

THE WELSH SOCIETY OF VANCOUVER

Gymdeithas Gymraeg Vancouver

Cambrian News

Hydref
2010

October
2010

Society Newsletter - Ylchgrawn y Gymdeithas



Society Members at the North American Festival of Wales

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

VANCOUVER WELSH SOCIETY

Officers:

President:

John Morris

Vice-President:

Lynn Owens-Whalen

Secretary:

Elizabeth Williams Wallace

Treasurer:

Gaynor Evans

Membership Secretary:

Mark Jones

Immediate Past President:

Jane Byrne

Directors:

Heather Davies

Mary Lewis

Gethin Owen

Alwyn Rogers

Eifion Williams

Contacts

Building Committee:

Lynn Owens-Whalen

Cambrian Circle Singers:

Nerys Haqq

Church Service:

John Morris

Welsh Speaking Group:

Gwilym Evans

Rentals:

Glyn Shepard

Glyndwr@telus.net

Social Events Committee:

Gillian Rogers

Gillian.Rogers@shaw.ca

Webmaster:

Alwyn Rogers

www.welshsociety.com

Newsletter Editor:

David Llewelyn Williams 737-0305

williams@phas.ubc.ca

The Cambrian News

From The Editor:

Well, September was the most inspiring month! Not only did we experience the North American Festival of Wales in Portland, but we were able to welcome Côr Godre'r Aran to the Cambrian Hall on Thursday, September 9th for a social evening and we were privileged to hear them again in concert at Shaughnessy Heights United Church on the Friday. Everyone to whom I had sold tickets was grateful of sharing the experience. What a pleasure it was to interact with a group of native Merioneth Welsh speakers. Had they stayed longer, there is a chance my Welsh fluency would have returned!

Now that some of you have experienced Portland, you might consider supporting The Left Coast Eisteddfod. If you contribute, you might even win David Western's magnificent love-spoon! The online competitions are now closed, but being able to listen to Harrison Solow is probably worth the trip.

I have included an abstract from the Bryn Tawe School website. The school was only founded in 2003 and has grown significantly since. It has established itself at the peak of academic success in the greater Swansea area and indeed in Wales. Its motto may be translated as "Gaining a language is a total gain". Students gain an additional dimension through their ability to communicate fluently in two languages. It opens doors to a rich culture in both languages and broadens employment opportunities. We look forward to meeting them at our Vancouver Celebration of Wales. See you all there!

David Llewelyn Williams

Please take note of the Red Cross First Aid Course and contact Mary Lewis
[See web page.](#)

Forthcoming October Events

Sunday October 10th

Bilingual Church Service at 11:00 am
followed by a **Tê Bach**.

Wednesday October 13 at 12:00 noon
Book Club Inaugural Meeting!

We will be reading "Secret Daughter" by Shilpi S. Gowda for the club's inception. Anyone and everyone is welcome to attend, and is asked to put forward 3 choices of books for future reading. Please bring a bag lunch; tea and coffee will be provided.

Monday, 18th October at 10:30 am
Welsh Speaking - Siarad Cymraeg

Monday, 25th October from 10:00 am till 3:00 pm **Work Party Day**.
All volunteers welcome; lunch served.

October 28 – October 31
Vancouver Celebration of Wales

Thursday, October 28th. at 7:30 pm.
Noson Lawen in the Cambrian Hall

Friday, October 29th at 6pm for 7pm
Anniversary Dinner. Tickets at \$40 from Gaynor. (Phone: 604-271-3134)
Email: fgevans@telus.net)

Saturday, October 30th
Dylan Thomas Presentation in the Cambrian Hall. from **11am to 3pm**

At **7.30 pm**, a **Grand Concert** will be held at the **Michael J. Fox Theatre** in Burnaby, featuring **The Vancouver Orpheus Choir, The Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir** and soloists **Eifion Thomas** and **Joy Cornock**.

Note: The theatre is located at 7373 Macpherson Avenue (take Kingsway to

Macpherson and turn south to the junction with Irmin St. If you reach Rumble, you are one block too far. Nearest Skytrain is Royal Oak.)

Sunday October 31st
Dysgu Cymraeg 10.00 am - 11.00 am

Bilingual Church Service at 11:00 am
followed by a **Tê Bach**.

As part of our Celebration of Wales we will be joined after the service by students from **Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe, Abertawe**. Our talented guests will be welcomed to join us for refreshments before performing a short concert at **1pm**. As we will be a larger group than usual, **your donations of plates of food** will be much appreciated. The students are all part of the school choir and they will entertain us with singing, dancing and drama.

Our traditional **Gymanfa Ganu** will commence at **2.30 pm** and will be conducted by **Eifion Thomas**, the Musical Director of the Llanelli Male Choir with soloist **Joy Cornock** from Abergwaun, Wales

Advanced Notice of Christmas Activities.

Saturday, December 4th
Mulled Wine Evening

Saturday, December 11th
Christmas Dinner.

Sunday December 12th at 2pm:
Children's Christmas Party.
Please forward your children's/
grandchildren's names and ages to
Gaynor Evans at fgevans@telus.net or
phone 604 271-3134 before the cut off
date of November 14th.

**The North American Festival of Wales
in Portland**

Our society was very well represented at the Festival, which proved to be a very special experience immersed in Welsh culture and fellowship. Portland itself was impressive for its cleanliness, its many parks and its free rapid transit system downtown. Portland's History Museum held an exhibition on the Welsh in America, provided by the Welsh Assembly. A tour was offered on the Friday to the Oregon Gardens and Frank Lloyd Wright's Gordon House; ending at Bryn Seion Church where we sang hymns and enjoyed tea and welsh-cakes.



Another tour arranged on the day after the festival took us up the Columbia Gorge, stopping to see Multnomah Waterfalls, the Bonneville Dam with its fish ladders, and ending up Mount Hood. The weather cooperated throughout and my only regret was that I could not be in three places at the same time; such was the tempting variety of seminars, films and Eisteddfod competitions.

We arrived on Thursday, September 2nd, and checked into the Doubletree Hotel which hosted all the Festival events. A welcoming ceremony in the Foyer, at which we were serenaded with Welsh classics by Nerys Jones, was followed by the raising of the Red Dragon on one of the hotel's flagpoles while we sang *Hen Wlad fy Nhadau*.



An evening concert, presented in their usual brilliant fashion by harpist Bronn Journey and his wife, soprano Katherine Journey, set the tone for the Festival.

Friday was Banquet Night. After the introduction of the Head Table by Vice President Hywel Davies, the 2010 Heritage Medallion of the National Welsh-American Foundation was presented to Martha Davies and Dr Berwyn Jones, especially for their creation and leadership of the Great Plains Welsh Heritage and Culture Centre in Wymore, Nebraska. We were entertained by baritone Glynn Morris from Abergwyngregyn. For our society, the highlight was his waltz with Kathy Thomas to a Franz Lehár melody!





Saturday's highlight, indeed that of the whole Festival, was the concert by Côr Godre'r Aran under the direction of Eirian Owen. Soprano Heulen Cynfal and the three basses, Tom Evans, Trebor Lloyd, and Sion Goronwy were also featured to great acclaim.



A rendition of *Old Man River* by Sion brought the house down! This was one of the best concerts we had heard for some years; the audience responded appropriately!

Following the concert we again had the choice of hymn singing or an 'Open Mic' session hosted by Bronn. Many performers from the previous evening again took part; this time I recited a selection of Robert Williams Parry's poems with my attempts at translation.

After the banquet, one had the option of Hymn singing or an 'Open Mic' session hosted with his characteristic humour by Bronn Journey. The quality of the performers, soloists, story tellers and musicians took me by surprise, so I wondered if my offering of *Aberdaron* which involved audience participation would be appropriate. But it worked and I was invited to participate again when it was decided to have a second event in view of the success of the first.



We were also entertained by recitations by Gwyn Evans (Bendigo) and by Alan Upshall (Hymns & Arias). Bronn encouraged harpists to come and perform on his harp and two actually did. Another spirited evening which owed much to Bronn's personality.

Sunday began appropriately with the Church Service, conducted by John Cann of our society in Welsh and by Rev. John Hasenjaeger from Bryn Seion Church in English. The organist was Alan Thomas from Ottawa.



The hymns were sung in equal portions in Welsh and in English as were the scripture readings by Myfanwy Bajaj (Toronto) in Welsh and Roger Hughes (Florida) in English. Robert O'Brien, the winner of the Hymn Singing Competition, was the featured soloist. An especially touching feature of the service was the memorial to departed members. As Rev. Dr. Stacy Evans announced each name, a child placed a red rose in commemoration. One name was our own Ken Owens.

A thought provoking sermon, entitled "Turning the World the Right Way Up" was given by John Cann. The offering was to be divided between Bryn Seion Church and The Great Plains Welsh Heritage and Culture Centre.

Sunday featured two Gymanfa Ganu sessions; the afternoon one conducted by Eirian Owen and the evening conducted by Rhiannon Evans Acree; two women originally from the same area in

Merioneth! Together with the presence of Côr Godre'r Aran, the spirit of the Welsh speaking heartland inspired the hymn-singing. The congregation sang its heart out on both occasions. An extraordinarily uplifting experience!



The two conductors.

The organist throughout was Alan Thomas; John Cann officiated at the afternoon session, whereas Rev. John Hasenjaeger officiated in the evening. John Owen from Boise, Idaho, the solo winner at the Eisteddfod once again (!), sang in the afternoon as did Côr Godre'r Aran. In the evening, the choir sang again as did Glynn Morris. Rhiannon brought forward Elizabeth Shoemaker, the young soprano from the Eisteddfod, to sing a piece with Tom Evans, as a tribute to her youthful talent.



The evening session was followed by the Closing Ceremony where the badges of office were transferred to the Venue Chairpersons of the 2011 Festival to be held in Cleveland. The 2010 Festival will be a hard act to follow and Janet Figini, Betty Pierce and their committee are to be heartily congratulated.

The Left Coast Eisteddfod

Portland, October 3 to 10, 2010.

This Eisteddfod was started in 2009 by Americymru, the group set up by Ceri Shaw. It features a variety of events including on-line poetry and writing competitions for which submissions are now closed. Readers may remember David Western's letter in our April newsletter in which he promised to create a love-spoon in support of the Eisteddfod. A ticket is issued for every dollar donated. Here is the recently completed spoon which is magnificent!



To give you some flavour of the events, I include the schedule for one evening

The Night of the Living Bards (at the Buffalo Gap Saloon) Thursday, Oct. 7
5.00 pm Showing of S4C production '**Other World**' (Y Mabinogi) 2002 (1hr 44mins)

"On his eighteenth birthday, Llew's world is shaken by the news that he is adopted. On the same day, his friend Rhiannon thinks that she may be pregnant, and Dan, who lives in his big

brother's shadow, is as scatty as ever. They all put their problems aside for the day when they come together to celebrate Llew's birthday. Venturing on a boat trip along the coast they suddenly see a change in the water. They realise that, on May Eve, they have found the golden doorway to the Otherworld, which can be seen shining deep beneath the waters. Being an independent and stubborn girl, Rhiannon doesn't think twice before plunging into the sea, and the other two are not far behind. As they swim deeper and deeper and get closer and closer to the golden gate, they are transported many centuries ago to the incredible world of the Mabinogi....." The musical score is arranged by **John Cale**, formerly of the Velvet Underground, in conjunction with the National Orchestra of Wales. Ioan Gruffudd, Mathew Rhys, Jenny Livsey, Daniel Evans, Phillip Madoc, Rhys Ifans Paul McGann are some of the famous names who have contributed to the film.

7.00 -7.30 pm Readings by Featured Authors at the Wordstock Festival

Niall Griffiths, Harrison Solow, Chris Keil, Peter Griffiths.

Niall Griffiths will be reading for the first time from his forthcoming book in the 'New Stories from The Mabinogion' series. Niall was commissioned by Seren (a leading publishing house in Wales) to write a modern adaptation of two tales, 'The Dream of Macsen Wledig' and 'The Dream of Rhonabwy'. The resulting title 'The Dreams of Max and Ronnie' will be published in mid October. According to the Seren website: "In this series, the old tales are at the heart of the new. Each author reinvents a story in their own way: creating fresh, contemporary tales that speak to us as much of our own world as of events long gone."

**7.30 - 9.10 pm Left Coast Eisteddfod
'Live' Narrative Competition**

A live narrative competition for which we will be recruiting 20 contestants.

**9.20 -11.00 pm Left Coast Eisteddfod
'Live' Poetry Competition**

A live poetry competition for which we will be looking to recruit 10 contestants.

[In each these competitions, competitors must tell a story of some kind but there will be no restrictions on narrative style or content. Each will have 8 minutes at the Mic and there will be a first prize of \$250 and a second prize of \$100. There is no registration fee; all will be required to pay the standard \$6 admission fee. If you wish to compete please email americymru@gmail.com].

11.00 -12.00 pm Halley Weaver, Portland's very own 'Zero Emissions Harpist' will be performing from The Mabinogion Suite and other works.

Note: The **Wordstock Festival** is a literary festival held in The Oregon Convention Center in Portland during the same period. Among its events is a discussion moderated by Ceri Shaw of Americymru featuring the authors listed above on the topic **Welsh Identity in Literature: From Dylan Thomas to Doctor Who – what is Anglo-Welsh literature and why should anyone care? How Wales tries to reinvent its cultural identity with every new generation.**

Ceri Shaw had earlier interviewed the participants on Americymru and I felt Harrison Solow's response was worth sharing. She said: "There is everything unique about the Welsh experience. I have said in various interviews about my writing about Wales that "no word equals its referent, and that the meaning of what is approximated in words lies in the shadow of them – in a different realm altogether." I believe "there is a meaning in any experience described

within a book, that cannot possibly be in the book." Nowhere have I seen this belief personified, indeed, living, except in Wales: This is a mystical nation and the daily life of y Cymry remains a mystery to outsiders, some of it even to fellow Welshmen who do not speak Welsh and whose intrinsic and amorphous content is shaped by what is considered by some to be an alien form: English. My significant encounters in Wales have been with the Welsh speaking Welsh, whose intermittent appearance behind those smiles have both an I-Thou magnetism and a faint but discernable invitation; whose bland and wordless gazes bespeak the language of a somehow recognizable teulu (family) that sent me hypnotically to the Welsh Department of The University of Wales to embark on a journey of another kind: the lifelong acquisition of an ancient, bardic tongue. But when I won the Pushcart Prize for Literature for writing about Wales, even those Welsh speakers celebrated the notion that it is possible to write about Wales in English. I'm not so sure that one can write Wales without Welsh. But one can write about it. Wales is a state of mind, or rather a state of heart. It is the scent of lanolin in the air – the hum of small cities in the loam beneath the oaks, the conviction of Celtic blood. It is an endless and sirenic song - as far from English sensibility as it is from German or Cherokee. Sometimes I think that any story about Wales should be told outside the written word. It is only because I cannot sing or paint that I write and what I write is a word-performance. It is eisteddfod."

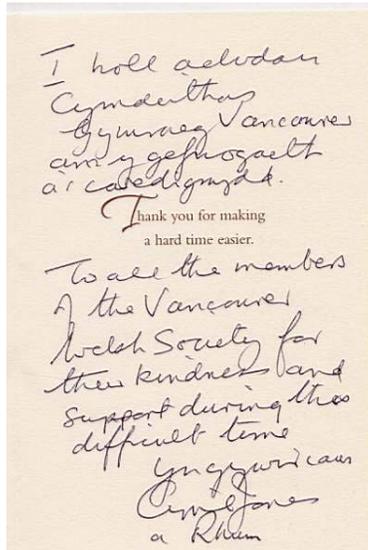
The Pushcart Prize was awarded by Harvard University in a competition that attracted 800 entries. Harrison's is entitled "Bendithion". (Blessings)

The visit of Cyril Jones

The photo below shows Cyril Jones from Caerfyrddin at our Tê Bach in June. Cyril had come over since his son Rhun had become suddenly very ill while on vacation in the Okanagan. He had been transferred from there to Vancouver General while awaiting arrangements to transfer him home to Cardiff, Wales by Air-ambulance.



Unfortunately, it proved not possible to save Rhun, who never regained consciousness. Cyril sent the following card of thanks to our society for the support he received while in Vancouver.



He was in contact with several members and, in his message to Mary Lewis, he included a eulogy to Rhun by Eilonwy Phillips, the Head of Mobile Library Services testifying to the impact Rhun

had had, both on the service and on its personnel. It is a touching tribute.

Cyril has many connections to our society: he attended Abergele Grammar School and Bangor University. He was Gethin Owen's Headmaster in Dyffryn Ardudwy and finally he settled close to Heather's home in Ceredigion. He was most grateful to our members and looks forward to revisiting us in the future.

Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe (rhan o hanes yr ysgol ar y wefan)

Sefydlwyd Bryn Tawe yn y flwyddyn 2003 gyda 95 o ddisgyblion. Ers hynny, bu twf yr ysgol yn syfrdanol gyda'n disgyblion cyntaf bellachym Mhrifysgol! Mewn cyfnod byr mae'r ysgol wedi ennill ei phlwyf fel ysgol lwyddiannus yn academaidd, yn ddiwylliannol ac yn gymdeithasol. Yn 2010, daeth Bryn Tawe yn un o'r ysgolion sydd ar y brig yn Abertawe, ac yng Nghymru.

Mae Bryn Tawe yn ysgol glos a chyfeill-gar lle y darperir ystod eang iawn o gyfleoedd allgyrsiol. Rydym am i'n disgyblion dyfu i fod yn ddinasyddion cyfrifol ac uchelgeisiol, sy'n oddefgar ac yn dangos parch a charedigrwydd tuag at eraill. "Ennill llwyr yw ennill iaith", dyma arwyddair Bryn Tawe, ac mae'n ein hatgoffa bod gan ein disgyblion ddimensiwn ychwanegol i'w bywyd, sef eu bod yn medru cyfathrebu mewn dwy iaith yn gwbl rugl. Mae bod yn ddwy - ieithog yn agor drysau i ddiwylliant cyfoethog yn y ddwy iaith, ac yn ehangu cyfleoedd ein disgyblion yn y farchnad waith. Ymfalchiwn yn y gefnogaeth bersonol a gaiff pob disgybl fel aelod o deulu Bryn Tawe.

Graham J. Daniels
Pennaeth

More Photos from Portland

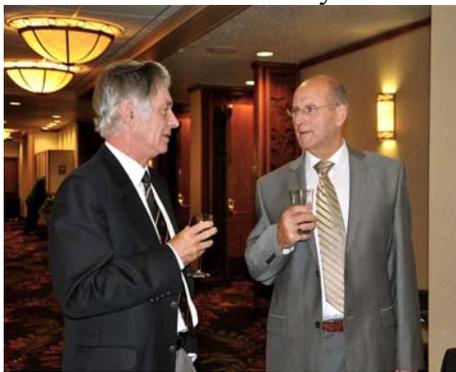
Neville and Kathy Thomas were unable to stay for all of the Festival so they are not in the group photo. Here they attend the first "Open Mic" event.



Relaxing after the Closing Ceremony:



A farewell drink with Glynn Morris



NOTE:

Uta has prepared a bound Photobook covering the Festival which contains many more pictures along with text. It will be donated to the society and will be available for viewing at the Hall.

First Aid Anyone?

St. John's Ambulance are offering a course in first-aid which includes C.P.R. level A (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation) It deals with choking & the unconscious patient, which could be due to many things such as fainting or Diabetic Coma It also suggests adding AED (Automatic external defibrillation) to the list. This last has been taught to all major office staff and in the Malls, and they all have defibrillators in their first-aid kits. They would come to the Cambrian Hall but need a DVD player and a TV with a working remote to present. We could also go to their place at 6111 Cambie St. at 45th. The cost is \$39 per person for a half day course which gives certification. If this seems too much, they can provide a two hour talk with no hands-on experience. Anyone interested please call me at 604-331-1573 or e-mail me at Lewiskelm@shaw.ca Mary Lewis

Rebecca's Daughters - a Mumming

Play. The 1839 Rebecca Riots in Wales led to the abolition of toll roads and bridges in Britain. "Rebecca's Daughters" is from a movie script. From it a short Mumming play of 15 to 20 minutes consists of a death and resurrection. The October Noson Lawen is an appropriate time to perform this historical play, 171 years later. We need volunteers, male and female, to perform and time set aside for rehearsals at the Cambrian Hall. Tryouts will be held at the Hall on Monday Oct. 4th at 7.30 pm. Scripts will be supplied. We will need: 1. Performers willing to wear a black face; 2. Welsh women's dresses, bonnets or hats. For further information, please contact: Paul Lievesley plievesley@hotmail.com Home 604-228-0675; Cell 778-883-6592