant", "Things Welsh", Children's Wear and Toys, Electrical and Electronics.

Volunteers are needed:

- before the Sale on Wednesday May 10th from 10:00 am till 3:00 pm to SET-UP
- before the Sale on Friday May 12th from 10:00 am till 3:00 pm to SET-UP ready for the sale
- on the day of the Sale to sell at the tables or assist in some other capacity
- at the end of the Sale day to help dismantle the stalls and put things away

Members of the Social Committee will be at the Hall to receive Sale items at the following times:

- Monday, April 24th from 10 am till 3 pm at the Work Party Day
- Wednesday, May 3rd from 11 am till 3 pm
- Wednesday, May 10th from 10 am till 3 pm at SET-UP Day
- Friday, May 12th from 10 am till 3 pm at SET-UP Day

Please let us know as early as possible if you have an item or a service you wish to offer worth \$25 or more since we plan to hold a Silent Auction. Silent Auction Tables will be set up with items or services on which people can bid above a minimum level for each offering. We have lots of contributors:

see <http://www.welshsociety.com/Lab5/donations/>

Contact Gillian (604-742-1378) or GillianRogers67@gmail.com or any member of the Social Committee to work out how you can help and when you are free to volunteer.

The Welsh Society of Vancouver invites you to a
Ceilidh/Twmpath/Barn Dance



The Cambrian Hall, 215 East 17th Avenue, Vancouver
on
Friday May 19th 2017 from 7:30pm - 10:30pm
with

The Rattlebone Band

and

J.D. Erskine (caller)

All dances taught on the spot! Come along and have some fun!
Beer, wine, coffee, soft drinks and snacks will be for sale.

\$10 (13 years and older)

\$5.00 (6 - 12 years)

Free (5 years and under)

For advance ticket sales, please contact Pat Morris
(phone: 604 536 9556 - email: druidsgreen@gmail.com)