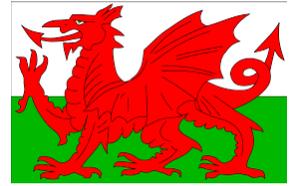


# The Welsh Society of Western New England



Cymdeithas Cymreig Lloegr Newydd Gorllewino

Website: [WelshWNE.org](http://WelshWNE.org) / Email: [WelshWNE@gmail.com](mailto:WelshWNE@gmail.com) / FaceBook: [WSWNE](https://www.facebook.com/WSWNE)

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

Every Tues. in Nov. (except Nov 3) - Welsh Conversation-on-Zoom

Mon. Nov. 9 & 23 - Welsh Genealogy-on-Zoom

Sat. Dec 5 - **CHRISTMAS GET-TOGETHER ON-ZOOM**

Every Tues. in Dec (except the 22nd) - Welsh Conversation-on-Zoom

Mon. Dec 7 & 14 - Welsh Genealogy-on-Zoom

## 2021

Every Tues. in Jan. - Welsh Conversation -on-Zoom

Mon. Jan 4 & 18 - Welsh Genealogy-on-Zoom

Sat. Jan 30 - International Noson Lawen

Every Tues. in Feb. - Welsh Conversation-on-Zoom

Sat. Feb 7 - March 20 - 6 Nations Rugby

Sat. Feb 20 - Sat. March 6 - Wales Week New England 2021

Sat, Feb 20 - Penderyn Whisky Tasting

Sat., March 6 - St. David's Day event

## CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY GET TOGETHER-ON- ZOOM

In these difficult times we need to celebrate the HIRAETH we all feel for Wales; a yearning for our home-land, and a need to be together, simply being Welsh. Let's get-together on Zoom and celebrate hiraeth!



## CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY-ON-ZOOM: THE PROGRAM



We'll have a cocktail or hot chocolate in hand to say "iechyd dda", and enjoy:

- A Christmas story read by Shirley Gilmartin
- Listen to Welsh folk music from Straford Wild and his guitar
- A tale from the Mabinogion



read by Magdalen Dowden

- A reading from Dylan Thomas' A Child's Christmas in Wales by Glyn Dowden
- A Welsh church choir singing a carol from Liverpool, England
- A Welsh tune from Beth Bynnag Tad
- Annie Rodgers singing Suo Gan & Tua Bethlem Dref
- Tina Davies singing the Welsh National Anthem.

Wear your Christmas best, sit by the tree or by the fire with a drink or a mug of hot chocolate, and have a very merry Welsh afternoon.

Members: look out for a Christmas card/invitation in November. Everyone is welcome to join us on Zoom, so non-members please email us to be added to the Zoom session: [InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com](mailto:InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com)!

Download the free Zoom app on your phone or computer. On the morning of Saturday, December 5, 2020 we will send a Zoom link to your email address to join us just before 2:00pm. Just click the link and you will be at our Welsh Christmas get-together.

**Questions? Help needed? Call 860-987-7097 or email us at [InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com](mailto:InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com)**

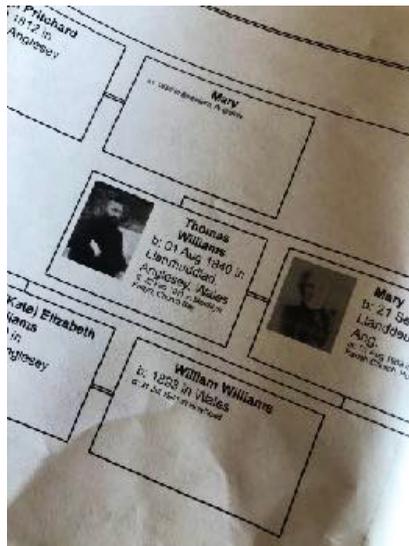
## GENEALOGY -ON-ZOOM

Welsh Genealogy continues on Zoom, a popular event in our new Covid world .

**When:** 11:00AM on Mondays: Nov. 9 & 23 and Dec. 7 & 14 and JAN. 4 & 18.

**How:** Join our ZOOM Welsh Genealogy group: email [InfoWelshWNE.com](mailto:InfoWelshWNE.com) to be added to the email invitation.

Our Genealogy Workshop will meet in-person once it is safe to do so. Meets at 10:30am - 5:00pm. RSVP, email [WelshWNE@gmail.com](mailto:WelshWNE@gmail.com).



Are you interested in Welsh genealogy/family history? Would you like to connect with others who are? Connect with us. Yearly dues are minimal.

WAGS, the Welsh-American Genealogical Society, was founded in Vermont, U.S.A. in 1990. It is an all-volunteer member-helping-member non-profit educational organization.



You will learn more about WAGS by visiting our .org website as well as through our Facebook page. <https://welshamericangenealogicalsociety.org>

Our email address is: [wagsoff1990@yahoo.com](mailto:wagsoff1990@yahoo.com).

*CROESO/Welcome  
to our new member*

- **Ian Olsen** - recently having moved back to Connecticut after some time in NYC, Ian wants to further his Welsh language learning. His ancestors come from the Wrexham area.

## WELSH CONVERSATION-ON-ZOOM - Nov to February

If you are a Welsh learner or speaker looking for an opportunity to chat in Welsh in a casual and friendly setting, we welcome you to join us. All levels, from beginner to native speaker, are welcome. We use a set of weekly questions in Welsh to spark the conversation and develop our language skills and vocabulary too. NOTE: this is not a class.

Where: **On Zoom, every Tuesday (except Nov 3, & Dec. 22 ) at 6:30PM**

How: To join our ZOOM Welsh Conversation group, please email us at [InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com](mailto:InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com) so we can add you to the Zoom email invitation.

## 2ND INTERNATIONAL NOSON LAWEN-ON-ZOOM

**Saturday, January 30th, 2:00PM - 4:00PM**

We had so much fun at our September Noson Lawen, with overwhelming demand to have a repeat! So, our 2nd Noson Lawen-on-Zoom will be held on January 30th, 2021, at 2pm-4pm. Noson Lawen was traditionally held in front parlors where friends and family would gather to play music, sing, and read poetry, fables and literature in Welsh (now in English too). Now, we will gather once more on Zoom to be together to enjoy a Welsh music and literature afternoon.



Jason Ellsworth singing at  
Noson Lawen 2019

Join us to simply enjoy the program or join in: read a poem in Welsh or English, read a part of the Mabinogion or favorite Welsh short story, sing a Welsh hymn or song, play an instrument. We have invited friends from Wales to join us, including members of Côt Y Penrhyn, from Bethesda, Gwynedd.

If you'd like to join the growing list of "performers" please email: [InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com](mailto:InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com).

If you are not a member, you are very welcome to join us ...MUST RSVP to [InfoWelsh@gmail.com](mailto:InfoWelsh@gmail.com) to be on the Zoom email invitation.

## RUGBY: 6 NATIONS CUP - 2021

Rugby's greatest championship between Wales, Scotland, Ireland, France and England will take place over seven weekends in 2021, beginning on Sunday Feb 7th. We will send advice in January 2021 on how to watch the matches. The schedule:

Feb 7th (Sun) 3:00PM - **Wales v Ireland, in Cardiff**

Feb 13th (Sat) 4:45PM - **Scotland v. Wales, in Edinburgh**

Feb 27th (Sat) 4:45PM - **Wales v. England, in Cardiff**

March 13th (Sat) 2:15PM - **Italy v. Wales, in Rome**

March 20th (Sat) 2:15PM - **France v. Wales, in Paris**



## OUR WSWNE NEWS

### INTERNATIONAL NOSON LAWEN-ON-ZOOM

write up by Susan Meers and Susan Davies Sit.....

Call me a skeptic, but I didn't believe a 19th century Welsh tradition could be pulled off successfully in a 21st century Covid-ridden technology-driven world. How wrong I was. On a Saturday afternoon in September we held an on-line Zoom Noson Lawen and celebration of Owain Glyndwr Day to celebrate Welsh literature, music, song and history... And celebrate we did! If you didn't join us, you missed a real treat. Joining in were members and guests from Canada, Wales and the USA.

The afternoon began with nine members of Hogia'r Bonc, a small men's voice choir from Bethesda, North Wales. Introduced by Alun Davies and Maldwyn Pritchard, they first sang *Moliannwn* which was beautifully described by Maldwyn, followed by *Arglwydd Gad i'm Dawel Orffwys*, which was filmed especially for us, on a hillside in Bethesda. What a start to the afternoon.

Winter 2020

Member Heidi Williams McClosky's own Eisteddfod-entry emotion-filled poem was next, bringing our first tears of the day (see this newsletter, page 15). Member and Welsh language learner David Owens was next reading *Y Pin/ The Pine* by Saunders Lewis both in Welsh and English.



Wena Evans, originally from Old Colwyn, North Wales, now of Liverpool, entertained us with a reading of *Eifionydd* by R. Williams Parry, first describing the setting near Porthmadog and Pwllheli and the magical Y Lôn Goed, a place of pilgrimage for Welsh language poetry lovers and a sanctuary at the heart of the Eifionydd countryside ([landoflegends.wales](http://landoflegends.wales)). This place is going on my list of must visit when I'm next in Wales.

Alwyn Rogers, who hails from Carmarthenshire, and is now a member of the Vancouver Welsh Society, Canada read the poem *Aberdaron* by Cynan. Alwyn had us join in with the last two lines of each stanza "*Ond creigiau Aberdaron, A thonnau Gwylit y Mor.*"

WSWNE Board Member Shirley Jones Gilmartin, originally from Aberdare, read "*Between two pieces of Toffee*" by Kate Roberts. So enthralled were we by her storytelling that she had us pulling for Dafydd who was trying so hard to convince Geini to marry him.

Howard Davies, WSWNE member originally from Bethesda and now of Connecticut, led the celebration of Owain Glyndwr by reading our hero's dramatic life story and sharing a picture of the statue of Glyndwr on horseback in Corwen, North Wales. That was followed by member John Bollard, a medieval Welsh history, literature and poetry professor at Amherst College, who explained the context of and read a 15th century letter written by Owain Glyndwr to Henry Dwr with details of the rebellion. What a treat!

Glyn Dowden, WSWNE Board Member and our resident Dylan Thomas and poet in his own right, originally from South Wales, read his poem "*Our Gwyn*", which is set in South Wales.

Winter 2020

The afternoon's final performance was brought to us by WSWNE member Josh's band Beth Bynnag Tad, including his 9 year old daughter who played her ukulele and sang "Sospan Bach" in Welsh, accompanied by dad on his guitar; his son played "Ar Hyd Y Nos" on the



viola; and finally dad on guitar with his other son on an African djembe drum, finished the evening with "Martha a Mair" by Huw M. It was wonderful.

Magdalen Dowden served very graciously as Mistress of Ceremonies, and our President, Susan Davies Sit, brought our international time to a very happy audience. Looking forward to the next Noson Lawen-on-Zoom, and I would encourage every Welsh Society to go for it.

## WALES WEEK / NEW ENGLAND Feb 20-March 6, 2021

WSWNE continues to support Wales Week WORLDWIDE, a celebration of everything Welsh - yes it's actually 2 weeks, as one week is just not long enough!

Wales Week events will be held in 21 places (so far) including London, Dublin, Newcastle, Paris, Melbourne, Manchester, New York, New England, Chicago, Dubai, Washington DC, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Pittsburgh, Thailand, Toronto, Ohio, Michigan, Essex and more to be added.

These organizing events serve varying purposes - be it simply for celebration around the time of St David's Day, or to use the time of heightened Welsh-ness to promote / support Welsh products, services, and our international and local profile.

So it's about noise - creating as much Welsh noise as possible. Here in New England, there may be events in Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut.

## WALES WEEK / IN NEW ENGLAND

If you're involved in the arts, business, the media, in sport, food, public life, academia, our heritage, or in technology, entertainment, tourism, the environment or whatever - and you have a connection to Wales - through Wales Week in New England we can create some great exposure for you, and you'll be helping us to continue building the events program - it's a win-win, if not this year due to Covid, then in 2022.

### Our WSWNE contributions to Wales Week 2021:

- Penderyn Whisky tasting via Zoom (complimentary)
- Welsh Conversation sessions via Zoom
- Welsh Genealogy workshops via Zoom
- Wales 6 Nations Rugby games on TV
- Welsh quiz via Zoom (TBC)

So, if you're interested in running an event, or have some ideas that you'd like to discuss, please contact us at [WalesWeekNE@gmail.com](mailto:WalesWeekNE@gmail.com). We are also on Twitter #WalesWeekNE.

## PENDERYN WHISKY TASTING



On Saturday, February 20 (more details in our next newsletter), we will host a FREE Penderyn Whisky Tasting, **for a max of 24 people. If you want to be included, please email us ASAP** at [InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com](mailto:InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com) to be included. Miniature bottles of Penderyn Whisky will be available to be picked up in Glastonbury, CT, or even delivered if you can't pick up. On a Zoom session, the Impex Penderyn importer rep will guide us through the whisky tasting. Should be fun, all from the comfort of your home and no driving!

### **Thomas Melvyn "Mel" Jones**

WSWNE member Thomas Jones, 92, of Wilton, CT passed away on July 7th, 2020. Mel was born in Treorchy, Wales to Hugh and Ann Jones. Coming from a family of coal miners, he broke rank by attending engineering school for both mechanical and electrical engineering. He married his beloved wife Betty in 1949 and moved to England shortly thereafter where their children were born.

Mel's success in engineering drew the attention of recruiters in the United States, and he accepted one of many offers to start a new adventure with his family across the Atlantic. Mel worked as a senior design engineer for Norden Systems, UTC in Norwalk for 28 years. During this time, he developed radar applications for military aircraft. He is survived by his loving wife of 71 years, Betty; his son Stephen (Lois) Jones of New Jersey, and his daughter Carolyn (Dan) Vinton of Wilton.

## **AROUND OUR WELSH AMERICAN WORLD**

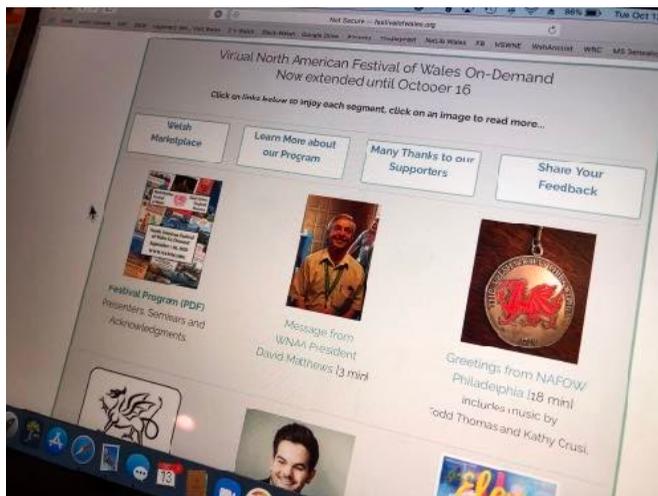
### **North American Festival of Wales virtually, 2020.**

Who would have thought about attending a festival through the glow of your computer screen? As the North American Festival of Wales 2020 wisely went virtual, the planners put together a 3 page roster on their website that you could click your way through, choosing menu items by sequence rather than having to choose either/or. The excitement of the interpersonal exchange during a real NAFOW is swapped for the ability to go to all the "events" and hear them repeatedly. I did this when sharing Mererid Hopwoods' lecture "What's Wales in Welsh" with my husband at a second time.

My viewing took place in the month of September, then the availability was extended by popular demand to the 16th of October. **Now it will be available until the end of this year.**

You have an opportunity to witness the entire Festival over the next one and a half months as many times as you wish!

Go to: [FestivalofWales.org](http://FestivalofWales.org).



*FestivalofWales.org*

In order to entice you, I offer a snapshot of the buffet table. In the music offerings are our friends Cor y Penrhyn and Hogia'r Bonc. Two accomplished vocal soloists give mini concerts: I particularly enjoyed seeing John Ieuan Jones presenting from several different

vantage points in his home to suit the music and his character portrayals. Amazingly, you can sing along with a Gymanfa Ganu On Demand and also experience a 20 minute Eisteddfod including poetry. When will that happen again? There is much more music than I list here.

Here is a sampling of lecture topics, if that is what you like at the Festival. I was fascinated to learn about "The Size of Wales", a non-profit working for climate change. You can hear about survival of Welsh Identity, Welsh-American Identity, Welsh language, Women Poets, Ruthless Squires, Welsh Bards, Gangsters, a Modern Medic, Welsh Patagonia and Images of Slavery in Welsh literature. It is full and satisfying!

Never having attended NAFOW, I'm enlightened by this experience and on board for attending in person in 2022 (Philadelphia). I can imagine being happily immersed in the place with the people. The difference will be that I'll have to choose between the enriching items but not be able to eat the whole meal. Or, maybe some sharing via Venmo and Youtube will be available. How delicious!

By Evan Williams, Board Member

## Venues for the next three NAFOWs so we can plan our trips!

2021 - Ottawa, Canada

2022 - Philadelphia, PA (4 hour drive)

2023 - Lincoln, Nebraska



## Consider giving a Christmas gift!

To keep up with news from Wales and North America, please subscribe to NINNAU: the North American Welsh newspaper. 6 issues per year at \$30 per year, or digital for \$20.

[www.NINNAU.com](http://www.NINNAU.com)

## Coincidences

Board Member Beth Roberts Brown had an interesting coincidence in August, 2019 during our genealogy tour of Wales, when we were in Brynmawr, South Wales:

“What are the chances of listening to Brynmawr historian, Eifion Davies, showing me a music CD called “The Boy From the Top of the Hill”, looking at the musician names on the CD jacket and seeing a familiar name. Beth asked Eifion if Huw Williams was a local performer, as Beth knew a Welsh guitar player and clogger called Huw Williams who was part of the folk group Crasiant. She had seen the group at NAFOW years ago and again at a Welsh concert in Utica, NY. This fellow is also the father of Bethan Williams, and manager of the dynamic Welsh group Calan that she has seen in concert and met at festivals here. Could he be? Eifion's expression confirmed he was the very same.”



## NEWS FROM WALES

### Begw Arian - Finding & Sharing Pearls of Wales

#### SAUNDERS ROW

Tecwyn (Tec or Tex) Roberts was raised in Llanddaniel, Anglesey in 1925. He began an engineering apprenticeship at Saunders Row in Llanfaes, converting and maintaining Catalina flying boats. Substantial work was done, including installation of air to surface vessel radar, work carried out in strictest secrecy.



After the war, Tecwyn continued to work in the Aeronautical Engineering field in the UK and Canada, becoming an experienced and sought after engineer.

In 1959, Tecwyn was chosen to join the then fledgling NASA. As Flight Dynamics Officer he played a key role with Project Mercury that put the first American into space. Said

to be one the few people who really understood the potential of the computer and its application at Mission Control, he and his team played a crucial role in many of the Apollo Moon Landings. He subsequently donated a miscellany of items dealing with lunar and space to the school: Ysgol Parc Y Bont, Llandaniel.

#### GREAT ORME COPPER MINES, LLANDUDNO

This site is regarded to be one of the largest prehistoric copper mines in the World, with over 4 miles of tunnels dating back 4000 years - from 1600 to 1400bc

Tunnels and caverns open into huge hall-sized spaces, hammered by volcanic stones from the beach and animal bone tools which were used for

more delicate work. There are also tiny cracks down which only very young children could access.

It is estimated that 1,800 tonnes of copper ore were extracted. Geo-archaeologists have found metal from this mine in bronze tools and weapons traded across Europe, from Brittany to the Baltic. Prehistoric mining stopped here at the advent of the Iron Age in about 800BC.

This site was 'rediscovered' in 1987 during landscaping for a car park, and a Visitors Centre opened 1991. You can see a variety of ancient artifacts; learn



about life in the Bronze Age, mining and metallurgy. You can also explore the tight narrow tunnels and wonder at the sight when they open into huge caverns (hard hats provided!)

Photos by  
[www.greatormemines.info](http://www.greatormemines.info) &  
[historypoints.org](http://historypoints.org)

## Two of Many Amazing Welsh Myths and legends of Wales

### The Afanc

A lake monster from Welsh mythology, the afanc, can also be traced through references in British and Celtic folklore.

Sometimes described as taking the form of a crocodile, giant beaver or dwarf, it is also said to be a demonic creature.

The afanc was said to attack and devour anyone who entered its waters, and various versions of the tale are known to have existed. In one telling, the wild thrashings of the afanc caused flooding which drowned all the people of Britain.

Several sites lay claim to its domain, among them Llyn Llion, Llyn Barfog and Llyn-yr-Afanc (the Afanc Pool), a lake in Betws-y-Coed.

(Photo by [www.snowdonia.gov.wales](http://www.snowdonia.gov.wales))



### **Twm Sion Cati**

Dubbed the Welsh Robin Hood, Twm Sion Cati was actually a bard and genealogist called Thomas Jones, who lived in Tregaron from 1530 to 1620.

He became a highwayman robbing the rich but it appears he was a bit tight-fisted and didn't distribute a penny to the poor.

He was reputed to be a trickster and a master of deception. But he also had a soft side - he avoided maiming his victims and preferred to pin them with a well-aimed arrow to their saddles.

He hid from the Sheriff of Carmarthen in the wooded slopes of Dinas Hill, close to Rhandirmwyn, and his cave today is well hidden on the banks of the river Towy in the RSPB sanctuary of Dinas Hill.

(Photo by RSPB Gwenffrwd Dinas, [WalesOnline.com](http://WalesOnline.com))

### **WSWNE's Heidi Williams McCloskey .....**

participated in the North American festival of Wales 2020's Eisteddfod and the Welsh Society of Western New England's International Noson Lawen in September 2020. Here she writes about her poem's emotional roots:

Although this poem was written specifically for the 2020 NAFOW Eisteddfod competition, the content had been a longtime brewing. As a kid on Decoration Day (It wasn't officially Memorial Day until 1971,) I often put the flag on my great grandfather's grave. On

Memorial Day 2019, most of the family gathered at the Cemetery for the annual planting, decorating, storytelling, and picnic. My sister chose to stay home. First time in about 20 years. We were just packing up to leave when we got the phone call that Sandra had unexpectedly passed away. Sad and angry, proud and hopeful, here's my poem....

**MEMORIAL DAY, WALES CEMETERY, ERIE, PA**

Dark nights on the Atlantic,  
Richard & Catherine and her parents  
Crossed to America.  
Full of hope.

Cousins walked off the farm to war.  
Battlefields drank the blood of two sons.  
More flags flutter in the Cemetery.  
Full of grief.

Widowed, alone, Mariah struggled.  
The children lived like orphans.  
Billy, the eldest, married an English woman.  
Full of plans.

Land called to Billy & Shanie.  
Mules carried three children  
From farm to school in Little Hope.  
Full of dreams.

Their seven offspring sought more  
And scattered from the land.  
Memorial Day calls them back.  
Full of hiraeth.

They arrived from Maenan in 1832.  
Day after day, year after year, generation after generation,  
They contribute to America.  
This is the power of hope.

H. Victoria Morgan  
August 2, 2020

WSWNE NEWS is published by the Welsh Society of Western New England, Inc

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**WSWNE Membership Form**

**MAIL CHECK to Mary Pallos, WSWNE Treasurer, 1542 Main Street, Glastonbury, CT 06033 (check made out to WSWNE. Membership year begins March 1st, one per family at same address):**

\_\_\_\$100 (Red Dragon), \_\_\_\$50 (Daffodil), \_\_\_\$25 (Miner's Lantern), \_\_\_\$10 (Student)

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_ NEW MEMBER: \_\_\_ RENEWAL: \_\_\_\_\_

Names (list household members):

\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email address (PLEASE PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_

Your Welsh Interests: \_\_\_\_\_

Newsletter Winter, 2020: For Treasurer's use only: Date received: \_\_\_\_\_