



# Gair y Ddraig

*The Word of the Dragon*

Ebrill/Mai 2020  
April/May, 2020

CALGARY WELSH  
SOCIETY  
FOUNDED: 1906



## We hope you enjoy this ‘*Special Edition*’ of *Gair y Ddraig*!

We have invited members to share some of their personal stories, the latest news that may be of interest, as well as some fun ‘stuff’.

This time of social distancing and extra-care places unusual burdens on individuals and society in so many ways. So, we invite you to help ‘*lighten the load*’ by sharing your stories, photographs, jokes, and activities that help see you through each day.

This issue invites you into the lives of some members. It includes some reports that impact the CWS and future events. It also includes humour which is so important in times of difficulty and stress.

Many thanks to those who have contributed, let’s keep the conversation going!!

Page 2 Board Members; Greetings from the President  
CWS donations to charities

Page 3 Cancellation updates

Page 4 Newly Arrived in Calgary-CWS member....

Page 5 St David’s Day Lunch - A Hit once Again

Page 6 Our Journey to Canada – The Freedmans  
Tracing My Welsh Ancestors – Tracy Burr

Page 7 Elaine Westlake – Proud Welsh Lady  
‘With Sorrow....’

Page 8 Welsh Pioneers: William Thomas and Mary  
Jane Llewellyn – Jane Thomas

Page 9 So Here’s Your CWS Board – *solve if you can!*



## THE CWS BOARD

### Officers:

*President: Margaret Freedman*

*Vice-president: Tracy Burr*

*Secretary: Sandy Keating*

*Treasurer: Gwenda Raymond-Jones*

*Newsletter Editor and Website Manager: David Matthews*

### Directors At Large:

*Membership Sec.: Jean Kuhn*

*Jane Thomas*

*David Matthews*

*Past President: Elaine Westlake*

## GREETINGS FROM YOUR CALGARY WELSH SOCIETY BOARD

Annwyl Ffrindiau/ Dear Calgary Welsh Society Friends.

WE HOPE YOU ARE ALL KEEPING AND SAFE and well during this difficult time.

Because of the pandemic, the board has decided to cancel our upcoming events, the Spring is Singing concert, the Annual General Meeting and the July picnic. In addition, the North American Welsh Choir has decided that they would postpone their trip until June 2021. We are, of course, absolutely disappointed. The board is conducting CWS affairs by email and phone.

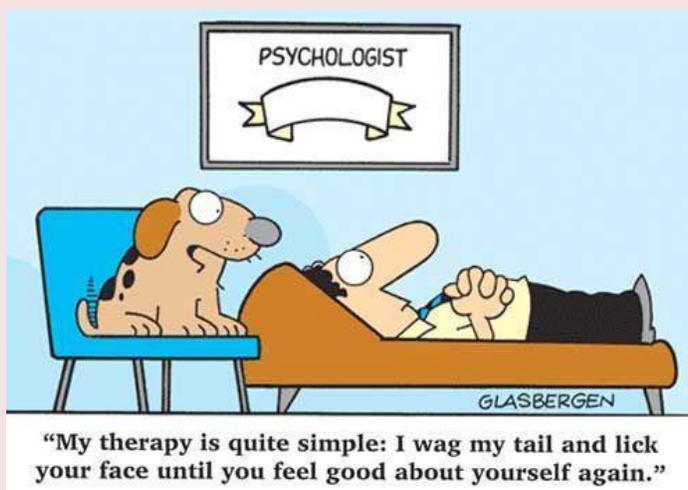
On a brighter note, we were able to celebrate St David's Day at the Calgary Winter Club. Despite the snowy start to the day, there was a good attendance, great food and wonderful entertainment.

Many thanks to all who participated to make this event successful. Thanks to Kathleen Johnson, the Welsh Flag was once again flown at City Hall and thanks to Jane Thomas who arranged for the Calgary Tower, the Olympic Plaza, Telus Spark, the Reconciliation Bridge and Jubilee, to be illuminated in the Welsh colours.

Please all take care of yourselves.

On behalf of the Board

*Margaret Freedman* ( President)



## CWS DONATIONS TO CALGARY CHARITIES WORKING TO SUPPORT THOSE IN NEED DURING COVID19

**HAVING AGLC 'CASINO' FUNDS** allows the Calgary Welsh Society to donate to worthy charities in Calgary. The following is a list of the charities selected by the CWS board as well as the amounts donated:

Calgary Food Bank	\$5000.	Calgary Mustard Seed	\$3000.
Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter	\$5000	Calgary Drop-In for the Homeless	\$3000
Calgary Humane Society	\$3000	The Salvation Army	\$3000

## NORTH AMERICAN FESTIVAL OF WALES PHILADELPHIA 2020 CANCELLED

It was with deep regret that the *Welsh North American Association*, in consultation with the Philadelphia organizing co-chairs, cancelled *NAFOW* Philadelphia, 2020. Preparations to hold this event began several years ago, so this is a great disappointment. The *WNAA* is working hard to reschedule this event as soon as is feasible. This is the first time since World War 2 that a *NAFOW* has been cancelled.

The amount of preparation that goes into organizing a *NAFOW* is huge and often not understood. For example, in order to gain the best hotel arrangements, contracts may be signed 3 years ahead of the actual festival and choirs, performers, seminar presenters, have to be contacted well in advance.

**The good news is that *NAFOW* Ottawa, 2021, is a go!! Preparations are underway to hold this Labour Day event in Canada's capital city. Ottawa has a strong, very active Welsh society.**

The irony in this may be the fact that during his first year of presidency of the *Welsh North American Association*, David Matthews, a *Calgary Welsh Society* board member, will be the first *WNAA* president in over 70 years who will not preside over a *North American Festival of Wales*.

### CALGARY WELSH SOCIETY EVENTS FOR 2020

February 15 <sup>th</sup> or 16 <sup>th</sup>	Possibility of <u>Recital</u> by visiting pianist and French Horn player Information will be forthcoming if confirmation of recital is confirmed.
February	ASAP <u>CWS membership fees</u> due for year Jan.1 <sup>st</sup> , 2020 to Dec.31 <sup>st</sup> , 2020 Payable to Jean Kuhn, membership secretary.
March 2 <sup>nd</sup>	<u>Deadline for purchase of St David's Day</u> Cheque payable to Calgary Welsh Society
March 7 <sup>th</sup>	<u>St David's Day Lunch</u> at Calgary Entertainment: Calgary Boys' Choir
April	[TBA] <u>AGM and Tea</u>
May 8th	<u>Spring Is Singing</u> concert Emmanuel Reform Church, Calgary
June 27 <sup>th</sup>	<u>Cor Cymru Gogledd America</u> / No Grace Presbyterian Church, Calgary
July	[TBA] <u>CWS picnic</u>
September 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup>	<u>North American Festival of Wales</u> in Philadelphia, PA Look for information & application to attend with this newsletter
September	[TBA] <u>CWS Tea and entertainment</u>
October	[TBA] <u>Noson Lawen</u>
December 6 <sup>th</sup>	<u>Christmas Brunch</u> at the Royal Hotel Calgary, (Former Executive Royal Hotel)



**LET'S LOOK FORWARD  
TO THINGS IMPROVING**

## NEWLY ARRIVED IN CALGARY, CWS MEMBER HEATHER POWELL

IN 2005 MY HUSBAND AND I, along with our two young sons, left the UK to relocate “temporarily” for work. As part of our going away gifts, my mother presented me with a card which read “You can take the girl out of Wales but you can’t take Wales out of the girl”! A momento I have kept to this day and after nearly 15 years of expat living it has certainly been true. I was born in North Wales and my home town is Llangefni, Anglesey. I miss it every day and more so now since I expect it will be some time before I get to travel back to visit my father and family. Typically I return around 4 times a year for a couple of weeks at a time. In the meantime, I am following several facebook pages dedicated to Anglesey and North Wales so I get a daily “fix” of photos and news.

Welsh is my first language and I think we are super fortunate that it is a phonetic one. Once you master the alphabet and get your tongue twisting around a few odd sets of letters, it is easy enough to speak Welsh. Although there have been many times when visiting South Wales, that I have had to resort to English as some words used totally baffle me! “Popty Ping” is one of my favourite translations for “microwave” literally it is “Oven Ping”.

My family name is Hughes and I married an Englishman whose name is Powell. Another good Welsh name (Ap Hywel/son of Hywel) and with Welsh grandparents, our sons are more Welsh than they are English which makes rooting for football and rugby teams tricky at times.

After studying at the University of Liverpool (close enough to my cartref and far enough away to be exciting), I have since lived in many different parts of the world: London, San Ramon (California), The Woodlands (Texas), Bangkok (Thailand), Jakarta (Indonesia) and now Calgary, Alberta. .

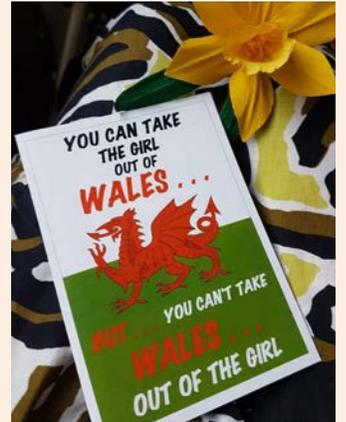


I have been fortunate enough to connect with Welsh folk all over the globe and my time in Asia was very special. Both Bangkok and Jakarta have a history of very active St. David’s Societies and at both locations I took the lead for a few years as Bard (Bangkok) and President (Jakarta). All four of the British societies: Saints Andrew, David, George and Patrick have dedicated supporters and these loyal societies have been hosting gala balls and fundraisers for decades to generate valuable funds for local charities. The Hong Kong Welsh Male Voice Choir (which was started in 1978) began to visit Bangkok from 1983 to perform at the St. David’s Day Ball. I was honoured to be Bard in 2013 when the choir visited for their 30th anniversary which was an incredibly special occasion. Lots of pomp, ceremony, tunes, Welsh food and of course daffodils.

Now Matthew and I are newly settled in Calgary where we expect to be here for around 3 years. Our boys are in the UK studying at university and we arrived in August 2019 fully expecting to make the most of this beautiful country. I have compiled a list of places to visit and although there is a global hiatus on these plans I will be using this “at home time” to do my homework and find out more about these spots.

There is a circularity about my being here in Canada. My maternal grandfather was born in 1911 of Welsh parents who had emigrated from Anglesey to Victoria, BC. My Taid returned to Wales as a child and we know that his older brother remained in Victoria so I have started to look into this side of our family history with interest. There is a great deal to read about Welsh settlers here in Canada, it is quite fascinating. If anyone in the Calgary society has an expertise in tracing roots here I would welcome the chance to connect with you to see if you have any particular advice.

Diolch am ddarllen fy narn. Thank you for reading my piece. Cadwch yn ddiogel ac yn iach. Keep safe and well. *Heather*



## ST DAVID'S DAY LUNCH – A HIT ONCE AGAIN!

ONCE AGAIN A GREAT CELEBRATION of our Patron Saint was enjoyed by all at the *Calgary Winter Club*.

Margaret Freedman welcomed members and guests. Glynis Grigg followed with a very entertaining *Toast to Saint David*.

After Gwenda Raymond Jones said the *Grace* in Welsh and English, the crowd sat down to enjoy a delicious lunch of leek soup, steak dinner, creme brûlée and Welshcakes.

Following lunch, all were beautifully entertained by a section of the *Calgary Boy's Choir*, the 'Gentlemen's Choir'. Past-president Elaine Westlake introduced the choir and choir director Kathryn Berko. The choir sang *Ar Hyd a Nos* in Welsh and did a great job. Rhys Wotton, who is in the 'beginner's choir', was asked to join the choir for the last song! Following the performance, Rhys presented Kathryn with daffodils and the boys with Welshcakes.

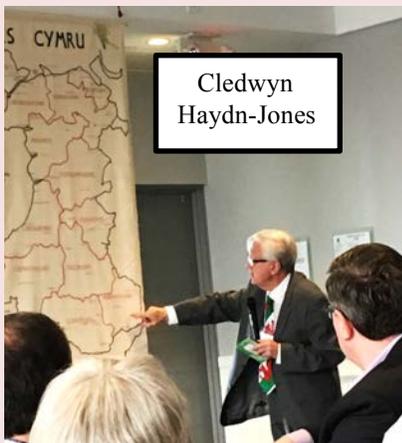
Cledwyn Haydn-Jones, as always, had the crowd highly entertained as he called on members to identify their counties - the 'County Call'.

Margaret Freedman read the Greetings from other Welsh Societies, and mentioned the societies to which Calgary had sent greetings.

Everyone had a wonderful time .

Many thanks to all members and their friends who were determined to brave the weather and attended this annual event.

We appreciate your support.



Cledwyn Haydn-Jones



Margaret Freedman



Glenys Grigg



***Special thanks go to those who organized & participated in this annual celebration!***

Apart from the enjoyment of the St David's Day lunch, Calgary Welsh Society members may have



Jane Thomas

seen the Welsh Flag, once again flown at City Hall. Thanks go to Kathleen Johnson for arranging this.

And a very special thanks to board member Jane Thomas who arranged for the illumination of the Calgary Tower, the Olympic Plaza, Telus Spark, the Jubilee and the Reconciliation Bridge in the Welsh Colours.

Diolch yn fawr iawn!!



Calgary Tower in Welsh Colours

## OUR [complicated] JOURNEY TO CANADA – The Freedmans

WE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO COME TO CANADA, in May 1974. At that time we were living in Herbrandston, near Milford Haven. Derek had an opportunity to come to Saint John, New Brunswick for a period of about 18 months. We thought as our daughters were young, it would be a great adventure.

We enjoyed our time, living in the village of Hampton. Derek was in Canada on a work permit and we decided to apply for immigration. As we were living in Canada, we had to return to Britain and apply from there.

We left Canada in November 1975, and returned to Herbrandston where we sold our home and shipped our belongings to Calgary in February 1976 where Derek had been offered a job. However, Derek was transferred to Houston after 10 months in Calgary and from Houston to Algeria.

In 1981 we wanted to return to Canada, but were told the law had changed while we were away, and that we would have to reapply for immigration. We had assumed we would return to Britain to apply but this time we had to go through Marseille. This was more complicated. When we left Algeria, and as we had a home in Houston, our paperwork was sent to Dallas, via Paris and Ottawa. We spent several weeks in Houston, but then were able to return to Alberta on a Ministers Permit. In August, 1981 we drove to Edmonton from Houston, with 2 teenagers and 2 cats. Our immigration papers were ready in October. But then, as we were living in Canada, we had to leave the country, to receive the papers. So we went to Seattle, and ‘officially’ arrived into Canada via Vancouver. As you can imagine we became Canadian citizens once we had the chance.



### Tracing My Welsh Ancestors - Tracy Burr

WITH AN INTEREST IN GENEALOGY, I have been tracing my Welsh ancestors.

I had always heard the story of a Spanish sailor who washed ashore near Aberystwyth, married a local girl and settled down in Wales. However, when I started tracking the actual records, such as census, parish and civil records, I found the story was quite different. I discovered many generations who lived along the Welsh Borders. The earliest record I'm confident of is a marriage in 1735 in Berriew, Montgomeryshire. Other locations where I have traced ancestors include Llanfair Caereinion, Newtown and Welshpool. Some of my ancestors occupations, besides farming, include master glovers, hatters, grocers and innkeepers.

Two years ago I made a brief trip to Wales to visit local history centres in Llandrindod Wells and Shrewsbury. I rode the coach through some of the same towns my ancestors had lived, and I wondered which buildings from their day are still standing today. I even saw the exact cottages my great-great-grandparents lived in for some 40 years, until 1861. And I'm sure there are still more records to find.



Don't forget to wash your hands



Match the following:

English

Welsh

One  
Two  
Three  
Four  
Five  
Six  
Seven  
Eight  
Nine  
Ten

Saith  
Pedwar  
Deg  
Un  
Naw  
Pump  
Dau  
Chwech  
Wyth  
Tri

## Elaine Westlake - Proud Welsh lady!

I WAS BORN IN THE COAL-MINING VILLAGE of Nantyffyllon, Glamorgan, South Wales when the local mine was still operating!

When I was 7 my policeman dad moved our family, which also included sister Chris and our mom, to Coedely near Tonyrefail. I attended Cwmlai Elementary School for the next few years and passed the Grammar School entry exam at age 11. I loved my seven years, from 1954 to 1961, at Tonyrefail Grammar School.

After meeting society member Brian Lewis, we discovered we had attended the same Elementary and Grammar schools. Brian's brother was in the same form as me and when I was in Wales in the Spring of 2018 Graham and I revisited our schools. Tonyrefail Grammar School was being refurbished at the time and no visitors were allowed! Well, not until Graham, who was chair of the Board of Governors, persuaded the officials that a dignitary (moi!) was visiting from Canada and we wished to go inside! It worked!

Teaching was in my blood from an early age, so going to Swansea Teachers' Training College for the next three years was a natural progression. Then I taught at Stacy Road Elementary School in the Splott area of Cardiff for the next year. Shirley Bassey's niece was one of 34 students in my Standard 1 (Grade One) classroom. We heard lots about Auntie Shirley!

My son Ian was born the next year when my husband and I lived in London. By then we had become serious about living 'abroad' so when Imperial Oil offered a job we excitedly accepted! We emigrated to Canada on the day of the Aberfan disaster, Oct. 21, 1966.

Son David was born during the time we lived in Dawson Creek, BC and Karen was born in Calgary three and a half years later.

I longed to get back into teaching but I was told my qualifications weren't good enough, so undaunted I completed a B.Ed in Special Education, at Calgary University. Then I got the job of my dreams in Ardrossan, Alberta, first in an enclosed Special Education classroom and later in Grade One. I taught in the same school for the next 25 years.

Upon retirement, I returned to Calgary to be closer to my five beautiful grandchildren. I love participating in Calgary Welsh Society events and lead a happy, busy life.



So Elaine had her \_\_ birthday recently and was happily celebrated by some 'hot' men in uniform! Belated Happy Birthday!!

**It is with deep regret** that we announce the death Of Peter Hunziker. Peter passed away peacefully at the Bethany Care Center in Cochrane on April 3, 2020.



Born in Switzerland, Peter apprenticed as a pâtissier in Montreux, and later as a chef at the Kongresshaus in Zurich. Peter travelled and worked in the culinary arts in hotels and resorts throughout the world and on the ocean liner S.S. Rotterdam, on which in 1959, he sailed around the world.

Peter immigrated to Canada in 1962. In 1970 he married Margaret and operated the 815 Snack Bar in Calgary for four years, then worked as a chef at Eaton's and later as chef and instructor at James Fowler High School in Calgary.

Peter was a talented gardener, craftsman and artist. He continued to sketch until the very last days of his life. His work was celebrated by and brought joy to visitors and fellow residents in the care homes in which he spent his final months.

At this time, our thoughts and prayers are with Margaret and family.

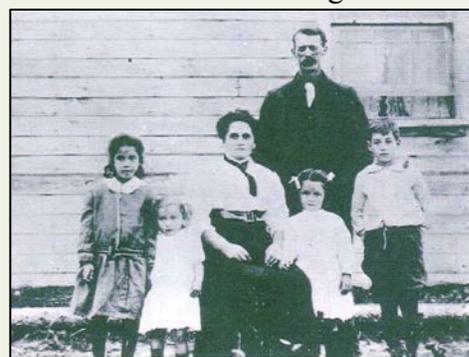
## Welsh Pioneers William Thomas and Mary Jane Llewellyn

I am Canadian born with an amazing Welsh heritage, revealed through a few of our family stories, my visits to Wales between 1980 and 2013 and a relentless curiosity for family research. My Welsh speaking grandparents were Welsh immigrants William Thomas and Mary Jane Llewellyn, who both sailed to Canada around 1900, met in booming Winnipeg and got married in November 1904, as shown in their wedding picture with friend Rachel Davies and brother Owen Thomas as witnesses.



William Thomas was born in January 1876 to limestone quarryman Richard Thomas and his wife, Emma Jones. They had six children, the eldest Ellen Thomas, who married mariner William Griffiths and who stayed in Wales. William Thomas was raised in the family home, beautiful Pentre Garreg Bach in Marian glas, Anglesey, North Wales. A carpenter, William built houses in Merseyside, Liverpool and villages in Anglesey in partnership with his brothers Richard and Owen. When the economy failed, William and Owen boarded a ship to Canada. Brother Richard sailed to Cape Town to work in the mines in South Africa.

Mary Jane Llewellyn, born about June 1875 in Aberaman, South Wales to coal stock engineer Nun Llewellyn and his wife Mary Williams, of Marle farm, Llandissilio and Walton, Pembrokeshire. They had six children. Second youngest, Mary Jane was single, had a son who lived with her at home. She prospered as a mother and gifted chorister in a woman's choir in bustling Aberdare. But the diphtheria death in 1899 of her six year old son changed her life. Broken hearted, she boarded a ship for Canada. In 2013 I visited Morris William's grave, shared with his grandparents Nun and Mary Llewellyn in the old Aberdare cemetery.



In 1905, William and Mary Jane started their family with a son, William Richard Owen (my father). Three of their four children (William, Mary and Gwladys) were born in Stonewall and Winnipeg. In 1911, Mary Jane, pregnant and with three children in tow, sailed home to Wales and bore Catherine, their youngest child, in Aberdare. Her baby was too young to honour their Titanic booking, so they stayed in Wales for about a year. Husband William stayed behind in Canada to work on elevator construction for the CPR in small towns like Preeceville, Saskatchewan. William's job often took him away from home which left Mary Jane with a full load of caring for their children.

In 1917, Mary Jane went into hospital for gallstones and from her bed she wrote a loving letter to her children that she would be home soon. But on March 30, she died in Winnipeg General Hospital. Her family placed her in a mausoleum in Winnipeg's Glen Eden cemetery. From their last home together in Mulvihill, Manitoba, her family carried on to Griswold and eventually settled in a small town in central Saskatchewan named Lintlaw.

William and Mary Jane's children all married and raised their families in Saskatchewan. In 1959 William Thomas and his four children stood together for the funeral of William's eight year old son grandson Edward.

In a letter to Wales William said his children all lived near enough to be close with his grandchildren. His last home was on the farm that he shared with son William and family. Active in municipal council meetings and the Orange Lodge he sped the countryside in his black model A. His occasional letters to his nephew in Wales recounted snowy Canadian prairie weather and some family news. In 1947 he said that brother Owen died in July. With his grandchildren he was reserved about his earlier life and we respected his privacy. Perhaps he was leaving behind the old hard of his early life in Wales to be able to pioneer through the new hard of Canadian life. By the end of 2000 William and his... [continued Page 9]

### MR<sup>S</sup> WILLIAM THOMAS

1875 – 1917

*Beloved Wife Of William Thomas*  
LINTLAW, SASK

BORN MARY JANE LLEWELLYN  
OF ABERAMAN, SOUTH WALES

*Canu yn y nefoedd*

children had all passed away.

My grandparents gave us a prosperous life in Canada. I have an amazing heritage which, little by little I've discovered through family in Canada and in Wales, old family albums, research in municipal records and lots of exposure to Welsh food, music, language and bonding in our Calgary Welsh Society.

*Hiraeth* flows as I see their family pictures and write about their lives. Welsh to their core, my ancestors championed a pioneer life in Canada. A lasting gift is my first and last name.

Jane Thomas



## SO HERE'S YOUR CWS BOARD! Draw a line from photo to name and win a glorious prize!!!!

Bring a copy of this page with your answers to the next CWS event!!



**Margaret  
Freedman**



**Tracy Burr**



**Sandy Keating**



**Jean Kuhn**



**David Matthews**



**Jane Thomas**



**Elaine Westlake**