

# THE WELSH SOCIETY OF VANCOUVER

*Cymdeithas Gymraeg Vancouver*

## Cambrian News

Rhagfyr  
2010

December  
2010

Society Newsletter - *Cylchgrawn y Gymdeithas*



*Janet and Joy Cornock and Eifion Thomas at the Anniversary Dinner*

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

## VANCOUVER WELSH SOCIETY

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## *The Cambrian News*

### **From The Editor:**

This edition is dominated by our Vancouver Celebration of Wales. I am grateful to Neville Thomas for his report and Martin Gouldthorpe for his videos. The success of the whole event is due to the hard work of a small group of people and they deserve our thanks. Primary among them is the Social Committee and you will notice that they are calling for volunteers to assist with future events.

It must be quite unique to have a society member marshalling in the Ryder Cup and I thank Rob Barclay for his first hand account of 'life within the ropes'. A great event to publicize Wales! By the way, the photo of Rob is taken at our Dinner, not at the Ryder Cup!

I am also grateful to David N. Thomas for giving me advance notice of his article. I have quoted passages to give you the flavour of this article. There is much more! It is worth subscribing to ***Cambria*** for this contribution alone. You can do so by phone at 44- 1267-290188 or at [www.cambriamagazine.com](http://www.cambriamagazine.com)

Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd  
Dda i chwi oll!

David Llewelyn Williams

### **Bilingual Service guest speaker**

We were delighted to have as a guest speaker, Reverend Carys Awen Jones, to give the "sgwrs" at our service on Sept. 12th. Carys and her husband David are from Llanelli and were visiting their son who is living here in Vancouver on a temporary basis. They are friends of Alcwyn and Gillian Rogers. Carys was pleased to visit the Hall, meet some of the members and give the "sgwrs".

### *Forthcoming Events*

#### **Saturday, 27th November at 7:30 pm Deck the Hall party**

Come and listen to Christmas music while decorating the Hall. The bar will be open and we will share some finger food. You are welcome to bring a plate along if you wish. Looking forward to seeing you there!

#### **Wednesday, 1st December at 7:30 pm Executive Meeting**

#### **Saturday, 4th December at 7:00 for 7.30 pm Mulled Wine (or Cranberry Punch) and Carol Evening.**

Join us for a jolly evening to prepare for the Christmas season. We will have readings from "A Child's Christmas in Wales" and we'll join together to sing carols. Check out our Christmas baked goods stall. You'll have the chance to take home a basket of Christmas goodies as a door prize.

#### **Monday, 6th December at 7:30 pm ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Please come along to vote in the 2011 Executive members.

#### **Wednesday, 8th December at 12:00 noon Book Club**

The Book Worms will be discussing 'Fifth Business' by Robertson Davies.

#### **Saturday, 11th December Christmas Dinner at 6:00 pm for 7:00 pm**

A delicious Turkey and Ham Dinner with all the trimmings will be catered by Jordan's and this will be followed by traditional Christmas deserts. Tickets at \$40 can be reserved by calling Gaynor Evans at 604-271-3134. Please book your place as soon as possible.

**Sunday, 12th December at 11:00 am  
Bilingual Christmas Carol Service  
followed by Tê Bach**

#### **Sunday, 12 December at 2:00 pm Children's Christmas Party**

Santa will arrive around 3:00 pm with his bag of presents. Please forward your children's and grandchildren's names and ages to Gaynor Evans as soon as possible. Email: [fgevans@telus.net](mailto:fgevans@telus.net) or phone 604 271-3134.

#### **Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> January at 7:30 Executive Meeting**

#### **Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> January at 11:00 am Bilingual Service followed by Tê Bach**

**Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> January at 12:00  
noon Book Club** The Book Worms will be discussing 'The Book of Negroes' by Lawrence Hill.

#### **Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> January at 10:30 am Welsh Speaking – Siarad Cymraeg**

**Monday, 24th January from 10:00 am  
till 3:00 pm Workparty Day** Lunch will be provided and all are welcome!

#### **Monday, 29th January St. Dwynwen's Day Party**

Details to follow on the web page or from Gillian at [Gillian.Rogers@shaw.ca](mailto:Gillian.Rogers@shaw.ca) or phone 604 742-1378.

#### **Helping hands needed**

No matter if you are unable to come to meetings, we would very much appreciate your help at events. Please give your name, and when you'll be able to lend a hand, to a member of the Social Committee or to Gillian (email [Gillian.Rogers@shaw.ca](mailto:Gillian.Rogers@shaw.ca), phone 604 742-1378). The committee will welcome your help whole-heartedly!

## Four Wonderful Fun-Filled Welsh Days in October

For four vibrant days, October 28 to 31 the Welsh community actively and enthusiastically ‘Celebrated Wales in Vancouver’.

The Thursday evening’s Noson Lawen drew a capacity audience to the Cambrian Hall. The format for the event was an open invitation for anyone to participate in song, dance, recitation or whatever imaginative presentation they wished to devise. And so they did! Considerable humour abounded and the number of innovative presentations was astonishing.

A ‘mumming play’ entitled Rebecca’s Daughters written and directed by Paul Lievesley was just such a delightful refreshing new event. It is based upon an original Dylan Thomas film treatment of the same name that portrays the outrage and frustration that existed amongst the rural peasantry of Wales in the early Nineteenth Century. Wherever they traveled they were confronted by toll gates and their extortionate charges. Angry farmers eventually disguised themselves in women’s clothes (calling themselves Rebecca) and attacked the toll gates and their keepers. It proved highly successful and by 1844 all toll gates were removed.

But the audience was totally taken aback with the surprise appearance of ‘The Cambrian Cuties’ where many lady members of the Welsh Society dressed in warrior suggestive clothing danced and sang their way to and onto the stage. Their main theme was the Celtic use of woad (a blue indigo that gave colour to bodies going into battle) sung to the tune of ‘Men of Harlech’.

The Anniversary Dinner was held in the Cambrian Hall on Friday evening. A superb buffet preceded the stage entertainment. This was provided by two outstanding visitors from Wales. Joy Cornock, an exceptionally talented soloist and Eifion Thomas, who has a world renown amongst Welsh people as a gifted tenor soloist and choir conductor. Their Friday contributions surpassed our expectations.

Saturday morning and afternoon were devoted to the Dylan Thomas Circle. After their AGM Dylan Thomas’ classic *Do not go Gentle into that Good Night* was analyzed. After lunch the mumming play was again performed followed by a conversation with Norm Levi about his relationship with Malcolm Lowry.

The Michael J. Fox Theatre in Burnaby provided the venue for Saturday evening’s Grand Concert. It featured the Vancouver Orpheus Choir, the Vancouver Welsh Men’s Choir and the duo from Wales, Eifion Thomas and Joy Cornock. What an outstanding evening of first class, transcendent singing that left the large audience in awe!

Sunday proved to be the busiest day of all. The morning bilingual church service had hardly ceased when two large buses arrived carrying more exceptional talent from Wales. The buses held 50 students from Ysgol Gyfun Bryn Tawe in Swansea who were concluding a two week stay in British Columbia where the boys had played rugby and the girls field hockey against some top schools. A compulsory feature for all students required them to be part of any stage performance by the group. And so it was to the exceptional joy of all present at the Cambrian Hall. They

performed solo and small group song, traditional Welsh folk dancing and drama excerpts from *Under Milk Wood*. Then the total group choir sang *Calon Lan* and the audience was totally captivated. But the students did not finish there. They stayed a little longer into the afternoon and joined the audience in our Gymanfa Ganu of Welsh hymn singing. Then they hastened to the airport to catch their flight to Wales.

The Gymanfa was superbly conducted by the amazing musical phenomenon Eifion Thomas, ably accompanied by Barry Yamanouchi. Joy Cornock also contributed a few more entrancing songs. The audience responded by singing more heartily than ever. What a wonderful climax to the 'Vancouver Celebrates Wales' Festival.

Neville Thomas

#### Pictures from the Celebrations

Martin Gouldthorpe has produced a report with pictures and excellent videos on his blog. They can be viewed at <http://martinandgracegouldthorpe.wordpress.com> They are also on our website!

Here are some other photos to convey some of the highlights; the WOAD and Dinner ones are by me but improved by Uta, the Sunday ones are by Uta and the one of us with Eifion is taken by Gwyn Evans.



**The Cambrian Cuties singing WOAD**

#### The Anniversary Dinner



**U.S. Visitors Janet Figini, Betty Pierce and Gerri Baker Parry**





**Eifion and Joy (Hywel a Blodwen)**



**Bryn Tawe School Choir**



**Simon Davies with Triple National Eisteddfod Winner Kate Harwood**



**Elin Samuel**



**Girls Chorus**



**School at the Gymanfa with Barry Yamanouchi**



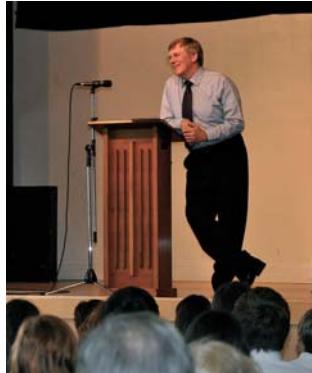
**Under Milk Wood**



**Welsh Folk Dance**



**John Morris thanking Simon Davies and the school**



**Eifion at the Gymanfa**



**Kathy, Gerri, Janet & Neville**



**Your editor, Uta and Eifion.**



**Joy at the Gymanfa**



**Gareth Prytherch and friends**

We have been privileged on Sunday to experience the cultural quality of the National Eisteddfod in Ebbw Vale.

Our soloist for this occasion, Joy Cornock placed first in the Welsh Solo and second in the Lieder Solo in the 19 - 25 age group competitions.

Ysgol Bryn Tawe student Kate Harwood picked up a hat-trick of awards — first prizes in the Alaw Werin (12-16) competition, the girl's solo (12-16) contest, and in the song from a show (12-19) category, where the other two finalists were 18 year old boys. The 15-year-old has competed previously in the Eisteddfod but never walked away with a first prize before.

Fellow Ysgol Bryn Tawe pupils Elin Samuel and Gregory Cox also picked up awards at this year's event. Elin, 15, took first place in the harp solo for 12-16 year olds, and Gregory, also 15, came third in the boy's solo for 12-16-year-olds.

D.Ll.W.

## My Experience at the 2010 Ryder Cup



In 1926 there was an unofficial golf match between professionals of Great Britain and the USA, held at Wentworth, England. It was won by the British. One of the spectators was an English man called Samuel Ryder. He was so enthralled by the match that, when talking to friends in the bar afterwards, he said "We must do this again," and so The Ryder Cup was born.

There have been three Welshmen who have captained GB/European teams: Dai Rees, Brian Huggett and Ian Woosnam. However, the matches have never been played in Wales... until 2010. When Wales was awarded the 2010 Ryder Cup, I had to go, especially as it was being held at Celtic Manor, in my own City of Newport. I applied to volunteer in 2008, and In 2009 was notified that I had been accepted, and that I would be a marshall. I can't tell you how thrilled I was.

The excitement of the Ryder Cup started for us when we went to Cardiff's Millennium Stadium for the "Welcome to Wales" gala show. Catherine Zeta Jones hosted the event and there were outstanding performances by Katherine Jenkins and Dame Shirley Bassey, along with other groups who sang and danced, making the event a fabulous night.

**Day One (Friday):** Once play began on the first day, it only lasted for a few hours due to the inclement Welsh weather. My job as a roving marshall was to follow the players from the 1st to 6th tee and then on to the 18th. I have to say that all throughout the game, the enthusiasm of the spectators never lagged.

**Day Two (Saturday):** The weather was getting better and play continued throughout the day. My position inside the ropes gave me the unique opportunity to see and hear the players up close.

Because of the need to play on Monday (as you all probably know it was the first time in the history of the Ryder Cup that an extension of play was required), we were given the singles we would be following on Monday, and I was given the 8th group out.

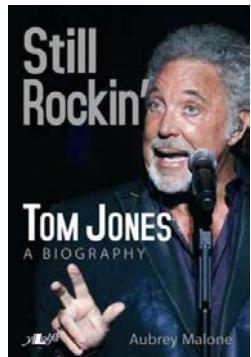
**Day Three (Sunday):** Sunday morning was just another October morning in Wales - rain and lots of it. The course was waterlogged and very muddy, especially for the spectators. By the afternoon, play was again underway, thanks to a fantastic greens' crew and an excellent well-drained golf course.

**Day Four (Monday):** On Monday morning, I was delighted to learn that the 8th group I would be following consisted of Tiger Woods and Francesco Molinari. Tiger, by this time, was beginning to pick up his play and won his match on the 15th hole. Monday saw nothing but blue skies, and as I was walking toward the first tee looking to the west over the river Usk, I could see the mountain of Twm Barlwm silhouetted against the blue sky. It was breathtaking. When we finished our duties, we stayed around the green of the 15th hole and watched all the other players until

Graeme McDowell and Hunter Mahan came by, and then we followed them to the 17h hole, where Europe was declared the winner.

The whole event was well organized and enjoyed by all, despite the weather...in the words of Max Boyce, the famous Welsh comedian .... "I know 'cos I was there."

**Rob Barclay**



A new warts-and-all biography tells the full story of Tom Jones' amazing career: his innumerable affairs, his friendship with Elvis, and his brush with Charles Manson. It describes how he hit the heights, outselling Frank Sinatra at the Copacabana night club, New York and the 5,000 bedroom keys that got thrown at him at Caesar's Palace, Las Vegas.

However there were many lows as Tom Jones continually reinvented himself from young rock-and-roller in Pontypridd to sixties hip-swiveller to seventies cabaret king, and then, under the strict direction of his own son Mark, to mature rocker and born again gospel singer with the recently released *Praise and Blame*. The biography also highlights Tom's attachment to his Welsh roots and to his wife and childhood sweetheart, Linda Trenchard -- which, according to the author, is "the craziest thing of all in the rascal's ultra-crazy life."

Author Aubrey Malone's biography sells for £6.95 and is published by Y Lolfa at [www.ylolfa.com](http://www.ylolfa.com).

#### CPR Course

Following the last note on CPR in the newsletter, many people have viewed the excellent video on line at <http://tinyurl.com/2fx8r9/> put out by the University of Arizona.

However, it is still felt that a "hands on" experience is essential. St. John's Ambulance "Life saver" course is four hours, costs \$35.00 per person and can be done at the hall for a \$75.00 delivery charge for the equipment, or it can be done at their place on Cambie at 45th street. They need one month notice and a minimum of 8 participants.

In view of all activities between now and Christmas, it seems best to book it for late January or February. Please give me your opinion and suggestions by email at [lewiskelm@shaw.ca](mailto:lewiskelm@shaw.ca) or call me at 604.331.1573

Mary Lewis

#### Cinderella

We invite you, your family and friends to join us on **Saturday, January 8<sup>th</sup>** at 2.00 pm for the Matinee Performance of Cinderella at the Metro Theatre, 1370 S.W. Marine Drive, Vancouver.

Tickets are \$23 each, \$14 for children aged 10 and under.

Please phone the Box Office 604-266-7191 ASAP to reserve your seat and pay by credit card at this time. Mention the Welsh Society- they are holding two rows for us, for a limited time.

After the performance we plan to have Fish and Chips delivered to the Red Dragon from the Windjammer Restaurant. Please phone Pat Morris 604-536-9556 if you have questions.

### Dylan Thomas and Pontardulais

Paul Lievesley produced a ‘mumming play’ based on a film script *Rebecca’s Daughters* by Dylan Thomas. I recently received an email from David Thomas, the Dylan Thomas biographer. He and Deric John have just published an article in the autumn 2010 issue of *Cambria* magazine. It’s called **From Fountain to River: Dylan Thomas and the Bont.** An annotated version is also on-line at <https://sites.google.com/site/dylanthomas/pontardulais/home> providing source notes, references and photographs.

This is a fascinating article which suggests that although Dylan set his story in Pembrokeshire in 1843, “there are passages in *Rebecca’s Daughters* which suggest that Dylan might also have drawn upon the far more significant events of 1843 in Pontardulais (the Bont). The confrontation in the Bont was one of the most serious of *Rebecca* incidents, involving a pitched battle between the rioters and the civil forces. It was also the only time that police and troops had managed to get in position before a tollgate attack happened. Dylan’s script seems to reflect this.”

“Dylan also describes how a young woman, Rhiannon, falls in love with the leader of the *Rebeccaites*. Her love deepens as she and her maid servant watch from her carriage as he leads the action at a tollgate. Was this just the writer’s imagination at work, or did Dylan know about the romance behind the Pontardulais riots? “

“In July 1843, the Bolgoed gate at the top end of the Bont, near the Fountain Inn, had been destroyed. The leader was Daniel Lewis, a weaver and poet, said to be a man of “unusual culture” who fostered “the radical ideas of the time”.

As he led the attack on the Bolgoed gate, his love Elizabeth Davies looked on with her maid servant, not from a carriage, but from an upstairs window of the Fountain. Betrayed by an informer, Daniel was arrested but eventually released. He and Elizabeth later married and had several children, the last being a girl they called Morfydd. If Dylan did draw on the Pontardulais riots, where did his information come from? One source could have been Morfydd’s son, Wynford Vaughan Thomas, a life-long friend of the poet, and a man who was proud of his grandfather’s part in destroying the Bolgoed gate.”

The article is full of well researched information about Dylan’s connections to the Bont and its colourfull characters. The sub-title, *From the Fountain to the River*, takes him from one end of the village to the other.

“The Bont was also a pub crawlers’ paradise, especially for someone like Dylan, who disliked spending too much time in just one pub. Amongst the things he loved doing, said a friend, “was going on the sort of boozing trip that you read about in *The Outing*.” Dylan could arrive from Swansea on the United Welsh doubledecker, and get off at the Fountain. Like scores of the town’s young men before and after him, he could then stumble his way down through the town to the river, eight pubs in all. This was no furtive affair. The pubs were all on the main road, making it a very public pub crawl indeed. The forces of law and order were close at hand: the police station and no fewer than seven chapels and churches also sat, watchfully, along the main road. This was a community that did its drinking and praying in the open, and took both seriously.”