

Cymdeithas Gymraeg



Victoria Welsh Society

Newsletter: Rhagfyr 2015 December

Board Members

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<i>Secretary</i>	Gillian Greydanus	250-642-2076
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<i>Past President</i>	Nerys Hughes	250-479-8742
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<i>Trustees</i>	David Lintern	250-642-6747
	Peter Murphy	250-383-4350
	Emrys Evans	250-652-5855
	Denis Brown	250-658-8701
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Notice – **2016 memberships are now due - \$ 20 single , \$ 25 family.**

■ **If in arrears you can still pay for 2015**

From the Editor

As was said about this time last year, another Annual General Meeting has come and gone and we have a new President ,who is the same as in 2015 and a couple of fresh faces among the Trustees. But the problems of the Victoria Welsh Society remain. There is little doubt that the Society is not suffering from growing pains. The attendance at the AGM again showed this. What then? Is it time to face the unpleasant reality of the need to wind up the present society? The majority of office holders have been in place for years and possibly would love to turn over the job to someone else. Ponder this!

Society News

The Annual General meeting was held on October 17th, in the community meeting room at 4125 Interurban Road. This was an afternoon affair that commenced with lunch at 1.00 p.m. A delicious lamb stew was served followed by Welsh cakes , tea and coffee. The food was prepared by Margaret Lintern and Gill Greydanus . Many thanks to them – if your Editor has forgotten others who contributed, he pleads ignorance and begs forgiveness.

Sixteen members attended, an improvement on last year but still quite poor considering that the event was held in daylight and offered lunch. The business meeting commenced at 12.45p.m. , Gill Greydanus being recording secretary.

The first order of business was the acceptance of the minutes of the 2014 AGM without change.

This was followed by the Treasurer's report which ,was accepted, unanimously.

In her report the President commented on the aging of the Society, the lack of new members which is a commentary on the dearth of Welsh immigrants to Canada. The present harder economic times and the high cost of insurance for elderly choristers contribute to our failure to persuade any Welsh choir to tour Western Canada and include Victoria in their itinerary. However, plans are being made and arrangements will be affirmed to play a part in the Vancouver Welshmen's Choir's joint concert with the Arion Choir in April 2016, here in Victoria.

Some discussion ensued regarding the future of the Society. While the President invited any ideas that members may have to re-vitalise the Society she noted that we were discussing ,basically, whether to carry on, and hope for the best, dissolve , amalgamate with some other Society or take some other unspecified action. It was noted that we mail 32 paper copies and e-mail 32 copies of the newsletter but we only have 24 paid-up memberships. This indicates an overall lack of interest which may be due to the fact that people who move her from Wales can easily remain in touch through e-mail, skype, cheap telephone communication or even fly back home relatively cheaply. The Commonwealth Society is active and it was suggested that members be encouraged to attend their functions, as a way of increasing our profile in Victoria.

As to April's concert by the Vancouver Welshmen the suggestion was made that members be canvassed to see if enough would interested so as to buy a block booking and dine together as a group beforehand.

As to the distribution of the newsletter a suggestion was made that in the next issue non-members will

be asked if they wish to continue to receive a copy and that the Board should discuss the wording of the question at the next meeting.

The Ladies Auxiliary will not be re-instated – this in answer to a question. Suggestions were invited for entertainment at the St. David’s Day celebration in 2016. One such possibility has been voiced.

The final piece of business to be attended to was the Election of officers to the 2016-17 Board. With the exceptions of Gwerfyl (Taffy) Richards (who is unable to continue) and Lynne Thomas who, through non-attendance in 2015, cannot stand (in accordance with the Society’s bye-laws) the present officers were agreeable to another year. For the two empty positions Rita Miller and Joan Hurwood volunteered their services, which were gratefully accepted and the new Board was elected by acclamation.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT.

I would like to welcome Joan Hurwood and Rita Miller to our Board and also to thank Taffy Richards and Lynne Thomas for their help in the past.

Despite lower membership the vote at the 2014 AGM was unanimous in favour of continuing with the Society, now in its 38th.year.

St. David’s Day is now our only annual regular function and we welcome any ideas or suggestions from members or non-members for future events.

In the past we have enjoyed picnics at Elk Lake, regular get-togethers at Norway House, many visiting choirs from Wales, sold out Christmas and St. David’s Day functions at the Princess Mary and other venues, with the presence of the Lieut.-Governor at one event, a very active Ladies’ Auxiliary and hosted the well known North American Gymanfa Ganu.

We are still working on another Welsh Choir visit!

Times have changed with new technology and hundreds of events coming to Victoria. We are small fish in a big pond but we don’t stand alone, many societies are struggling along. We’ll continue for now and see what next year brings.

I would like to thank Denis for producing the newsletter,

I wish you all a Happy Christmas and New Year, Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda.

Once again we’re approaching Christmas (how the time does fly) and once again Myfanwy graciously extended an invitation to all members to attend her annual Christmas party on December 6th, 2015

It is to be hoped that some members were able to join Myfanwy’s friends at her home in this festive season.

St. David’s Day, 2016

The Board have identified February 27th. as the date for our celebration. It will be held at the Gorge Vale Golf Club again.

Final arrangements for time and other information will be made in the new year and will be passed on to all members.

News from Wales

The Welsh Government has appointed a new head for Welsh affairs in Canada and the USA. He is Dr. Gareth Morgan who arrived ,in the summer of this year, with a broad and inclusive mission to enhance the relationship between Wales and Canada and the USA. He has a sterling record as an academic and as a manager at senior levels in the Welsh Government. (Since devolution and the establishment of the Welsh Assembly in 1999, the powers and responsibilities of the Welsh Government have grown appreciably . In recent years Welsh law-making powers have expanded and new levers over borrowing and

taxation will be implemented in the not-too-distant future.)

Seven Welsh locations are listed among the World's top 500 places to visit. Snowdon is number 181 (for its beauty and myth), Portmeirion is 207th. and St. David's Cathedral is at 294. The other locations are Caernarfon Castle (315), the Brecon Beacons (365), Tintern Abbey (373), and St. Fagan's History Museum gets in at number 431.

(So next time you travel pass up the Taj Mahal, Great Barrier Reef, Victoria Falls, etc. and head for Wales.)

Glyn Baines, an 84 year old, from Bala, has been awarded the National Eisteddfod's Gold Medal for Fine Art. He left off farming 50 years ago to pursue his dream of becoming an artist. The award was for his collection of abstract collages. He also received a cheque for £5000. (Nothing abstract about that! – Ed.)

Llandrindod Wells has been voted as the happiest town in Wales and is seventh among towns across the U.K. For neighbourliness it's first in the country.

Notwithstanding the opinions of Cardiff's people, Swansea is in second place in Wales.

Do you remember that droll film of a few years ago regarding the height of some obscure hill in South Wales? The title was something like "The man who climbed a hill and came down a mountain." Well, truth is quite as strange as fiction because Snowdonia has lost one of its mountains – Moelwyn Mawr. Under some new rules a peak has to be 2000 feet high and have a height difference between the summit and the "bwlch" connecting it to the next higher hill

of 15 meters or more. (nice mix of units here!). It appears that Moelwyn Mawr missed the second criterion by a 23 centimetres. .

The number of listed mountains in Wales is now only 189.

Cardiff has qualified among the top ten most affluent cities in the U.K., according to some research by Barclays Bank, lying seventh and ahead of Liverpool and Manchester. The ranking was based on a number of factors including numbers of millionaires, average pay, giving to charity, business survival rates and exam scores. The figures show that there are 12,000 millionaires in Wales, a rise of 50% since 2010. Of the regions in the U.K. Wales has seen the largest increase since 2010.

(Not the Wales that I knew but good luck to them!- Ed.)

The best of British beers is brewed in Newport's Tiny Rebel brewery. "Cwtch" was named as the overall winner in the Champion Beer of Britain contest, that is run by the Campaign for real Ale. The contest lasted for more than a year of tasting in regional heats before the final that was held in London's Olympia. Connoisseurs will be interested to learn that it is a 4.6% bitter involving 6 malts and two US hops and with a citrus and tropical fruit taste. It won the best bitter section before being named best overall. (Jawch, beth yw'r ffordd cyflym i Casnewydd ?)

Wales is experiencing record employment rates at present. The Department of Work and Pensions reported a rate of 71.5% in August last, the highest of all U.K. regions.

Welsh Sports

- Well, it wasn't to be! Wales did not beat New Zealand in the World Cup. Neither did they beat Australia or South Africa but they performed well were and possibly done in by injuries to key players. But they did beat England in a rousing manner, coming from behind 22-12 to stun the Twickenham crowd with a last minute 28-25 win.
- In European soccer Wales have been doing extremely well and will probably qualify to the Euro finals stage. They were ranked number eight in the FIFA World table, ahead of England!. Gareth Bale is the man they'll need to watch.
- In league play neither Swansea or Cardiff have had many wins lately. After a bright start to the season both have slipped some. Swansea are below the half-way point in the Premier division.
- Glamorgan did not have a very good season in County Cricket last year. They finished fourth in the second division. Worse still, for the second time they've faced criticism for the dangerous state of their pitch. Their game against Hampshire was abandoned ; the team was docked two points and fined £ 15000.

(All the items of news from Wales were first reported in " Ninnau " , the North American Welsh newspaper. At a subscription price of 27 Canadian dollars , for 6 bi-monthly issues it is exceptional value. Try it! Write to : Ninnau, P.O. Box 712, Trumansburg, NY 14866, USA

News from Canada/USA

The 84th. National Gymanfa Ganu that was held in Columbus, Ohio last summer was a

huge success and it is to be regretted that the venue is so far from Victoria. The conductor was Owain Arwel Davies, well known for his musicality, and the accompanist was David Penrose , organist and choirmaster at the Church of the Resurrection in New York. With such directors the singing was , in the words of Arwel Davies " I've never heard better in Wales."

The guest artists were Gwawr Edwards , now a renowned soprano, and harpist Glain Dafydd, who has twice carried off the blue riband at the National Eisteddfod. The choir from Wales was 'Cor y Penrhyn from North Wales, which is directed by Arwel Davies. The opening concert was a very grand affair.

The North American Festival of Wales ,NAFOW ,is of course, more than just the Gymanfa and concerts. It is also a folk festival and among the exhibitors of their craft was our own David Western. He was there with a remarkable collection of lovespoons. He and fellow carver Laura (Jenkins) of Worthington, Ohio (who was also chairperson of the 2015 NAFOW) collaborated on a newly designed lovespoon that they donated as a raffle prize, to raise funds for the NAFOW organization.

The next North American Festival of Wales will be held in Calgary, September 1st.to 4th. 2016 and the Welsh Society of Calgary will be the hosts for the gathering. (doubtless there will be a Welsh choir and some famous artists for the occasion, so this will be a chance not to be missed. More details will be forthcoming- Ed.)

On Sunday ,April 10th 2016 the Vancouver Welshmen choir will perform, with the Arion Choir, at St. John the Divine Anglican Church , Quadra Street, Victoria. Concert time is 2.0 p.m.

The Ontario Welsh Festival will be held in Ottawa, April 22nd. to 24th. at the Lord Elgin Hotel. One of the best young Welsh choirs will perform along with the Three Welsh Tenors. The organizing committee is in process of arranging a superb programme of interest.

Visit <http://ontariowelshfestival.ca> for latest information. To reserve a room at the Lord Elgin (special rate of \$147) phone 1-800-267-4298. Mention Ontario Welsh Festival.

(Did you know that the prime minister's official residence , 24 Sussex Drive, has a Welsh name, Gorffwysfa, meaning 'place of rest.' – It's a fact – Ed..)

Now for the bad news :

Due to increased mailing costs we cannot continue to send copies of the newsletter to non-members and those who are in arrears with their dues. If you wish to continue receiving please renew your membership using the attached form – otherwise this will be your last newsletter.

Name(s)_____
Address_____

Please re-new my (our) membership. (Single \$20 , Family \$ 25)

Send a cheque (made to Victoria Welsh Society) to Mrs. J. Pearson,
4277 Houlihan Place,
Victoria, B.C., V8N 3T2

Myfanwy Rutherford writes :
" Catherine needs a replacement car for the 1986 Plymouth that died earlier this month. She would like a somewhat newer car, 1987 or younger.

If you have a car that you want to sell that would fit the bill please call 250-382-9343.

Now to all members of the Victoria Welsh Society it's time to wish you,

A Very Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year.

Nawr, mae'n amser dymuno pawb o
Cymdeithas Gymraeg Victoria,

Nadolig Llawen Iawn Ichi
Gyd a
Blwyddyn Newydd Dda .