



Gair y Ddraig

The Word of the Dragon

Mis Awst, 2019

August, 2019

CALGARY WELSH
SOCIETY
FOUNDED: 1906

Officers:

President: Margaret Freedman

Vice-president: Tracy Burr

Secretary: Sandy Keating

Treasurer: Gwenda Raymond-Jones

Directors At Large:

Membership Sec.: Jean Kuhn

Jane Thomas

David Matthews

Past President: Elaine Westlake

Newsletter Editor and Website Manager: David Matthews

GREETINGS FROM YOUR CALGARY WELSH SOCIETY BOARD

Annwyl Ffrindiau / Dear Calgary Welsh Society Friends

THE BOARD HOPES that you are all enjoying the late arrival of summer.

Well it has been a busy time for the Society. A great 'Pot Luck' lunch was enjoyed at our A.G.M. on May 4th at Lake Fraser Green. The only changes to the Board, were that Barbara Morris stepped down, and Sandy Keating took her position as *Secretary*. David Matthews was elected to the Board as *Director at Large*. Many thanks go to Barbara, who worked hard on the Society's behalf.

On May 11th our annual *Spring is Singing* concert was held at Christ Church. It was a truly wonderful evening with great attendance and incredible music. The reception afterwards was well attended.

Unfortunately, *Cwrs Cymraeg*, which was to be held in Calgary was cancelled. However, Christine McSorley, who was scheduled to be one of the teachers, visited Calgary and a small group of members met at David Matthews' home for some Welsh conversation. Christine also joined us at our picnic.

Our *Annual Picnic* was held at Lake Bonavista on July 21st. The weather cooperated and once again a great time was had by all.

We have 10 members, sponsored by *AGLC*, attending *NAFOW* in Milwaukee later this month. Some other members will also be attending. Calgary will be well represented once again. We wish them all a safe journey and a wonderful experience. This year David Matthews will be appointed President of the *Welsh North American Association*. Congratulations to David.

Our next event is our *Annual Tea* on September 14th at Christ Church. Details are in this newsletter and you will be receiving an email and phone call. There will be a charge of \$10 per person for the tea. We do ask that you honour your commitment to attend. Afterwards there will be a presentation by David and Mona Matthews: "*Walking Offa's Dyke Trail. Mona and David's walk from North Wales to South Wales.*"

We are also in the planning stages of a possible *Noson Lawen* in October, so our many talented members can entertain us with their skills.

If you have a story or article that you might like to have in the newsletter. or if you wish to contact the Board, please send to thecalgarywelshsociety@gmail.com

On behalf of the Board

Margaret Freedman

President, Calgary Welsh Society

GROUP OF MEMBERS MEET TO SPEAK IN WELSH

ON JULY 22ND, a small group met for an afternoon of conversation in Welsh. Graciously hosted by David Matthews, we were led by Christine McSorley, originally from Anglesey, Wales. Christine now teaches in Ontario, and is a tutor on the Cwrs.

Despite the Cwrs Cymraeg being cancelled this year, Christine opted to still come and visit Calgary and offered to lead us. Our group was diverse, from beginners to fluent speakers. Christine had us all introducing ourselves, talking a bit about ourselves and our families, all in Welsh. We finished with delicious cake and Welsh cakes. We hope this will be the beginning of future Welsh conversation afternoons.



CAN YOU HELP? A Barry Ross from Australia is looking for a Gwilym Davies.

Gwilym emigrated from Wales to Australia, living 15 miles south of Sidney. The school he attended was at Wollongong. Gwilym then came to Calgary, Alberta.

Barry has no idea of the dates regarding Gwilym's travel to Canada.

Gwilym was or is in the legal profession. He would now be about 77 years old.

Barry Ross's wife's family is from Porthcawl, She was born in Australia and her uncle was Alan Pask who played rugby #8 for Wales.

If you can help, please email thecalgarywelshsociety@gmail.com with the information.



UPCOMING EVENTS

AFTERNOON TEA: An afternoon tea will be held on September 14th, 2019 at Christ Church. Doors will open at 1:30pm and the tea will commence at 2:00pm. There will be a \$10 admission fee.

David and Mona Matthews will be giving a slide presentation: **'WALKING OFFA'S DYKE'**. You will see highlights of their 270 km walk from Prestatyn, North Wales to Chepstow, South Wales.

As with all previous events held by the CWS, you will receive an email and phone call. Please let the phoner know whether you plan to attend the event. It is important that you honour your commitment.

The Offa's Dyke Walk



SPRING IS SINGING!

AS ALWAYS. "Best Ever!" was heard after a fantastic concert at Christ Church on May 11th, 2019. The music was wonderful, the church beautiful and the setting perfect. Many thanks go to Laura Styler who organized and performed in this event.

Margaret Freedman, CWS president, welcomed the audience and Cledwyn Haydn-Jones, who was the MC for the evening, introduced the performers. Many thanks to Cledwyn.

The reception afterwards was well attended. Everyone enjoyed the tea and Welshcakes, as well as having the chance to meet and congratulate the artistes.

The Artistes were: Laura Styler, soprano; Barbara King, mezzo-soprano; Jorge Aviles, tenor; Ian Fundytus, bass-baritone, and Ron Bennie, accompanist. *Thanks to Kathleen Johnson for the photographs.*



In the photo on the left, left to right: Ian Fundytus, Jorge Aviles, Laura Styler, Barbara King and Ron Bennie. In the photo on the right, left to right: Cledwyn Haydn Jones Ian Fundytus, Jorge Aviles, Laura Styler, and Barbara King.



Jean Kuhn presenting flowers to the artistes.



Julie and Cledwyn Haydn-Jones.

'YMA O HYD' honours Jean Kuhn

Written by Brian Lewis

WHENEVER CWS WOMEN DRESS in traditional Welsh costumes for a special event Jean is always one of them. She's been a CWS member for almost thirty years.

Jean was nearly seventeen when she arrived in Calgary with her family in 1954. Her dad had been a tenant farmer in Llay Hall farm near Wrexham. The family name was Pugh, and her father, Bert was Welsh-speaking. They lived in a three storey ten bedroom house, no doubt at one time the home of the lord of the manor. For the five children life was wonderful,--but Bert saw no future for his children. The land had shrunk to only 125 acres as the owner sold more of it to developers. Bert couldn't sustain his family on the farm much longer. Bert decided to emigrate to Canada when he learned the government would help him get settled on a farm.



At sixteen Jean was the oldest of five children. She loved Welsh country life and the simple pleasure of embroidery and sewing. She also loved Welsh cultural events. At fifteen she was in a Morris Dance Troupe that competed in the Eisteddfod in Llangollen.

Although she would miss Wales Jean was excited about being a farm girl near Calgary. Imagine the shock to Bert when he went to the Federal Building in Calgary and learned they had no record of him and couldn't help! True to character (according to Jean) he refused to leave the building until his problem was solved. Eventually the problem was dealt with but it meant splitting the family. Bert and his wife Dorothy and the three youngest children would go to a farm in Chestermere, Jean went to a farm in Springbank, her sister, Joan found work in the city.

The seventeen year old Jean soon proved her worth to the sceptical farmer. She could drive a tractor and she could bale hay. She also gained local fame as the British farm girl who got things done—but was to be given a wide berth when she was on the tractor!!

Jean did not discover CWS until late in life. In the early nineties she was on the telephone committee. When Elaine Westlake became president, Jean became membership secretary. These roles brought her close to the membership and she learned the many ways she could be helpful. That has been the hallmark of Jean's service to CWS. She spotted things that needed to get done and volunteered to do them.

Jean left school at fifteen but schooling had been a rich experience. Anyone who received a handwritten note from Jean is struck by the beauty of her handwriting.

Everything about Jean speaks of traditional values; family, church and school. She milked the cows before walking to school. She helped keep the family together. In Calgary she found many of her life-long interests like singing could be enjoyed once again through CWS. She discovered the *North American Festival of Wales* and the chance to meet Welsh people from all over the continent. Locally, celebrating St. David's Day was one of the highlights of the year.

At 82 Jean still works. She looks after farm or other animals to give the owners respite. She has a great love of animals—whether they are dogs, cows or Llamas. She often says how grateful animals are for everything you do for them.

We are also grateful to Jean for doing so much for CWS in her quiet unassuming manner.

CALGARY WELSH SOCIETY FAMILY NEWS

CONTINUED 'GET WELL' WISHES go out to **Megan Morris** (along with parents Barbara and Philip) who had extensive back surgery in June to correct scoliosis. After a few initial setbacks, Megan is recovering well and is happy to be able to go for short walks with friends on the flat terrain of Calgary Malls. Rumour has it that also includes some early 'back to school' shopping!

Jean Matthews (widow of the late H. David Matthews), is back at *Chinook Care Centre*, where she now resides, after recovering from pneumonia at the Rockyview Hospital. She would love to see society friends! She is registered as Alice Jane Matthews.

Susan Drayson, past member of Calgary Welsh Society, is on the mend after surgery to remove part of her colon followed by a nasty infection. Susan moved back to her home area of Simcoe, Ontario a few years ago. Many of you know Susan as she contributed a lot to CWS during her years here. She formed a Welsh choir of society members, accompanied us on the piano during functions and helped with all musical events.

NB: If you know of any member who is sick, needing support or celebrating an event, please let Elaine Westlake know by emailing her [westlake.me@shaw.ca] or calling at 403-256-4136. Diolch yn fawr! Elaine :>)

GREAT NEWS FROM THE HENDERSON FAMILY

After three years of perseverance to get into medical school, **Amanda Henderson**, daughter of CWS members, Michèle and Craig Henderson, has been accepted at the University of Calgary's Cumming School of Medicine. Amanda begins her journey to become a doctor in July! Mom and Dad are immensely proud!

CALGARY STAMPEDE SHOWBAND WINS WORLD GOLD MEDAL

Evan Coolidge, son of Dave and Kate Coolidge and grandson of CWS board treasurer, Gwenda Raymond Jones, plays the trombone in the band. Evan also recently returned from a week at the Eastman School of Music. Congratulations Evan!!



ON JULY 24TH AND 25TH THE CWS OPERATED A SUCCESSFUL CASINO. Thanks to the following who participated: Mark and Tracy Burr, plus their son Logan, Tudor Davies, Julien De Shutter, Viv Ellis, Effie Galway, Glynis Grigg, Sandy Keating, Ceril Kenney, Jean Kuhn, Ted Jones, David and Mona Matthews, Philip Morris. Norm Pierce, Gwenda Raymond Jones, Beth Sawatzky, Ed van Runt, Betty Watson, Elaine Westlake and Ann Williams.

Derek Freedman, Chairman CWS Casino team.

“Mae fy nain yn canu yn y nefoedd” by Jane Thomas

THIS WEEK I WAS OVERJOYED to finally find my Nain’s death notice which appeared on 12 May 1917 in the Aberdare Leader:

Aberdarian’s Death in Canada

Mrs. William Thomas (Miss Mary Jane Llewellyn) died at the Winnipeg General Hospital, Canada on March 30th last, following an operation at the age of 42 years. A funeral service was held at Clark’s Undertaking Parlour, Winnipeg, on Sunday afternoon, April 1st, quite a number of South Walians attending. The Reverend H.W. Griffiths, Welsh minister officiated. The deceased came to Canada from Aberdare 18 years ago, and was married four years later to Mr. William Thomas, of North Wales, who is now left with four children.

For 90 years Mary Jane Llewellyn seemed lost to her family. We grandchildren were frustrated and curious. Our grandfather William Thomas and their children spoke little about Mary Jane’s life but did show us a picture of her in a choir. In 1991, inspired after a trip to Wales, my brother obtained her Canadian death certificate but it showed a defunct cemetery name. In 2007 we finally found the revised cemetery name: Glen Eden and located her at Winnipeg’s Glen Eden Mausoleum.

It was time for a road trip to Winnipeg and five of us grandchildren went to find her. When we arrived, the Mausoleum office told us their old death ledger entry line 198 was the only trace to her unnamed crypt situated high above a beautiful stain-glassed window in that marble room.

We had the Mausoleum engrave her crypt. Because of this choir picture we knew it was important to include the words, ‘*canu yn y nefoedd*’ - ‘singing in heaven’.

Before we left her in Winnipeg, we had a family service beside her crypt, first to say a proper hello and then a peaceful goodbye to our Nain.



UK ART FUND MUSEUM OF THE YEAR: ST FAGANS WINS £100,000 PRIZE

ST. FAGANS NATIONAL MUSEUM OF HISTORY beat four other contenders for this prize.

Founded in 1948, St Fagan’s is one of Wales’ most popular heritage attractions. It allows visitors to take a walk through Welsh history, from prehistoric times to the present day.

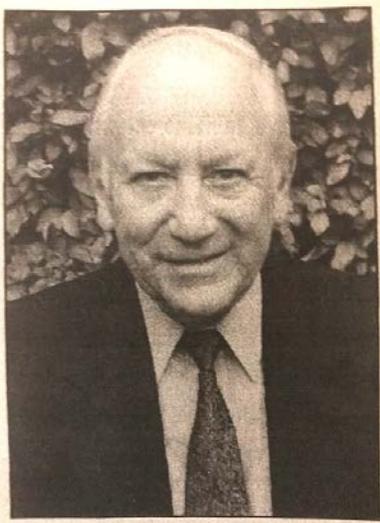
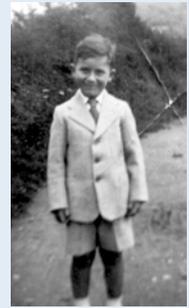
According to Stephen Decher, Art Fund director and chair of the judges, “It is a truly democratic museum that lives and breathes the culture, history and identity of Wales”.

[Extracts taken from www.celtic-connection.com and submitted by Phil Morris]



Remembering H. David Matthews

WE WERE SADDENED to hear of the sudden death of long time member **H. David Matthews** on June 22, 2019. He was very proud of his Welsh heritage and, what a coincidence that when he was evacuated as a child from London during the WW1 bombings he was sent to live in his mother's home area in the Vale of Neath, Glamorgan, South Wales. You may recall an article that David wrote in the February 2014 issue of our newsletter entitled *Wartime memories of a Young British Boy*. You may recall this photo of David as a boy.



He worked hard during his time as Secretary of Calgary Welsh Society from 2003 - 2007 registering CWS with Alberta Registries and creating our first society By-Laws. He also persevered until he secured our first society Casino.

David came to Calgary in 1957 and soon joined CWS. He loved speaking a few words of Welsh and was proud of the Welsh he learned at Roly Thomas' classes back in the 1970's.

David had many interests including rugby - he was a founding member of the Calgary Rams Rugby Club in 1959, rowing, tennis, his community, and horticulture. He assisted with the rejuvenation of Reader Rock Garden and he helped lobby for the preservation of Fish Creek and Nose Hill Parks. He was also proud of the part he played in the establishment of Calgary's pathway system.

CWS was pleased to make a donation to Calgary Rams Rugby in honour of Dave. They too are remembering him with a plaque on the Rams Memorial bench at the Calgary Rugby Union.

Sincerest condolences to Jean and family on the loss of David. He will be missed!

JUST 1 MINUTE AND 11 SECONDS SHORT

THE FINAL STAGE OF THE 2019 TOUR DE FRANCE ended on Sunday July 28th following a grueling couple of sections in the French Alps immediately before the Paris finish! On this occasion the efforts of Cardiff Olympic racing cyclist Geraint Thomas fell short by the smallest of margins – a mere 71 seconds! Readers will recall that his success in last year's race became an outstanding personal achievement when he also claimed a record number of yellow jerseys.

The Alpine region, on this final occasion, presented some very unseasonal weather conditions with severe hailstorms, rock falls and mud slides despite which the young winning rider from Columbia Egan Bernal mastered the 21 day event.

There was not a single yellow jersey for the Welshman this year but his success almost followed the pattern of the previous year. However, instead of taking the lead from the 11th stage onwards he maintained the position of being the next fastest to finish in second place. For Geraint this was still a tremendous achievement and he deserves our congratulations. *Submitted by Roly Thomas*



KEEP YOUR CALENDARS OPEN FOR AN OCTOBER NOSON LAWEN! NOW IN THE PLANNING STAGES, THIS WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS ONCE AGAIN TO SHARE THEIR MANY TALENTS! STAY TUNED FOR INFORMATION!!

CWS ANNUAL PICNIC

THE CWS ANNUAL PICNIC was held once again at Lake Bonavista on the afternoon of July 21.

It was a glorious afternoon with sun shining and warm temperatures. Once again members and guests brought a variety of delicious food dishes. Barbeque chief chef, Ed vanRunt, ably assisted by Mark Burr, did a great job of turning out dozens of hotdogs and hamburgers for a hungry crowd.

Some of the crowd, young and older, enjoyed playing *Ladderball* while everyone had a great opportunity to socialize.

Thanks go to everyone on the board, but especially to Jean and Sandy who purchased all the CWS food and to Tracy and Mark Burr who brought all supplies from storage.

A great deal of thanks also go to Ross and Pam Hicks and Kate and Dave Coolidge for allowing us to use this great facility.

