

Cymdeithas Gymraeg



Victoria Welsh Society

Newsletter : Hydref 2009 October

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Don't forget the AGM – October 16 at 5.30 p.m. in the Eastern Star Hall.

We hope to see you there!

*From the
Editor*

I hope that all our members have enjoyed the summer just past. Several, including your editor, made the trip to the U.K. and, it's to be hoped, had a good time. More of this when we get to "Society News".

Now to the future : the Annual General Meeting comes up in mid- October and, by now all should have been notified of this, a most important event in our calendar. It's to be hoped that there'll be a good turnout with some volunteers to provide new faces on the Board.

There have been one or two inquiries as to a Christmas Lunch this year. It is a popular event and good for us to get together. Although the Board haven't yet discussed the matter it will probably be held in December – but don't say you heard it here.

Now we look forward to another year of Society activities - Xmas, St. David's Day, the Risca Choir and, possibly, a social event in the spring with a picnic and BBQ in the summer.

Society News

- Following the summer break the board met on September 1st. Several items of importance were dealt with. In particular the date and venue for the AGM (Oct. 16th. at the Eastern Star Hall) and the choice of the concert hall for the Risca choir performance on August 23rd2010. (Don't forget this date). The decision taken was to hold the concert at the Alix Golden Hall. There will be further discussion on other matters pertaining to the concert in due course.
- We have nine new members . They are Betty Board, Patricia Ralphs, Emrys and Robin Evans, Shaun Humphrey, Sheila Hobbis, Anne Briggs and Veronica and Graham Greig. They are most welcome.
- Margaret Brandon enjoyed a busy holiday in the U.K. She and daughter, Gwynne, took a conducted tour from London up North as far as Fort William,

taking in Stratford, Coventry, Leeds, York, Edinburgh, St. Andrews, Aviemore, Fort William, Glasgow, Gretna, The Lake District, Liverpool, Caernarfon, Cardiff, Bath, Glastonbury, Plymouth and Stonehenge before heading back to London. They had a great time!

After the tour they stayed with relatives in the Wirral (near Liverpool) and then in the village of Titchfield, in Hampshire from whence they went to Portsmouth and saw H.M.S. Victory and the Mary Rose.



Margaret and Gwynne get re-acquainted with the Red Dragon in Cardiff.

- Bea Buchanan had a hip replacement earlier this month. It went well and she is now recovering.
- Former President and also Secretary, Sylvia Preto, now residing in Whitehorse, was in the area at the beginning of the month, visiting her daughter in Sidney. Unfortunately she was unable to get to the city so didn't meet any of her old friends. This was too bad! We must do better next time.
- Recent Trustee, Lilian Fraser, liked the St. David's Day arrangements so much that she wrote to the Board -----
" I write to say how very enjoyable this year's St. David's Day entertainment was – diverse, lively and fun. Thank you one and all for such an excellent afternoon."

Apologies

To Michael Davies for omitting his name from the list of excellent entertainers at this year's St. David's Day event. We all enjoyed his playing.

News from Wales.

- The Welsh Assembly is considering the possibility of compiling a registry of Welsh battle-field sites! One of these is a 30 acre hillside pasture near Knighton in Powis where, in 1402, Owain Glyndwr defeated an English force. (*Source – Carwyn Edwards' newsletter.*)
(and there are some who consider the Welsh Assembly but a talking shop – Ed.)

- Again from Carwyn Edwards :

There's a little cottage somewhere in the Principality where , before WW2, a number of prominent or notorious people stayed. These include St. John Philby (father to Kim the Spy), Sir Granville Bantock, composer and conductor, and the infamous Irish-American William Joyce, better known as Lord Haw Haw for his wartime broadcasts from Nazi Germany.

- Welsh speakers can now obtain a mobile phone with menus and predictive text in Welsh.

- And again from Carwyn Edwards :

Welsh speakers have the advantage in learning to speak KLINGON – the difficult language of STAR TREK (it's translated for TV audiences.) This is the opinion of Alex Greene, of Wrexham, who is one of the select group who speak KLINGON fluently. He believes that the creators of KLINGON drew on Welsh, among other languages, for the inter-galactic dialect.

(*I had heard that Welsh is the language of Heaven but not KLINGON- don't believe a word of it!* – Ed.)

- That famous Welsh institution, Howells' department store, in Cardiff, has been at the same location on St. Mary street for 144 years. (*Some might say that's gross!* – Ed.)
- The Gower Peninsula is in danger of losing its reputation for outstanding natural beauty. National Trust staff and others have spent many hours this past summer cleaning up waste left by people camping illegally.
- It used to be thought that education standards in Wales were at least equal to those in England. But according to a piece in the July– August issue of "Ninnau", (The North American Welsh newspaper), the number of students in Wales who achieve 5 or more GCSE passes, which was on a par with England in 2000, is now 7% less. Moreover it is a fact that local authorities in Wales are allotted 496 pounds less per student to spend on education per year than in England. Has this any bearing on the falling standards, dilapidated buildings and school closures now seen in Wales?
- The Taxpayers Alliance has recently called for an end to the claiming of expenses for food by Assembly members whose constituencies are in the Cardiff Bay area. In 2007-08 four Plaid Cymru members each claimed more than 3000 pounds for meals and subsistence. (*But at least it wasn't food and shelter for ducks!* – Ed.)
- The first ever cricket Test match in Wales was held in Cardiff in July. England were fortunate to force a draw with Australia in the contest for the Ashes.

A Mediaeval Mystery

“ There’s no evidence of a church or a mill, just a village street. Although we’ve a huge archive of animal bones, we’ve found no human burials, which is very strange.”

Those are the words of the community archaeologist at the Cosmeston Mediaeval village near Penarth , close to Cardiff, in South Wales. This may not be the most famous of archeological sites but it is unique and attracts thousands of visitors each year. They can see the ‘dig’ in progress and wonder at the authentically recreated buildings which have been constructed on the exact outlines of original dwellings. More than this , since 2007 it has been an innovative example of community archaeology with Cardiff University and the Vale of Glamorgan Council working to involve the public in ‘ hands-on’ activities like helping at digs.

The historic village grew around the 12th century fortified manor of the Constantin family who were among the first Norman invaders of Wales. Excavations have found a wide range of artifacts from prehistoric to modern; large quantities of pottery and animal bones, including unusual species like the now extinct Great Auk seabird.

Why did the community fade? The Constantin family held the manor until 1314 when it was granted ‘for life’ to William Caversham but by the 1430’s records refer to the manor house as a ruin and it is known that in the 17 cent. the village had degenerated into three farmsteads. The standard explanation is that decline set in after the Black Death and the deteriorating climate. A Welsh uprising, in which nearby Sully Castle was

ransacked, could also have contributed to the decay.

-----So if you have an interest in ancient things and events and happen to be near Penarth on your next visit perhaps you’ll look in on Comeston Mediaeval Village - for more information write to :

Comeston Mediaeval Village,
Lavernock Road,
Penarth, Vale of Glamorgan.
Wales, U.K.
CF64 5UY

Or phone 029 20701678

Website :

www.cf.ac.uk/archeology/cosmeston

(we are indebted to The Countryman for the article on Cosmeston in the September 2009 issue of their magazine.)

Now that autumn is here our thoughts may turn to that institution of the Christian Church, the harvest festival. It may be thought that the rites and form that we know are very old. But not so! According to an article In the September issue of The Countryman magazine, the harvest festival, as we know it, commenced a mere 160 years ago, in the parish of Morwenstow, in Cornwall. The vicar, Robert Hawker, came to the parish in 1834, as the first resident priest in a 100 years and a century of neglect made his task very difficult. He was received with hostility and all attempts to win the hearts of his flock were , at first, met with rebuffs. The ‘flock’ were a mixed bunch. Smugglers, wreckers and ‘ dissenters of every hue’ were amongst them. The church itself, originally founded in the 5th century was in disrepair, the vicarage in ruins and there was no day-school in the village. However within a decade ,through his tenacity and hard work, parishioners began to attend the special service of thanksgiving for the harvest on which they depended for survival and sing the well known hymns like ‘ We plough the fields and scatter-----’.

And now some advertisements for Welsh matters – rwan rhai hysbyshebbion am pethau Cymraeg.

The Welsh National
National Gymanfa Ganu Association, Inc

With members across the United States and Canada, the WNGGA is the largest Welsh organization in North America. Dedicated to the preservation and cultivation of our Welsh heritage, the WNGGA sponsors :

---- the publication and sale of Welsh hymnal and folk music books and recordings (see website for book titles and prices)

---- the North American Festival of Wales, a four day celebration of Welsh culture featuring the National Gymanfa Ganu. It travels to a different city each year in early September.

For more information on activities of WNGGA or to join our association please go to our website at wngga.org or contact the WNGGA headquarters, P.O. Box 410, Granville, OH 43023.
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FINALLY – YN TERFYNNOL

Paid a anghofio y Cyfarfod Cyffredin

Blynyddol !

Don't forget the Annual General Meeting !

Dydd Gwener, Hydref 16 , amser hanner wedi pump.

Friday, October 16 at 5.30 p.m.

Yn Neuadd y Seren Dwyreiniol

In the Eastern Star Hall.

3281 Harriet Street.

Welwch chi yno – see you there.