

Cymdeithas Gymraeg



Victoria Welsh Society

Newsletter : Mehefin 2009 June

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From the Editor

Here we are, once more gladdened by the advent of spring, as was *Dafydd ap Gwilym*, back in the fourteenth century, in his poem *Mis Mai* (May month).

*God knew the richness of fresh growth
would well become the beginning of May,
that without fail new shoots would grow
upon the Calends of the gentle month of May. - - -*

However the winter wasn't all that bad, even with the snow, because following Xmastide, when we all got together for lunch, we could look forwards to St. David's Day. And not only to that because other things too were in the offing, which you may recall, were mentioned in the February newsletter. More of these as the year goes on – the best is yet to be!

Society News

- We celebrated St. David's Day at the University Club again this year and it was a considerable success. About 70 attended, the best attendance in some time, possibly as a result of advertising in the Times – Colonist that all would be welcome but also because of the change in format – no speaker but instead homegrown entertainment. Who will forget Mel Jones' version of Welsh history? Richard Adams' tall tale that followed was almost too much to bear. Joyce Jones was moved to recite the opening passage from *Under Milk Wood* followed by *Eli Jenkins' Prayer*. A rendition of familiar airs on the harp by Gill Greydanus (she said she was shaking all the time) rounded out the talent show, leaving others holding their fire until next year. We welcomed several new members into the Society.
- On a sombre note we were saddened to learn that a long-time member, Joan Backhouse, died recently. We give our condolences to Paul Wilson, Joan's son.
- Unfortunately we have lost the presence of one of the stalwarts of the Society. Helen Steinle has left Victoria and now lives in Qualicum Beach. As you know Helen was once more serving on the Board. She was a great help through her knowledge of the Society, from years back as Trustee, Secretary, Treasurer, President and Past-President. She was also the driving force behind more than one Gymanfa as well as many a Noson Lawen. We shall miss her presence very much.
- In the Lintern household they are getting ready for their son, Gwyn's wedding on June 20th. We all join in sending our best wishes to the happy pair.
- Gill Greydanus' daughter will be graduating from Camosun College any day now.
- Another wedding is imminent, that of Jen Pearson's son, Kevin. Again our best wishes to the happy couple. (Jen is going to be rather busy with the wedding and guests from Wales who will attend).
- Recently a representative of the Risca (South Wales) male voice choir visited Victoria to look at the city's concert halls and report back to the choir regarding a possible performance by the choir next year. He was guided around by our President and Secretary in visiting several venues. He liked what he saw and as a result the choir will be here in 2010. They have given us their itinerary and will perform in Victoria on Monday, August 23rd. (They will also perform in Vernon, or Kelowna, and also in Vancouver). *Mark this on your calendar now! --Ed.*
- The board have been thinking about a summer BBQ in some location suitable for a "family gathering" where there will be room for children to run about. This would be directed at some part of the city where there would be a need for such an Outreach. It is hoped that you will respond with your grand-children also (or great-grand-children). This initiative is in the very early stages of planning, with the intention of holding the event in 2010.
- A happy birthday to Anita Davies who celebrates her 90th. Also we wish her a speedy and complete recovery from her recent surgery.

- Mention must be made of the resounding success of our *Social Gathering* on May 23rd. For those of you who couldn't be there, too bad! You missed the following delicious lunch :
Cawl Mamgu (Grandmother's lamb broth)
Tarten Afalau (Apple pie)
Teisen Gymru (Welsh cakes)
Te neu coffi (Tea or coffee)

There was , of course, much good conversation during the course of the meal and the afternoon was rounded out with a showing of a further episode of the BBC's *The Coal-house* – in which some of to-day's families in South Wales attempt to live in a coal mining village in the conditions of 1927 – no refrigerator, no washing machine, no TV, no hot- water heater, no bathroom, outside privy, no phone, oil lamps and a 3 mile walk to the mine for the men. Needless to say the families were having a difficult time.

News from Wales

- Wales will be the featured country in this year's annual *Smithsonian Folklife Festival* which will be held in Washington D.C. June 24 – July 5. The National Library of Wales will be represented by staff members who are experts in Welsh genealogical research. The Library is considered to be the premier resource for this. Further information on the Library can be found on their website www.llgc.org.uk.
- As we know the Welsh rugby xv didn't have enough of what it takes to win the Grand Slam this year and could only watch as that other Celtic nation, All Ireland won it for the first time in 50 years. Wales were fourth (behind England, whom they beat!)
- After showing considerable promise neither Cardiff City nor Swansea Town were able to make it into the Premier League this year. Too bad, but perhaps next season!
- And Joe Calzaghe has hung up his gloves – undefeated World champion as a super – middleweight.
- The Welsh Assembly was 10 years old in May. Once dismissed as a 'talking shop' this *Parliament of Wales* is proving its worth. They are asking the Westminster Government for jurisdiction over matters involving the Welsh Language.
- More than half the people in Wales would vote in favour of the Welsh Assembly becoming a law making body, according to a public opinion poll made recently. This will put pressure on the Assembly to fulfill its promise to hold a referendum on this before 2011. The poll also showed that less than half the population knows that the Assembly Government is controlled by a coalition of Labour and Plaid Cymru (Welsh Nationalists).
- Many Welsh speakers are irate at *Google Translate* because this translation service, which allows languages such as Latvian, Galician and Maltese to be translated into English, is not available for Welsh.
- The Mumbles pier, built in 1889, is to receive a significant update at an estimated cost of 39 million pounds. It is hoped to incorporate a new boathouse at the end of the pier to house the new class of lifeboat that the RNLI will operate in 2011. (*The pier was originally commissioned as the terminus for the already established Swansea to Mumbles Railway, which was the first passenger rail service in Britain.*) – Duw! Duw! Get away! I never knew that!
- After 6 years of planning, protests, court battles etc. the first LNG (liquefied natural gas) tanker recently arrived in Milford Haven and unloaded to the largest LNG storage plant in Europe. (This beats shovelling coal! – Ed.)

**Forthcoming Events
in Wales**

Llangollen 2009
*International Festival of Music
Song and dance.*
July 7th.—12th
Box Office 01978 862 001
[www. International-eisteddfod.co.uk](http://www.International-eisteddfod.co.uk)

Royal Welsh Show
Llanelwedd, Builth Wells
July 20th.—23rd.

Welsh Heritage Week
University of Wales, Cardiff
July 25th.—August 9th.
Learn Welsh, Enjoy the Music

National Eisteddfod
Bala, Gwynedd
August 1st.—8th.

**Forthcoming Events
In Canada/ USA**

Welsh Language Learning
Course—offered by
Cymdeithas Madog
At the Augustana Campus
University of Alberta,
Camrose. July 19th.—26th.
Apply to : Shirley McKee
3033 Willowbrook Way,
Beavercreek, OH 45431—7702
registrar@madog.org
Visit website at www.madog.org
to register on-line and obtain more
Information.

BBQ and Garden Party
At 3038 Admirals' Road
Any time after 2.0 p.m. on
Sunday, July 12th. 2009
Pot Luck (see you there -Ed.)

Festival of Wales
and
78th. Gymanfa Ganu
In
Pittsburg
September 3rd – 6th 2009
*At the Pittsburg Hilton
North American Welsh Choir
Ar Log, Folk singer Dafydd Iwan
Grand banquet with Welsh tenor
Gwynnaf Jones*

In accordance with the traditions of the Gymanfa ,the Festival of Wales will include a morning service of worship and song followed by the Gymanfa in the afternoon and evening. The service will be held at 10.0 a.m. in the Pittsburg Hilton with Lord Roger Roberts presiding. Lord Roberts has been a Methodist minister for more than 50 years, including six months as interim minister at Eglwys Dewi Sant in Toronto. For many years he was president of the Welsh Liberal Party, then of the Welsh Liberal Democrats. In 2004 he was made a life peer as Baron Roberts of Llandudno , where he lives .

REMINDER

The Annual General meeting of the Society will be held in October. The time date and place haven't been decided yet but will be announced in the September issue of the Newsletter and also through a mailed notice. --- **Please keep this in mind and plan to attend.**

Another Reminder — if you haven't paid your membership dues for this year, please do so without delay.

\$16 single, \$24 family.

Send your cheque to the Treasurer :
Mrs J. Pearson,
4277 Houlihan Place,
Victoria, B.C., V8N 3T2.

And now, from Carwyn Edwards' Newsletter, a recipe for Brecon Light Cakes :

120 gm (near enough 4 oz.) self raising flour
Half tsp salt
10 gm (1/3 oz.) castor sugar
Two eggs
Two tbsp orange juice
Three tbsp milk
30 gm (1 oz.) butter, to fry the mixture
30 gm brown sugar

Beat eggs together with orange juice. Sift flour and salt in a bowl, add castor sugar and mix. Combine this with the egg mixture and stir thoroughly before adding milk. Stir again and let stand for a few minutes.

Melt the butter in a large frying pan and when sizzling-hot drop in tablespoons of the batter. Cook through on both sides until a golden brown and serve hot, sprinkled with brown sugar. (*The farmers I knew in my youth in Breconshire would have been crazy for these – Ed.)*

We are also indebted to Carwyn Edwards' recent newsletter for the following article by John F. Wake :

Talking about Wales -- Lost churches and Tudor Genius.

Why was the tiny church of St. Jerome chosen to house one of the most spectacular wood carvings in Britain ? At the end of the fifteenth century, during the first few years of the reign of Henry the seventh, one of the most intricate and impressive wood carvings was commenced. If you are near Usk in Monmouthshire , and love the country lanes, take the time to see and wonder at this work of genius. St. Jerome's is also unusual in having its Mediaeval tower at the side of the chancel. No one knows why ?

There are many 'lost' churches in Wales that seem 'trapped in time', some dating from the twelfth century. Look for the little sign-posts off rural lanes. They usually begin with " Llan ". Enjoy St. Jerome's.

If you are a wood- carver or a lover of wood take a few minutes to watch the short video that can be found at www.youtube.com/watch.

Diwedd – We end this issue of the newsletter sadly, in having to report the recent passing of long-time member Lois Newsham. Our sympathy and condolences go out to her husband, Lloyd.