

THE WELSH SOCIETY OF VANCOUVER
Cymdeithas Gymraeg Vancouver

Cambrian News

Tachwedd
2011

November
2011

Society Newsletter – Cylchgrawn y Gymdeithas



Llanfihangel y Pennant Church

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

VANCOUVER WELSH SOCIETY**Officers:****President:****John Morris****Vice-President:****Lynn Owens-Whalen****Secretary:****Elizabeth Williams Wallace**
mail@welshsociety.com**Treasurer:****Gaynor Evans****Membership Secretary:****Mark Jones****Immediate Past President:****Jane Byrne****Directors:****Katrina Borsato**
Heather Davies
Antone Minard
(Recording Secretary)
Gethin Owen
Alwyn Rogers**Contacts****Building Committee:****Lynn Owens-Whalen****Cambrian Circle Singers:****Nerys Haqq****Church Service:****John Pritchard****Welsh Speaking Group:****John Pritchard****Rentals:****Richard Williams 604-340-8545****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)****Cambrian Hall 604-876-2815****The Cambrian News**

From The Editor:

I am grateful to Neville and Kathy Thomas for their reports on both the Anniversary Dinner and the Celebration of Wales. Neville also brought to my attention the controversy with respect to the Wind Farm. As you will realize, what Wales needs now is an influence comparable to Sir Alfred T. Davies to defend its heritage.

I have chosen to include our trip to Llanfihangel Y Pennant, the home of that iconic figure in the history of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Mari Jones. The photographs, for the last time, are by Uta, who also made the trip. One photo of the trains at Abergynolwyn Station is, however, by "Optimist on the run" who has a marvellous collection.

In the January issue, I hope to include my trip to Llanddwyn Island, since January 25th is St. Dwynwen's Day.

Please take notice of our December events and let Gaynor know if you wish to attend. Of great importance to the future of the Society, please attend, offer your services and vote at the AGM for next year's Executive.

David Llewelyn Williams

For Christmas Celebration this year, the Dylan Circle will be feasting in Downtown Vancouver and then attending a theatre performance of "*A Child's Christmas in Wales in Concert*" on Friday, Dec 9th. (To participate - contact David at 604 299 8755 rollin@uniserve.com before Nov 21)

Forthcoming Events

Monday, November 21st at 10:30 am
Welsh speaking – Siarad Cymraeg

Monday, Nov. 28th, 10:00 am till 3:00
Deck the Halls on Work Party Day

Listen to Christmas music as we decorate the Red Dragon in preparation for the Christmas season. A delicious home made lunch will be provided.

Wednesday, November 30th at 7:30 pm
Welsh class Social gathering for those interested in learning Welsh.

Saturday, December 3rd at 7 pm
for 7:30 Mulled Wine (or
Cranberry Cocktail) and Carol
Evening

Join us for a merry evening to begin the Christmas festivities. There will be readings from "A Child's Christmas in Wales" and we will join together to sing carols. Check out our Christmas Market.

Wednesday, December 7th at 7:30 pm
Executive Meeting

Sunday, December 11th at 11:00 am
Bilingual Christmas Carol Service

This will be followed by a Tê Bach.

Sunday, December 11th at 2 pm.
Children's Christmas Party.

Please forward your children's or grandchildren's names and ages to Gaynor Evans as soon as possible at 604 271-3134 or e-mail

fgevans@telus.net

Santa will be visiting around 3pm with gifts and goodies, and so he needs to know how many children, 12 years and under will be at this fun party. Anyone over 12 years is more than welcome to join in and help with games and crafts.

Let me know if you're coming

.....Time is running out!

Monday, December 12th at 7.30 pm.
Annual General Meeting

Please come along to vote in the 2012 Executive members or to volunteer!

Wednesday, Dec. 14th at 12:00 noon
Book Club

The Cambrian Bookworms will meet at a new location to discuss "Sing them home" by Stephanie Kallos. Phone Jane at 604 732-5448 for details.

Saturday, December 17th at 7pm
Annual Christmas Dinner

Jordan's International Food Designs will once again be serving a traditional Christmas dinner of hot sliced Turkey and Festive Ham with all the trimmings, Winter leaf salad, roast vegetables, seasonal desserts, fruit platter and tea and coffee. Cost per person, which includes HST and gratuity, \$40.

Please reserve your tickets early to avoid disappointment. Telephone Gaynor Evans at 604 271-3134 or e-mail fgevans@telus.net

Monday, December 19th at 10:30 am
Welsh speaking – Siarad Cymraeg

Wednesday, January 4th at 7:30 pm
Executive Meeting

Wednesday, January 11th at 12 noon
Cambrian Bookworms

Sunday, January 8th at 11:00 am
Bilingual Church Service

This will be followed by a Tê Bach

Monday, January 16th at 10:30 am
Welsh speaking - Siarad Cymraeg

Monday, January 23rd from 10:00 am
till 3:00 pm Work Party Day

NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2012 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Society's Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday, December 12. The most important part of the meeting will be the election of officers to serve on the Executive Committee for the coming year.

The Society has been very fortunate in the past in having hard-working volunteers fill Executive positions, many of them serving for several years in various capacities. This year, too, there are members willing to serve as Directors, some of whom have already done yeoman service in ensuring the smooth running of the Society.

The hardest positions to fill are those of table officers, especially President and Vice-President. According to the Society's Constitution, a member cannot be elected to these positions for more than three consecutive years. This year, the current President, John Morris, is ineligible for re-election, although he will continue to serve as Past President.

The difficulty in filling major positions on the Executive is due largely to a diminishing pool of active members who are aging or have personal or family health problems. Fortunately for the Society, the last few years have seen a growing number of younger members willing to serve. The Society recognizes, however, that these younger members are likely to have work and family commitments that must take precedence over Society activities.

Despite the above, it is still hoped that members will come forward to fill all the positions. Executive members act in a collegial manner, hold ten meetings

during the year, and no one is expected to bear an unfair burden of responsibility.

The Welsh Society has had a very successful year. Finances are stable, rental income is up, and there are very active Social and Building Committees. A full slate of officers for 2012 is needed to ensure that this success continues. Members wishing to submit their names to serve on the Executive should contact Elizabeth Murray (604-464-3343) or Eifion Williams (604-469-4904).

Constitution News Update

At our November General Meeting, information was requested on the progress our application to the Registrar of Companies, to replace the existing 1986 Constitution with a 2011 version.

Our initial submission was returned with advice to make minor changes to be compliant. Only those sections of our Constitution which allow changes and which are to be changed need be forwarded.

Section 1. The name of the Society. The addition of Cymdeithas Gymraeg by way of a bilingual addition is not permitted.

Section 2. The "objectives" of the Society was changed to read "purposes".

A complete copy of our revised By Laws was attached as requested and our application has been resubmitted.

John Morris, President.

An Excellent Welsh Annual Dinner.

A splendid buffet dinner and captivating entertainment combined to produce a highly successful Anniversary Dinner for the Welsh Society on October 15th. The planning of any major event at our Society leads to a call to Jordan's International Food Designs to provide their high quality catering services. At the Dinner, our members thrived around the enticing, bountiful buffet table. Many return visits were observed.

Well nourished, members then reposed themselves for the entertainment which also proved exceptional. It was provided by Nerys Jones, who is a recent emigrant from Wales and now resident in Seattle. With her beautiful mezzo-soprano voice and accompanying herself on the harp, Nerys soon had the audience captivated. There was a particular joy in hearing so many delightful traditional Welsh songs delivered in this manner. Nerys has been induced to return to Vancouver to perform again at our Gymanfa Ganu on Sunday, November 6th.



A special thanks to Gaynor Evans for organizing the evening, ably aided by Gillian Rogers and the members of the Social Committee.

Neville Thomas

Blowing in the Wind

David Williamson Wales Online

Oct. 13 2011

The site of Owain Glyndwr's first victory against the English should be a "national monument" and not be spoiled by a wind farm, the Cambrian Mountains Society said yesterday. Activists gathered in Westminster to condemn proposals to erect 64 wind turbines in Mid Wales at a site between Talybont and Nant y Moch reservoir. Lance Mytton, a trustee, said the area was the location of the iconic 1401 battle, should be respected as a war grave, and called on politicians in Cardiff and London to oppose the plans. He said: "It's the site of the battle of Hyddgen when he [Glyndwr] defeated a much larger army. And it's the very place that sent the lightning flash of Welsh self-determination 600 years ago. It's an absolute disgrace; it's a complete disgrace. I don't blame the ministers in Westminster for not knowing that but I do blame the Welsh Assembly for not knowing it."

Developers SSE Renewables claim the turbines would generate enough electricity to power 65,000 homes.

However, Ann West, the chairman of the society, said she did not see how the energy produced could "possibly justify" the "desecration" of the landscape. Jane Ashley, the daughter of the designer Laura Ashley, also attended the House of Commons event and warned: "I think there's going to be total anarchy in Wales if this goes ahead."

(Ed. Doesn't this remind you of Tryweryn?)

A Memorable Celebration of Wales

Our Society presented a stimulating Welsh Weekend, Friday, Nov 4 to Sunday, Nov 6.

Friday evening saw the staging of the *Noson Lawen*, an event where individual Society participants happily perform a song, a dance or a recitation. The attendance and contributions were lower this year than in previous years because both the Orpheus Choir and a portion of the Welshmen's Choir had out-of-town commitments. The Cambrian Circle Singers in their elegant Welsh costumes, however, were there to lead us into a spirited evening. Throughout an evening, directed by Neville Thomas, we received humorous, energetic narrations and talks by John Cann, David Llewelyn Williams, Geoffrey Madoc-Jones and Grace Gouldthorpe. A Dylan Thomas story was playfully presented by a group under the direction of Liz Murray. Once more, by great demand, James Thomas delighted the audience with songs of his own composition



James Thomas

Alan Tucker lively sang a solo - *Swansea Town* and then the audience itself chorused in with two Welsh folk songs - *Iechyd Da*, *Foneddigion* and *Sospan Fach*.

Saturday from 10 am till 3 pm. Dylan Thomas Circle Annual Gathering.

Their day was composed of the Circle's AGM, many vigorous poetry readings and talks and a major address on the life of the native artist, Bill Reid by the guest speaker, George Hayhoe. A magnificent Neo-Ploughman's Lunch was also a major highlight.



Dylan Thomas Circle Members

Saturday's Pub Night – Welsh Legends

King Arthur, Beddgelert, y Tylwyth Teg, fairy rings, the Twrch Trwyth. . . . tales from the distant past. Names with which the literature of Wales abounds. Where did these stories have their origin? A presentation entitled “Legendary Wales” given by Welsh Society member and Celtic scholar, Dr. Antone Minard provided answers to some of these questions. After giving a brief overview of the post Roman organization of Wales and the distinction between myth, legend and folk tale, Antone gave a lively and most interesting talk, which focussed on some of the legends of Wales. Looking around the Red Dragon afterwards, it was obvious that Antone had lit a spark in a number of members of the audience, as lively discussions around legends appeared to continue at some of the tables.



Antone and Gillian

To go along with the good pub cheer there followed a delightful light meal organized and prepared by the Social Committee. The meat pies, salad and sweet to follow were heartily consumed.



Our bartenders Mary and Mathew

Truly a stimulating evening in every sense of the word--good discussion, good drink and good food! (report by Kathy Thomas)

Sunday morning, our bilingual church service was ably led by Jane Byrne. Considerable singing was encouraged. John Cann delivered a thoughtful 'Sgwrs' and Nerys and Margaret combined to deliver a serene song. And then there followed a bountiful and delicious Te Bach.

Sunday afternoon - The *Gymanfa Ganu* This *Gymanfa* will certainly rank as one of our most memorable. In all, 19 traditional Welsh hymns were sung under the highly competent baton of the amiable Jonathon Quick (the conductor of the Welsh Men's Choir) with Ray Batten on the piano. Jonathon's selection of verses and tempo ensured a wonderful response from the singing audience.



The soloist was again Nerys Jones from Seattle. Her glorious mezzo-soprano song delivery, along with the harp she played, was totally enthralling! It was magnificent to hear traditional Welsh songs conveyed in such a manner - it brought a tear to one's eye. At the conclusion of the day, the audience surged to their feet to applaud her superb, emotional performance.

So much of the Weekend's success was due to the considerable preparation work undertaken by the Social Committee and by the indispensable, intricate technical work performed by the capable hands of Paul Lievesley. Particular thanks also to Steve McVittie of the *Celtic Treasure Chest* for his support and those delicious meat pies.

Neville Thomas

A Journey to Llanfihangel y Pennant.

In late July, Uta and I took a trip from Chester where we were staying, into the heart of the mid-Wales countryside. It was not a particularly good day; the views were often limited by clouds and rain, but the tranquility of rural Wales shone through.

Bypassing Wrexham, we passed through Llangollen and Corwen to arrive in Bala for lunch. We then drove on past Bala Lake (Llyn Tegid), and took a short detour to Llanuwchllyn, in tribute to both Godre'r Aran and O.M. Edwards.



Several of the terraced houses on the main street were “Ar Werth” and the church has been closed since 2004 for lack of a congregation. Continuing on, we took the Brithdir road to bypass Dolgellau. Here is the view of Talyllyn Lake as we approach it down the pass,



We stopped at Ty'n y Cornel Hotel at the lakeside for a break. Then on to the



village of Abergynolwyn, home of my mother's family. The village was originally built to house the workers at the Bryn Eglwys Slate Quarry where my grandfather worked. There is a poetic account of a visit to Bryn Eglwys in the May issue of Cambria with pictures of Nature's re-colonization of the ruins. The Talyllyn narrow gauge railway was originally built to carry slate to the coast. It now runs for tourists from the Nant Gwernol Station to Tywyn. Here are two engines at the Abergynolwyn Station.



Here's a picture of Nant Gwernol itself.



It was too tough to try to explore Bryn Eglwys, so we walked around and took photos of houses I had visited and talked with people who recalled that my mother had a son called David Llewelyn! Here is Water Street where the family lived

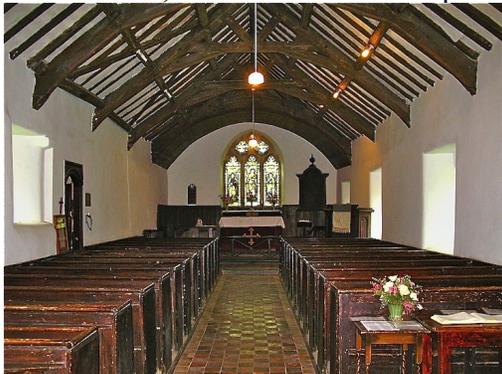
next to yr Afon Gwernol.



The Elementary School, where my mother once taught, was closed in 2008 after serving the community for 125 years. I attended it myself for one term. We then drove over the narrow country roads to Llanfihangel y Pennant to search for my maternal grandparents' grave in the churchyard of St. Michael's (Mihangel) Church. We searched through lots of Evans until we found the grave and also that of one of my great uncles and great aunts right next to it.



Church services are now only held about once a month, but the church was open.



In the vestry there was a collection of Mary Jones memorabilia. Further down the road in front of the ruins of her house

Ty'n y Ddol, is a memorial erected to Mari Jones and her historic walk by the Sunday Schools of Meirioneth.

ER COF AM MARI JONES
YR HON YN Y FLWYDDYN 1800,
PAN YN 16 OED A CHERDDODD OR
LLE HWN I'R BALA, I YMOfYN
BEIBL GAN Y PARCH THOMAS
CHARLES, B.A.
YR AMGYLCHIAD HWN FU YR
ACHLYSUR SEFYDLIAD Y
CYMDEITHAS FEIBLAIDD
FRUTANAIDD A THRAMOR
IN MEMORY OF MARY JONES,
WHO IN THE YEAR 1800,
AT THE AGE OF 16 WALKED FROM
HERE TO BALA, TO PROCURE FROM
THE REVD. THOMAS CHARLES, B.A.,
A COPY OF THE WELSH BIBLE.
THIS INCIDENT WAS THE
OCCASION OF THE FORMATION OF
THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE
SOCIETY.

On our way back, we passed by the ruins of Castell y Bere, but we were short of time so we didn't stop to explore. This castle was built by Llywelyn the Great in the 13th century and was the last Welsh castle to fall to Edward I.

We took the country roads on our way back, through Llanegryn to Rhoslefain and Llwyngwriil on the coast, following the Mawddach Estuary to Dolgellau.



Then we retraced our route to Chester. A long but rewarding day!

David Llewelyn Williams

Wales coast is best on Earth to visit - Lonely Planet

Coastal Wales has been named the "best region on Earth" to visit next year by a travel guide. The 870-mile (1400km) trail around Wales is due to be completed next year. The nation's coastline is highlighted in the Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2012 guide to the best places to go over the next 12 months. Next May, Wales will become the first country in the world to offer tourists a formal trail right around its coast. The Welsh government said the recognition of the coastal path was "fantastic news".

The book, in its seventh year, highlights 10 countries, 10 regions and 10 cities handpicked by the publisher's travel experts as the best places to visit.

Lonely Planet

"How better to truly appreciate the shape - and soul - of a nation?" the annual guide asks of the coastal path. It states: "What a wonderful thing: to walk the entire length of a country's coastline, to trace its every nook, cranny, cliff-face, indent and estuary. Well, in 2012 Wales will become the only country in the world where you can do just that. The All Wales Coast Path (AWCP) will squiggle continuously from Chepstow in the south to near Queensferry in the north - via dramatic serrations, sandy bays and domineering castles - making 1,377km of shore accessible. As well as the novel ability to walk its entire coastline, the region comes out top because of its wildlife, great surf, castles and fantastic spots such as St David's.

Wales Coast Path project manager Sue Rice, of the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), said she was "really

excited" at the news. "We hope that the path will encourage not only visitors to Wales, but also locals to enjoy the health benefits of outdoor recreation," she said. "The local authorities along the path have all put in so much effort to make this happen. Their dedication and hard work on the ground has enabled the project to take shape. We look forward to seeing it open next spring."

Environment Minister John Griffiths said the recognition of the Wales Coast Path was "fantastic news". "When it opens the path will provide a real boost to local economies around Wales' coastline," he said. The path is due to officially open on 5 May 2012. It has been developed by government and CCW, along with 16 local authorities and two national parks. In addition to £2m a year funding from the Welsh government and the coastal local authorities, the project has received nearly £4m in four years of European funding. CCW said improvements to the quality and alignment of the route will continue during 2012 and 2013 to ensure that the path follows the Welsh coastline as close as it is safe and practical

Of the approx 870-mile (1,400km) long path, some 838 miles (1,350km) have already been completed, said CCW. Over time, the Wales Coast Path is expected to lead to the creation of circular coastal routes as links to inland towns and villages are improved.

In case you're interested the top ten are Coastal Wales; Ruta Maya, Central America; Northern Kenya; Arundachal Pradesh, India; Hvar, Croatia; Sicily; Maritime Provinces, Canada; Queens town & Southern Lakes, New Zealand; Borneo: Poitou-Charentes, France.