

# Cymdeithas Gymraeg



## Victoria Welsh Society

Newsletter : Rhagfyr 2010 December

### ***Board Members***

***President*** Nerys Hughes 250-479-8742

***Secretary*** Lynne Thomas 250-383-3880

***Treasurer*** Jen Pearson 250-477-2548

***Ladies' Auxiliary*** Myfanwy Rutherford 250-382-9343

***Past President*** David Lintern 250-642-6747

### ***Trustees***

Rita Miller 250-389-0736

Peter Murphy 250-383-4350

Emrys Evans 250-652-5855

Denis Brown 250-658-8701

Gillian Greydanus 250-642-2076

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**Notice – 2011 memberships are now due.**

## From the Editor

Once more at the start of a Society year – it happens with the Annual General Meeting. I'm sorry to say that the attendance was at its usual low level. That's too bad as it's your Society. The AGM affords the best opportunity for the outgoing Board to receive your criticisms and /or plaudits and for the incoming Board to learn from the members what they expect of them. Don't be diffident!

Thanks to those twenty-four, or so, who did attend. You enjoyed an unlooked-for entertainment by a group of enthusiastic and talented young people from Bryn Tawe School, which is in Swansea, South Wales.

Resulting from the AGM we have a new President and Secretary. I'm sure that all members will wish them well in directing the affairs of the Society.

## Society News

- After a quiet summer, there being insufficient interest in either a lunch meeting or a conducted tour of Hatley Gardens, we were delighted by the September 8<sup>th</sup> concert by Cor Godre'r Aran, the Welsh Male Voice Choir from Llanuwchllyn, North Wales. The concert was held at the Alix Goolden Hall with a large audience in attendance – five hundred tickets were sold – Victoria loves Welsh choirs. Prior to our concert the choir had performed at the Festival of Wales, in Portland.

The programme was quite eclectic, a mixture of Welsh Folk Songs, Opera, well known Welsh hymns and present day musicals. Three of the choir basses, Tom Evans, Trebor Lloyd and Sion Goronwy sang solos and as a trio. As an added treat a young soprano, Heulen Cynfal, ( just leaving school ) also performed. The splendid accompanist , a lady named Eirian Owen also conducted with the greatest facility. This was altogether a great musical evening.

- The Annual General Meeting was held a little later than usual this year, on October 26<sup>th</sup> at the New Horizons Hall on Menzies Street. This was done to facilitate meeting and be entertained by the students from Bryn Tawe School, who were on a tour, visiting Canadian schools in the Lower Mainland and on this Island. The party, including staff numbered about sixty. They sang, danced and performed a selection from "Under Milk Wood" with great aplomb. The boys in the group also played rugby against teams from their host schools. Up to this point they'd won in Abbotsford and lost against Shawnigan. The girls fielded a hockey ( field ) team.

After the performance , which was much appreciated by the outnumbered audience , boxes of pizza, sandwiches and buckets of fried chicken were brought in, to the delight of the school party ,to be eaten wherever one could put down one's plate.

Eventually the school party left and the business meeting commenced. The outgoing President, David Lintern ,who had declared his intention of not standing for this position again ,formally presented the slate of those prepared to stand, as follows :

For President – Nerys Hughes  
Secretary – Lynne Thomas  
Treasurer - Jen Pearson  
Trustees – Rita Miller  
- Gill Greydanus  
- Peter Murphy  
- Emrys Evans  
- Denis Brown

Ladies' Auxilliary- Myfanwy Rutherford  
There was also an invitation for nominations from the floor and, there none, the slate was acclaimed on a show of hands. ( It should be noted that the outgoing President becomes the Past President without election).

- The new board met on November 5<sup>th</sup> to consider future activities. After some exchange of views a decision was taken against arranging any formal event between now and our St. David's Day

celebration. The decision to forego a get-together was taken partly because there was little enthusiasm for a pre-Xmas lunch exhibited at the AGM and also on account of the perceived difficulty in arranging a formal lunch for a large party in the time available. However, those who will be disappointed by this decision can take advantage of the kind invitation of Myfanwy Rutherford to attend the Xmas party at her house on Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>. Come and wish Myfanwy and your friends “ Merry Xmas”.

- *St. David’s Day* will be celebrated on Saturday, February 26<sup>th</sup> 2011 at the University Club again, commencing with a gathering in the bar ante-room at 11.30 a.m. with lunch at 12.30. Entertainment will follow. Further details will be given nearer the time. *So please mark this on your calendars now.*
- On February 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011 Hugh Hughes’ play “ *Floating*” will be staged in Victoria. This is a whimsical piece about the day that Anglesey floated away from the mainland.

The performance is at the Metro Theatre on Quadra street, next to the Conservatory of Music. Tickets can be bought in advance for \$ 21 at #2-1609 Blanshard street ( 250-383-2663 ) or at the door of the Metro theatre for \$ 25.

*Should be fun!*

### News from Wales

- Hafina Clwyd, writing in “ *Ninnau*” reported at length on the events and competitions in the National Eisteddfod which was held in the industrial town of Ebbw Vale, in August. All the big prizes were awarded, the Crown being taken by a grandmother, Glenys Mair Roberts, who was competing for the first time. The Chair for poetry was won by

another first time winner, Tudur Hallam. The Daniel Owen Memorial Prize for a novel was taken by Grace Roberts for her story of three generations of women and expresses how attitudes and lives have changed. The main literary award for writers, the Prose Medal, was won by the Cincinnati born, Ohio University educated Jerry Hunter. His courses in English at Ohio had some Welsh content ( strange but true ) and this inspired him to learn Welsh to fluency. He is now a lecturer in the Welsh Department at Bangor University . His winning novel at the Eisteddfod is called ‘*Gwenddydd*’.

Tim Rhys Evans who became prominent as the conductor of the choir *Only Men Aloud*, which won a television Competition in London called ‘*Last choir Standing*’, brought them to Ebbw Vale to perform at the opening concert. He also brought a 200 strong youth choir, formed from disaffected youth in South Wales, to perform. This choir, dubbed ‘ *Only Boys Aloud*’, brought the roof down with their performance.

In her report on the Eisteddfod Hafina Clwyd relates that what she describes is only a small fraction of what went on. “ *The week was packed with activities. Choirs, dancers, violinists, elocutionists, poets, soloists, book launches, college reunions. Something for everyone, as usual.*”

( Next year the National will be held in Wreccsam. Shall you be there? – Ed.)

- If quilting interests you then be aware of heightened activities in the craft in Wales. On your next visit to *Yr Hen Wlad* look in on Jen Jones’ Welsh Quilt Centre in Lampeter Town Hall. You’ll see stunning examples of Welsh quilts in the gallery then browse and, possibly, buy in the Gallery Shop. Her original cottage shop in nearby Llanybydder is also open. You can also visit the Minerva Arts centre in

Llanidloes and view the exhibits by the Welsh Quilt Association. They hold weekly meetings to which guests are welcomed. A great way to see the stitchwork and meet the locals.

- Six University of Rio Grande and Rio Grande Community College students, from south-eastern Ohio, are now taking part in an exchange programme with Trinity College in Carmarthen. Rio Grande's *Madog Center for Welsh Studies* arranges an exchange each year whereby American students spend the Fall Semester at Trinity and Trinity students spend the Spring Semester at Rio Grande. Since this programme started in 2002 more than 40 Rio Grande students have participated.
- According to an article in the 'Globe and Mail' for September 15, 2010, visiting Cardiff is a 'must' in the U.K.

"Long gone is that busy coal-exporting port—the peak of the coal exports was in 1913, when over ten million tons left Wales and Cardiff docklands were the busiest in the world and in what was known as "Tiger Bay" some 57 languages were spoken. It was also one of the roughest places imaginable. In the nearby Coal Exchange the world's first million pound cheque was signed. But Welsh coal and the demand for it was running out and in 1964 exports ceased. Tiger Bay remained rough and tough though, "You just didn't go there."

But look at it now! Thanks to a huge waterfront project involving a barrage, locks, bridges and sluices the former grimy area has been transformed. Now one can go white-water rafting in a 500 acre lake, cycle the coastal path, stroll past chic\* shops, dine on Welsh specialities like salt-marsh lamb, ride the carousel on the back of Griff the dragon and even float in a blimp over Cardiff Bay. It's one of the hottest waterside districts in Europe." (\* not chip-shops.—Ed.)

- Did you hear of "The sleeping caravanner?" It seems that William Roberts, 70, fell asleep in his caravan (trailer), which was parked in his driveway and woke to find it being towed away. The caravan came to a halt after 10 minutes and Roberts escaped, to find himself in Llandudno. He knocked on a stranger's door and said, "Someone has taken my caravan and I was in it." A court in North Wales was told that the caravan had been hitched to a van and driven off. Police stated that they gave chase at speeds up to 80 mph on a dual carriage-way before it veered off and stopped. The driver admitted to taking the caravan without consent and his girlfriend to allowing herself to be driven in a stolen vehicle!!! (from the Weekly Telegraph, August 18 – 24, 2010).
- BBC weather-news on November 28<sup>th</sup> reported the lowest ever recorded temperatures for this date in central and north Wales, - 17 degrees Celsius. Yes, minus 17.

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You will recall that in the August issue of the newsletter some verse from "Country Memories" (by a "small girl") was printed. Here are some more of those memories:

I remember

the cuckoo's return with its happy call,  
it sounded so glad to be back again  
among carpets of sweet smelling bluebells,  
deep down in the glen.

I remember

the church at harvest time  
with cabbage and beets on the window sills,  
while a giant wheat-sheaf held centre-stage,  
and all the families  
gave thanks from their hearts.

I remember

a walk on a moon-lit night  
when a bomb dropped not far away  
and the whole world shook  
and my mother screamed,  
as she held me tight.

I remember

walking home in the afternoon  
and a 'plane so low over head,  
I felt so exposed and very  
afraid  
as I huddled below a jutting  
rock.

I remember  
at dusk one Spring  
watching ,in silence, from the  
top of a wall  
the angry red of the southern  
sky  
as Swansea burned,  
not far away.

And I'll not forget  
A day that was sad,  
I was eight years old  
and we moved away.  
We went by train  
for a hundred miles,  
a very long way for a very small  
girl.  
I still go back  
to the place of my birth  
where relatives lie in the still  
church-yard.  
The effects of that time  
I feel to this day, so yes,  
I'm glad that I had  
a country life.

(Some hiraeth here, no doubt. Thank you, small girl for your memories. – Ed.)

Did you ever wonder how Tom Jones – sorry, Sir Tom Jones – he of the booming voice, manages to keep the notes flowing out at the age of 70? The secret lies in his use of Vocalzone Throat Pastilles.

These have been around for a long time, having been developed by Carmarthenshire born William Lloyd, an ear, nose and throat specialist at the London Hospital. He created them in the early 1900s especially for Enrico Caruso, the famous tenor, who was a heavy smoker and a regular patient of Dr. Lloyd. According to Sir Tom, the lozenges were so effective that the doctor became part of Caruso's entourage and travelled with him on singing tours.

A spokesman for the company that makes the pastilles says that the reason for the effectiveness is that they contain myrrh.

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Last year several members of the Society bought a copy of Nathan Hughes book " Reminiscences of Wales 1924 – 1942 " In this very interesting auto-biography the author gives a very detailed account of growing up in rural Wales in the 20s and 30s, up to the time he joined the Navy.

Many of us are able to identify with that life he describes.

Sadly, Nathan Hughes died earlier this year. The May issue of Ninnau gives an account of his life, and makes clear that Wales can be proud of him.

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Another sad note – Your editor has just been informed of the passing of long time Society member, **Brynmor Jones**.

All members of the Society will regret this and we give our heartfelt Sympathy to Joyce , his daughter and other members of the family.

The funeral will be held at First Memorial Funeral Home, Fort Street, on Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.

( It will be recalled that something of Brynmor's life was featured in the August issue of this newsletter. You editor recommends its reading again.)

**Don't forget the Xmas party at Myfanwy's home on Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, from 2 p.m. onwards. Come and celebrate the Xmas season with Myfanwy and your other friends. In case you've forgotten ,the address is 3038 Admiral's Road. Bring some finger foods if you like. Welais chwi yno! See you there!**

A Merry Christmas and a Happy  
New Year to All.

Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn  
Newydd dda i Pawb.