

THE WELSH SOCIETY OF VANCOUVER

Cymdeithas Gymraeg Vancouver

Cambrian News

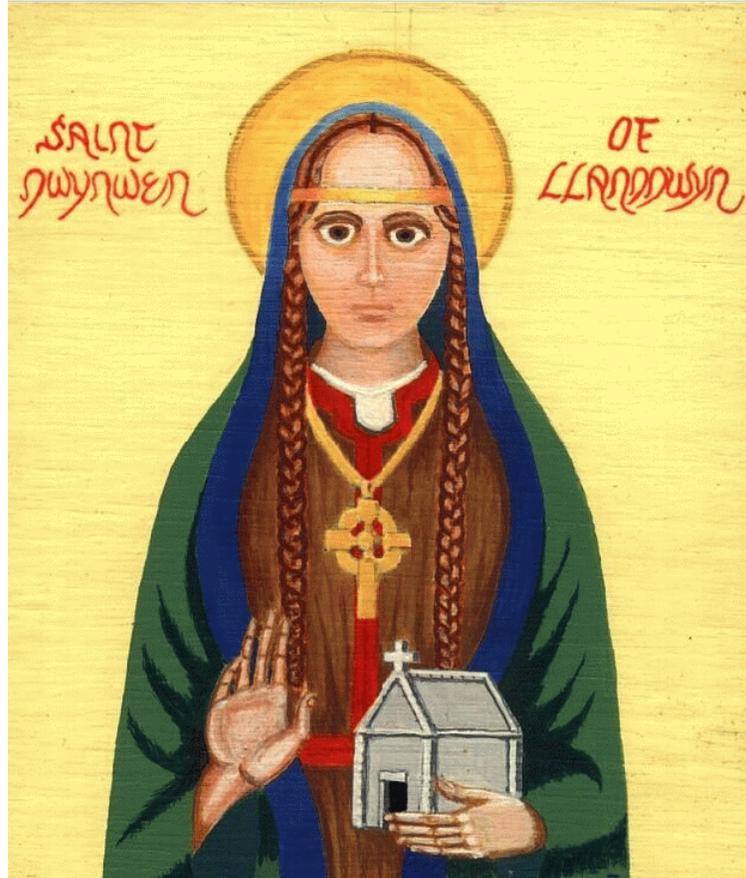
Gwanwyn

2016

Spring

2016

Society Newsletter - Cylchgrawn y Gymdeithas



Santes Dwynwen

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

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Cambrian Hall

604-876-2815

The Cambrian News

From The Editor:

We have many important future events but one in Calgary deserves our support



NAFOW 2016, SEPTEMBER 1 – 4
CALGARY, ALBERTA
RESERVE EARLY!
Headquarters Hotel WESTIN
Festival rates: \$125 CAN per night
Online registration is now open at
www.NAFOW.org

The visiting choir from Wales is Côr Meibion Colwyn and they will give us a joint concert with the Orpheus Choir prior to the Festival. The major award in recognition of his contributions will be presented at the Banquet to our Life Member, Gren Thomas, who will also give a seminar entitled 'From Coal to Diamonds'. More details are available on site, or call Megan Williams at 607-279-7402 or email wnaahq@gmail.com

Vancouver Mayor, Gregor Robertson has proclaimed March 1 as St. David's Day so do support the Society through attending our St. David's Day Open House and our St. David's Dinner.

Thanks to Eifion for his obituary of Margaret Airey and thanks to Bob Florence of the Saskatoon StarPhoenix for allowing me to quote his article on our member, Rhoda Hughes.

David Llewelyn Williams

Forthcoming Events

Monday, February 29th from 7 to 9 pm
Welsh lessons

Tuesday, March 1st St. David's Day Open House at 7 pm

This will be a relaxed evening for attendees to enjoy and meet others.

You will see the grand entrance of the Druids and associates. There will be entertainment by The Cambrian Circle Singers. There will also be *Cawl Cennin* / Leek soup and much singing

Sat., March 5th St. David's Dinner

Doors open at 6:15 pm, dinner at 7 pm

An evening of the most delightful food and entertainment. The dinner will be catered by Jordan's International Food Designs and the menu will be,

- Leek soup (served at the table)
- Rolls and butter
- Garden Salad
- Hot Vegetables
- Roast Beef with gravy
- Chicken
- Vegetarian dish
- Dessert Squares
- Fruit Plate
- Tea and Coffee

Tickets at \$40 each from Gaynor Evans by phone (604 271-3134) or email

fgevans@telus.net. Please reserve as soon as possible.

Monday, March 7th at 7:30 pm Executive Meeting

Wednesday, March 9th at 12 noon
Cambrian Bookworms The book this month is "No Relation" by Terry Fallis.

Sunday, March 13th at 11:00 am Bilingual Church Service

This will be followed by a Tê Bach

Monday, March 14th at 7 to 9pm
Welsh lessons

Tuesday, March 15th at noon Genealogy group

Monday, March 21st at 10:30 am Welsh speaking / Siarad Cymraeg

Monday, March 21st at 7 to 9pm
Welsh lessons

Monday, March 28th 10:00 am till 3:00 pm
Work Party Day – **CANCELLED**

Future Important Events

GRAND SPRING SALE

Saturday, April 23rd 10 am till 2 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 and Videos, Kitchenware, Linens and Jewelry, "White Elephant", "Things Welsh", Children's Wear and Toys, Electrical and Electronics. Please remember that we would be pleased to sell your donated Welsh and British collectibles. [See attached poster.](#)

Volunteers are needed:

- **before the Sale** on April 20th and 22nd to price items and set up tables from 10:00 am till 3:00 pm
- **on the day of the Sale** to sell at the tables or assist in some other capacity
- **at the end of the day** to 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:

- Sun., April 10th at the Church Service
- Monday, April 11th at the General Meeting
- Wed., April 13th at the Book Club (from 10 am till 3 pm)
- Wed., April 20th from 10 till 3 pm
- Fri., April 22nd from 10 am till 3 pm

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

Bryn Terfel Concert

May 4th at 7.30 pm at The Orpheum
Programme

Idris Lewis: Can yr arad goch

Meirion Williams: Gwynfyd

Sul y blodau

Y Cymro

Frederick Keel: Salt water ballads

Port of many ships

Trade Winds

Mother Carey

Jacques Ibert: Chansons de Don Quichotte

Chanson du depart de Don Quichotte

Chanson à Dulcinée

Chanson du Duc

Chanson de la mort de Don Quichotte

Bryan Davies: A Medley of Welsh

Folksongs

Robert Schumann: Belsatzar Op. 57

Zwei Venezianische Lieder

Leis'rudern hier Op. 25 No. 17

Wenn durch die Piazzetta Op. 25 No. 18

Franz Schubert: Gruppe aus dem

Tartarus D583

Liebesbotschaft

Das Fischermädchen D.957 No. 10

Auf dem wasser zu singen Op. 72

Die Taubenpost D.965a

Report of the President

2015 has been an eventful year and many thanks should go to the rather small group of volunteers who allow this society and the Cambrian Hall to survive.

The Social Committee under Gillian Rogers, arranged the events; the St. Dwynwen celebration, the St. David's Day celebration

and the Vancouver Celebrates Wales weekend. The folk trio *Tramor* entertained us at a well attended St. David's Day Dinner and we were privileged to hear a Toast to Canada given by our guest of honour, local M.P. Don Davies. Gwyn Rhys Jones made a video of the event, which is available on u-tube. The Concert at West Point Grey United Church during the Vancouver Celebrates Wales Weekend featured a wealth of local talent and two Welsh performers, flautist, tenor and composer Hugh Evans and mezzosoprano Nerys Jones. Nevertheless the size of the audience was disappointing as it was also at the otherwise successful Gymanfa Ganu on the Sunday.

Of the several other events, one should mention that all of the Dinners; St. David's, Anniversary, and Christmas were arranged by Gaynor Evans with Tim Jordon, who has established an enviable tradition of good fare for the Welsh Society. Gaynor also arranged, with strong family participation, yet another very successful Children's Christmas Party. Thanks also to 'Father X' Brian Granville! Here lies the future! Several other events, such as the Mulled Wine Night, were very pleasant and everyone left in good spirits. Speaking of spirits, one should recognize Heather Davies and Jane Byrne for stocking the bar!

Several efforts were made to engage the public this year. The Society had a stall at the Celtic Fest at the Langley Library manned by Heather Davies, Mary Lewis, Pat Morris, all in Welsh costume, with Antone Minard and Mathew Parry. The Cambrian Circle Singers performed. Pat, Paul Lievesley and I rode in the St. Patrick's Parade. At Eurofest, we had a shared tent under the U.K. banner, but we had quite an impact! Pat set up the stall and Heather, Mary, and Jackie Chapman attended in Welsh costume supported by Antone Minard

and myself. At the Highland Games, we had a tent manned by Pat and Jackie in costume with Steve Chapman and me as support. At Vancouver Library Multicultural Day we had Pat and Mary in costume.

Mathew Parry has maintained our electronic communication with the wider community through our Facebook and Twitter accounts, which have attracted very many followers. Our website is managed by Alwyn Rogers and contains a mine of readily accessible information about our society. Eifion Williams contributes articles to the Celtic Connection and to the North American Welsh Magazine, Ninnau. Our Society is a member of the Affiliated Welsh Organizations group of the Welsh North American Association through which we can exchange views and information.

Antoine Minard has continued to present his interesting free program of Welsh lessons, which have also led to an increase in membership. Another effort to attract membership was initiated by Neville Thomas at a Rugby Six Nations screening downtown. We held a Friday Pub Night to welcome Rugby fans to the Hall and several turned up and some later attended the St. David's Day Dinner. Marc Synan arranged another evening during the Rugby World Cup but few visitors came.

This year was the 150th Anniversary of the establishment of the Welsh Colony (Y Wladfa) in Patagonia. We recognized this historic event through a Sgwrs (Talk) at the June Church Service by Victor Griffiths on the relationship between the settlers and the natives and also through my presentation during the Celebration Weekend on the voyage of the Mimosa and the history of the settlement as recounted by Huw Edwards during his 2014 visit.

The Building Committee, chaired by Pat Morris, has worked on Hall improvements. The most crucial was the renovation of the Bar in the Red Dragon Lounge and the adjacent floor area. The main work was contracted out, but both the cost and the time exceeded the initial estimates. With new replacement equipment sourced by Pat, the bar is back in operation in improved condition. Volunteer work by Paul Lievesley and Ron Clarke saved further expenditures. Paul and Ron together with Alwyn Rogers also painted the lower portion of the outside walls resulting in a significant improvement in appearance. Tim Darvell volunteered his time to maintain the front lawn. Our thanks go to Pat and her team for their vital contributions. Finally it should be noted that Paul also provides all the audio-visual expertise required for all events, as well as video taping selected performances. Dedicated members also attend a monthly Work Party Day to help maintain the Hall.

The Church Service has been guided by Jane Byrne, with support from Nerys Haqq and Ray Batten. A special tribute to Capt. Ieuan Lampshire-Jones was arranged at the November service with a Sgwrs in his honour delivered by Eifion Williams. The Cambrian Bookworms maintain their steady pace of a book a month. Thanks also to Ray Beavon for arranging the monthly Welsh Speaking Morning.

A much enjoyed annual feature, the well attended August Garden Party, was again blessed with fine weather in the beautiful garden of Lynn and Wilf Owens-Whalen.

A major Society concern is financial. In 2015, the assessed value of the Cambrian Hall Land increased by 25% and in 2016 we have been given advance notice that it will increase by a further 41%. City property taxes will rise accordingly. Insurance costs are also rising. Our Spring Sale, thanks to

the sterling efforts of Carole Smythe on the Silent Auction and all the home produce and other donations by members, was once again profitable. But for the second year we did not receive a cultural grant and our costs have significantly exceeded our income. Alcwyn Rogers has shown a time series for the last five years, which shows the impact of these costs on our major expenditures on building restoration. Much still needs to be done to preserve this heritage but no major repair will be possible in 2016.

In closing, I should mention the members we have lost since our last A.G.M.; Keith Williams in December 2014; Jessie Morgan Dodds in February; Dr. Gwilym Evans, former Vice President, in February; pianist and society accompanist, Margaret Airey in September. We shall miss their presence and contributions.

Finally I should like to acknowledge the members of the 2015 Executive who have performed so diligently on behalf of the Society.

David Llewelyn Williams

**WELSH SOCIETY REMEMBERS
MARGARET AIREY**



On the afternoon of Saturday, November 21st a Celebration of Life was held in the Fellowship Hall of Knox United Church for

the late Margaret Airey, who passed away on September 15th.

A number of Vancouver Welsh Society members attended the celebration to honour the contributions Margaret made to the Society and to the Welsh of the Lower Mainland in general. She was a talented musician who shared her gift with many organizations. Her love of music and children made her a perfect piano teacher, a gift she shared with many students in the Dunbar and Kitsilano areas for over 50 years.

Margaret was the accompanist for the Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir for their first ten years and accompanied the choir on concert tours to many parts of the world. She was made an honorary Life Member of the choir for her contributions over the years. One of the VWMC's founders, Gwyn Evans, remembers Margaret as an exceptional accompanist with a wonderful personality.

Welsh Society members will remember Margaret primarily for her contributions as accompanist at events in the Cambrian Hall. Worshippers at the Society's monthly Church service at the Hall especially appreciated Margaret's faithful attendance as accompanist for the congregational hymn-singing and for regular soloist Nerys Haqq. For her many contributions, Margaret was also made a Life Member of the Vancouver Welsh Society.

Margaret Airey (Newton) was born in 1917 in Southern Ontario and was predeceased by her husband Jack in 1977 as well as her brother Howard Newton (2006) and her sister Marian Brown (2012), both of Ontario. She is survived by her sons Paul (Judy) and Howard (Anita), both of Vancouver, four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, as well as many extended family members in Ontario and Quebec.

Margaret held a Supervisor's Certificate in Vocal Music for High Schools and Collegiate Institutes of Ontario and a Teachers Degree in Piano and Theory from Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music. Her musical interests were wide-ranging, as evidenced by her own written observations on events in which she participated. She was fond of writing; some of her writings were displayed during the Celebration, with many of those present commending her positive outlook and sense of humour.

During the Celebration of Life event family members spoke of Margaret's love of family and the many interests that occupied her throughout her long and productive life. She was loved by all who knew her and will be missed.

Eifion Williams

December Events at the Cambrian Hall

Our Festive Season started in fine fashion with a traditional **Mulled Wine Evening** on Friday, December 4th. We started with two carols, *O Come all ye Faithful* and *The First Noel* to get us in the mood. After a welcome and opening remarks by the President, we were treated to a classic reading of the first part of *A Child's Christmas in Wales* by Tora Anderson and Paul Lievesley. Three more carols followed, the third being *The Twelve Days of Christmas* with audience participation!

To conclude this portion of the program Jackie Chapman gave a rousing rendition of *The Twelve Days of Christmas* from the perspective of the recipient! We then relaxed with Mulled Wine and Minced Pies, but remembered to conserve a toast for the next carol, *We wish you a Merry Christmas*. This was followed by *Silent Night*, in English, Welsh and German.

Beti Darvell-Jones regaled us with a reading entitled *'Twas the month after Christmas* which dwelt on the recovery time following the Festive Season. One more carol followed, the door prizes were drawn, and David Llewelyn read the humorous, but also touching, later portion of *A Child's Christmas in Wales*.

He then thanked all the participants, the members of the Social Committee, and Eifion Williams for the festive programs. We concluded by singing *Joy to the World*. A warm and joyful celebration!

Sunday, December 13th, we held our annual bilingual **Carol Service** chaired by our President. We sang six carols and four scripture readings in both Welsh and English. Lynn Owens-Whalen offered the prayer and Ray Batten the solo. One rather unique Welsh carol was entitled *Oer yw'r Gwr* with words by Ceiriog and music by the blind harpist John Parry Dall. The Tê Bach followed the service and we then prepared for the **Children's Christmas Party** – the hope of the future.

This year's attendance exceeded that of previous years and the whole event was very successful, thanks largely to Gaynor Evans and her family, who organized the games, provided the prizes, and the refreshments.



Santa himself was key to the success of the evening too. We thank him also.



The final social event of our festivities was our **Christmas Dinner**, organized by Gaynor Evans with Jordan's International Fine Foods providing a mouth-watering buffet! Grace in English was given by Jean Porter, a society member from past years and in Welsh by Alwyn Rogers. After the meal, Paul Lievesley gave a reading of the classic *'Twas the Night before Christmas* and we were then entertained by Sharon McIntee Birrell who sang three carols accompanied by Ray Batten.

We paused to conduct the raffle while the buffet was cleared and then in recognition of Tim Jordan's long and excellent service to our society, we awarded Tim an Honorary Membership in our society. Truly, one of our family!

The evening continued with carol singing, led by Sharon and Ray, in an atmosphere of warm Christmas cheer. David Llewelyn Williams thanked all the participants, the Social Committee and especially Gaynor Evans, the Raffle Prize donors and Brian Maudsley for manning the bar. We all left full of the Christmas spirit!

St. Dwynwen Celebration

This year we celebrated St. Dwynwen on Saturday, January 30th and just as we were about to begin our program all the power went out! An emergency light came on and fortunately we had a supply of donated Christmas candles. The bar was lit by three

red candles and tables by one each. A most fitting atmosphere!

Conversation and wine flowed but after half an hour I decided to start. I had a captive audience! I first recounted the story of St. Dwynwen, the establishment of her Church on Llanddwyn Island, the attraction of her Well and recited her Prayer for Lovers. Dafydd ap Gwilym had visited her church in the 13th cent. and wrote a poem asking her to intercede on his behalf with the love of his life Morfudd. I read a translation of another of his poems, *Gweled Morfudd* recounting his love at his first sight of her; it seemed a more fitting poem for the occasion!

The power was still not restored, so I filled the time by reading my translation of a schoolboy's hilarious account of Saint Dwynwen's life he had written for his Welsh teacher, 'Miss Thomas Welsh'.

Finally, to great applause, the power was restored! I handed out St. Dwynwen's Day cards to everyone and our program continued. Paul Lievesley showed us a video of his summer travels to Anglesey which included both a visit to Bryn Celli Du, a Neolithic burial site, and a visit to Llanddwyn Island itself which showed the ruins of St. Dwynwen's Church.



Listening to Sharon

Sharon McIntee-Birrell accompanied by Ruben Federizon sang two popular love songs to much acclaim. Then after food for the soul we moved on to enjoy the chocolate-coated strawberries, the fruit platters, trifles and other delectable desserts from the Social Committee.



After the break, Sharon and Ray led us in community singing of two very well known Welsh folksongs; *Myfanwy* and *Bugeilio'r Gwenith Gwyn* in Welsh and in English Translations.

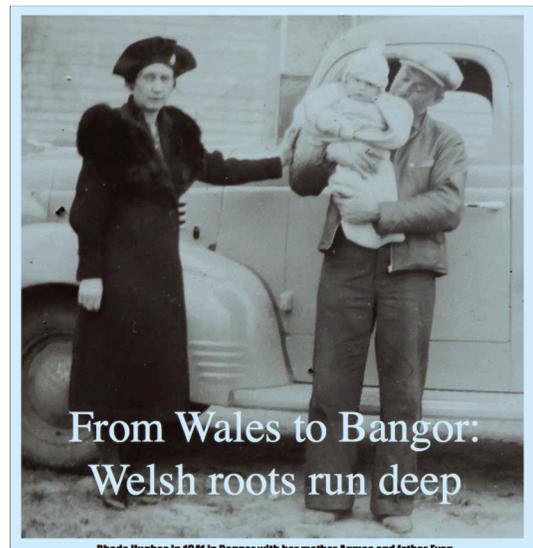
We then embarked on the Limerick Competition: one based upon 'Pwllheli' and one based upon 'the Gower'. I read out some I had received, while others came up and read them themselves, to much amusement and applause. I did not collect all entries so no overall winner has been chosen but we had a fun time!

I then showed the powerful nostalgic video by Ron Davies entitled *The Exiled Mind*, which showed many scenes of Wales and a quote from Welsh Landscape (R.S.Thomas) as the exile regretted that his emotional feeling for Wales had not been passed on to his sons.

Sharon brought the evening to a fitting close with two love songs; *We'll gather lilacs in the Spring again* and *The Rose* which is my personal favourite. D.L.I.W.

St. Dwynwen's Prayer
O Blessed St. Dwynwen,
you who knew pain and peace, division
and reconciliation, you have promised to

aid lovers and you watch over those whose hearts have been broken.
As you received three boons from an Angel, intercede for me to receive three blessings;
to obtain my heart's desire {here you may name the person} or, if that is not God's Will, a speedy healing from my pain;
your guidance and assistance, that I may find love with the right person, at the right time, and in the right way;
and an unshakeable faith in the boundless kindness and wisdom of God.
And this I ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Rhoda Hughes in 1941 in Bangor with her mother Agnes and father Evan

Well you read the books your father gave you, says a line in the song Life. Ate the food your mother made you.

The Canadian song is sung by Morgan Cameron Ross, a guitarist and lead vocalist for the Birds of Wales. He wrote the song. He named the band. Call it a voice of experience. Ross was raised by a Welsh mother who had a pet cockatoo.

The song was released six years ago. The Birds of Wales are history. Since 2013 Ross has toured with a different band, the Bellwoods, as well as performing solo. His style grows, his message changes, but a folk sound resonates. Welsh is in his marrow.

Morgan, who lives in Toronto, grew up in Burnaby, B.C., the only child in the family. He often spent summer holidays in southeast Saskatchewan, joining his mother Rhoda in the neighbourhood of her youth.

Rhoda Hughes knows Yorkton. She knows Saltcoats and Bredenbury. She could write a book about the area. Such stories she can tell. Her connection with Saskatchewan began before Saskatchewan became a province. Rhoda's grandmother Mary came to the Prairies in 1902, travelling by boat and train with 233 friends and relatives from Wales looking for a better life. Their hope was abundant, their means scarce. It's a wonder Mary survived even infancy. She was born premature in a Welsh village in 1861 to a single mother. Her father had been killed in a mining accident in his late teens. Mary, a small, weak baby, won't live long, the midwife said.

Fourteen years later, Mary and her mother and her mother's second husband moved to Argentina with a group of other Welsh migrants. They settled in the province of Chubut in Patagonia, sure that the southern tip of South America would produce a harvest bounty, not the scratch and scabble existence of farm life in Wales.

In Patagonia, Mary Howells married Thomas Rees. Although they first met on the clipper bound for Argentina in 1875, Mary and Thomas were from the same part of Wales. Thomas's family were coal miners in Glamorgan.

Life in Patagonia was demanding. The Chubut River flooded the valley, a washout for farmers. Welsh men were expected to join the Argentine army. Their independence evaporated. They wanted out. A Welsh group that included Mary and Thomas Rees and their 13 children came to Saskatchewan in 1902 looking to start again. They went to Saltcoats, southeast of Yorkton, and pitched tents. Knowing that Prairie winters were as cold as bison breath, they made log houses. They ended up settling east of Melville, starting a village they called Bangor.

Each of their family farms had a name. The Rees farm was Bryn Hyfryd, meaning Pleasant Hill. Not far away was Bryn Gobaith, the Hill of Hope, the Hughes family farm. One of the sons in the Hughes family, Evan, became a school custodian. He managed a BP gas station. He

married a woman who was in her 40s, a local teacher. He married Agnes Rees, a daughter in the Rees family. Evan and Agnes Hughes had one child, Rhoda. Mary Rees of Wales mothered Agnes of Patagonia, Argentina. Agnes mothered Rhoda of Bangor, Sask. Rhoda mothered Morgan of Burnaby, B.C.

"I don't dwell on the past," Rhoda, 75, said the other day from Burnaby where she lives with her husband Jim Ross. But she doesn't distance herself from the past, either.

New English word

Rhoda goes to Wales. She has been to Patagonia to see her Welsh relatives who live there, eating food they cook in an outdoor oven in their yard, drinking maté

In 2002, when the village of Bangor commemorated its centennial with a homecoming that drew more than 300 Welsh, Rhoda was the first guest speaker. She told the crowd about her grandmother Mary. She could have talked to them about her mother Agnes. Raised in Patagonia to speak Welsh and Spanish, Agnes learned English as a student in Bangor. Said Rhoda: "She ran home from school one day and told her mom 'I've learned a new English word.'

"'Oh,' said her mom. 'What is it?' "'Rhubarb,' my mom said. "'What does the word mean?' her mom said. "'It means 'How are you?'" my mom said." Rhoda has a good laugh telling the story.

She can fast forward to a later generation she can talk about her son Morgan going to grade school in B.C. Every year on March 1, which is St. David's Day, honouring the patron saint of Wales, Rhoda made Welsh cakes with cinnamon and nutmeg and raisins and took them to Morgan's school to give to students.

The world is Rhoda's classroom. She did office work in Australia and New Zealand. She taught English at a Buddhist school in China. Her interest and experience with other cultures heightens the appreciation of her own. "My dad was not religious," she said. "We didn't go to church in Bangor. When we did I remember the singing.

"Cwm Rhondda (a Welsh hymn) stirred me. It moved me. Still does.

"What would I say about Welsh who settled in Saskatchewan? They were good, sturdy stock."



www.WelshSociety.com

Grand Spring Sale

The Cambrian Hall, 215 East 17th Avenue

Saturday, April 23rd 10:00am till 2pm

- ❖ Home made baking and preserves
- ❖ Collectibles and China
- ❖ Pre-owned books
- ❖ CD's, DVD's Etc.
- ❖ Linens and Jewellery
- ❖ Children's wear and toys
- ❖ White Elephant
- ❖ Things Welsh
- ❖ Kitchenware
- ❖ Electrical and Electronics

❖ A Silent Auction will be held on the stage.

❖ Refreshments will be served in our Tea Room.

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