

Newyddion o Gymdeithas Dewi Sant

St. David's Society News

Celebrate St. David's Day on St. David's Day, Saturday, March 1

Ramada Plaza Hotel

NOTE: We will be in the Minnesota Grand Ballroom.
ENTER VIA THE MAIN ENTRANCE.

1330 Industrial Blvd. (via I-35W), Minneapolis, MN 55413
(612) 331-1900

Our speaker for the 2014 St. David's Day luncheon will be Elfryn Thomas, born and raised in Carmarthen, South Wales. After attending Ysgol Dyfryn Bro Myrddin High School, he attended the Welsh Agriculture College in Aberystwyth. After college, he decided to follow his grandfather's dream to go and visit Wisconsin.

He was an exchange student for a year before moving back to Wales. After two years there, he decided that he wanted to move back to Wisconsin permanently.

Elfryn will tell us more about his journey to the U.S. He'll also sing and recite his winning 2013 Wisconsin State Eisteddfod essay in Welsh and in English.

In addition, David Evan Thomas will accompany flutist Amy Morris on his composition: "Three Welsh Songs."

Registration begins at 11:30 a.m. After noon seating in ballroom to enjoy cheese and fruit, a cup of Tomato Basil Soup will be served, followed by the plated meal: Welsh Miner's Pie (pie crust bottom, topped with mashed potatoes).

Diners can choose vegetarian filling or meat/vegetable filling on the enclosed yellow reservation form.

Dessert will be Berry Trifle.

Ticket prices: \$25, ages 11 and older;
\$12, ages 10 and under.

Contact Judith Evans Warner with questions: judithewarner@aol.com. Register by mailing enclosed form to Pam Rose at 8514 13th Ave. S., Bloomington, MN 55425.

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE:
FEBRUARY 21.**

Elfryn Thomas, originally from Carmarthen, Wales, is shown with his wife Tami and their four children: Ryan, 15, Rees, 7, and Gethin and Ariana, 5½. They live in Brillion, Wisconsin. Elfryn will speak at our St. David's Day luncheon, Saturday, March 1, at Ramada Plaza Hotel.

JANUARY 2014

Volume 36, Issue 1



Reading and listening Welsh stories and poems Sun., January 12, 2-4 p.m., Black Bear Crossings

Look over books of poetry, fiction or nonfiction that have some connection to Wales, Welsh language or culture, or the Welsh immigrant experience. Choose a passage or poem you enjoy, either for its content or its style.

Perhaps you'd like to share a family letter. Contact Ilene at ilene.dawn@gmail.com immediately if you'll be one of the readers on January 12.

Come to Black Bear Crossings on Sun., Jan. 12, 2-4 p.m. Purchase a treat to bring downstairs to our meeting room. We'll be in the larger room that day. We'll listen to one another read and tell why our choice is interesting to us. Plan to read and comment no more than 8-10 minutes.

The Pavilion is 2.3 miles north of I-94 on Lexington Parkway. For more detailed directions, click on "Contact" on the website:
<http://blackbearcrossings.com>.



Hanner Draig charms Christmas Tea audience

Hanner Draig—Maria Bartholdi (vocalist and new member of the Society) and Will Roberts (guitarist)—pleased all who attended the Christmas Tea on Dec. 14 at University Lutheran Church of Hope. The couple provided music in Welsh ranging from old folk ballads; a heart-rending selection about the last Welsh princess, Gwenllïan; a bit

of Welsh protest; and some lighter folk songs in which we were invited to join. Will provided able back-up for Maria's lovely voice. Audience members particularly appreciated her time to prepare translations of all her songs.

As explained last month, *hanner draig* means "half dragon." Will has Welsh ancestry, but doesn't know the language. Maria has no Welsh ancestry, but can speak Welsh.



Photo by Ilene Alexander *Hanner Draig—Will Roberts and Maria Bartholdi*

Maria Bartholdi is a producer for television and radio. She does the lot—from videography and editing to field production and writing. She's a multiple Upper Midwest Regional Emmy winner and Telly award winner, too. She hails from Cloquet, now lives in St. Paul, and has become a regular student and now a Board member with Cymdeithas Madog [Fellowship of Madog], sponsor of the annual Cwrs Cymraeg. Despite her Italian origins, she's followed her love for the Welsh language to fluency via those cyrsiau. She can regularly be seen performing in improv comedy groups around the Twin Cities.

Will Roberts is Welsh and grew up in the Twin Cities. He is a teaching assistant at the University of Minnesota in Economics, having recently completed his Masters degree. He also holds undergraduate degrees in Mathematics and Philosophy. Will can be seen in various bands around town, playing bass guitar and giving guitar lessons. Will is also active in the Twin Cities improv comedy scene.

Eisteddfod Study Group

- Explore the delights of reciting Welsh.
- Learn a Welsh poem, hymn or song in a relaxed setting.
- No Welsh language experience necessary.

In several sessions, we'll provide mutual support in preparation for the Eisteddfod at the National Festival of Wales in Minneapolis, August 28–31, 2014.

Contact: David Evan Thomas

det@davidevanthomas.com
612-870-3747

A note of apology

Our December 2013 issue indicated that our longtime Archivist, Mae Anderson, had a "nearly complete file of Society newsletters." That was an error. She had compiled a complete file before turning archives over to new Archivist Ilene Alexander.

August 2014

August 2014 is important for the Welsh because, of course, the North American Welsh Festival is coming here Aug. 28–31. But it's also the only time in your life you'll see this phenomenon!

**August will have 5 Fridays,
5 Saturdays and
5 Sundays!**

This happens only once ever 823 years.

The Chinese call it "Silver pockets full."

The Welsh call it "Be sure to register at the hotel for the Hyatt Regency Hotel for the 5th Friday, 5th Saturday and 5th Sunday of August."



North American
**Festival
of Wales**

the Welsh North American Association

Tecwyn Vaughan Jones from Bangor University will lead NAFOW seminars AND visit our Society March 20

Tecwyn Vaughan Jones hails from the slate quarrying town of Blaenau Ffestiniog located in the heart of the Snowdonia mountain range. Both his grandparents and father were involved in the slate mining industry.

He was educated at Ysgol y Moelwyn High School in that town and from there went to study at the University of Wales, Bangor. He graduated in Sociology and later proceeded to complete an MA in Folklore. He worked as a research officer at the National Museum of Wales and was based at St. Fagans. That site is now called the National History Museum. It is located on the outskirts of Cardiff.

Following this, he was Marketing Manager for the National Museum of Wales before leaving Wales for Canada to study and teach in the Department of Folklore at the Memorial University of Newfoundland in St. Johns. He returned to Cardiff in 1993 and taught the MA in Folklore graduate programme in the School of Welsh, Cardiff University.

In 1997 he was appointed Director of the Celtica Heritage Centre in Machynlleth and in 2000 was appointed to his current post as Resident Director of the Central College Iowa Study Abroad Programme at Bangor University. Since his appointment, over 1,000 American students have completed the programme.

His teaching interests are Identity Studies, Globalization and Ethnic Cultures, Contemporary Wales and Folklore. He specializes in the folklore of children and folk custom. He returned to live in Blaenau Ffestiniog eight years ago and is very glad to have had the opportunity to return to the town after an absence of so many years.



Tecwyn Vaughan Jones will speak here the evening of Thursday, March 20. His topic will be "Welsh and Celtic?" He will also present two seminars at NAFOW 2014 in Minneapolis Labor Day August 29 and 30.

March 20 meeting with Tecwyn

The location of this Thursday evening meeting will be in our next newsletter and on our web page as soon as decided. If you have a suggestion for a quiet room, preferably free, to comfortably seat 20-30 people for conversation, please advise Mary Mergenthal.

Good access and parking are also vital.

(651) 644-1650 or mary.mergenthal@gmail.com.

World War 1 Centenary 1914-1918

By Kay Gavin

The 100-year anniversary of the start of the First World War, or the Great War, will be August, 2014.

At the North American Festival of Wales 2014 in Minneapolis, we would like to honor your Welsh ancestors who were involved in this war by displaying their stories and pictures. If you have a Welsh ancestor who served in WW1, we would like to hear from you.

Please write a 100-word document about your serviceman: name, born, where served, rank achieved, brief history of his life, where buried, relationship to writer. Include copies only of a picture of the soldier, letters they may have written while serving, or any memorabilia you may have.

Please send your stories to:

Kay Gavin, 2737 Aglen St.,
Roseville, MN 55113-2046 or by e-mail to
kaywgavin@hotmail.com by March 1, 2014.

Life Memberships

Why do we offer Life Memberships, and why should you want one?

The St. David's Society of Minnesota decided to offer life memberships as an option a few years back. The rate for the life memberships was set at \$175.00, or about ten years of individual membership renewals.

The decision was made to set up a reserve fund with the receipts from the life memberships. We invest this fund. The idea is to stretch out the money in the fund for use over many years.

As a life member, you will receive the newsletter and be a member of the St. David's Society for as long as we have a valid address to send your mailings to.

Advantages to the society.

We have a fund that is expected to provide a reserve and also annual income for the life of the St. David's Society.

Having reserves gives us the potential of more "clout" with outside sources if we have the need to handle a special project, such as obtaining a proper venue for a Welsh choir or chorus to perform in Minnesota.

Having the "perpetual" income gives us a base income that assures that the work we do in support of Welsh education will continue for many years to come.

Advantages to the members.

For everyone, life memberships prevent those embarrassing renewal notices in the mail. They also help prevent a lapse of membership due to inattention to renewal dates and notices. This happens more often than you might think.

For younger members, life memberships give individual members the ability to save money over someone who chooses to renew membership every year for over ten years.

For older members, life memberships give individual members the ability to make a gift to the society as an ongoing source of income for that time in the future when the member is no longer able to contribute.

The rules for a life membership are simple.

A life membership is for one person. It is not for a couple, and it is not for a legal entity such as a corporation. Your living trust can own a life membership, but it cannot be passed on.

Two notes.

Some people with current family memberships have chosen to take out two life memberships. Others who now own a life membership also provide gift memberships every year to a spouse, partner, offspring or other loved ones. This is not a requirement. It is a definite benefit to your St. David's Society and a thoughtful thing to do for others.

If our mailings to you start being sent back by the post office, we will attempt to locate you. Until we find out where you are, you will not receive your newsletter and may be dropped from the active membership list.

We'll need lots of help at the NAFOW over Labor Day weekend—ushering, greeting, delivering messages and more. If you're not sure we have your names, please complete this form & send to Kay Gavin, or contact her at the e-mail or phone # below.

North American Festival of Wales VOLUNTEER FORM

Name _____

If more than one family member can help, please include all names.

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ - _____

Phone _____ E-mail address _____

VITAL if you have one.

You will be contacted soon after registration forms are available (February/March). At that time, please keep record of what you've signed up for, so your volunteer time will not keep you from attending something you'd like to do.

Mail to: Kay Gavin
2737 Aglen St.
Roseville, MN 55113

or contact Kay at: kaywgavin@hotmail.com
or call her at (651) 484-1778.

Diolch yn fawr.

News of the Well-Read Dragons

By Mary Mergenthal

Turf or Stone
by Margiad Evans,
Library of Wales Press

This book, our title for December, reminds one of the reason for book clubs. This writer started the meeting announcing that she had found no character of redeeming social value whatsoever in the book. Others were not offended nor surprised by that reaction, but they were able to "fill in the blanks," to help me see the lessons to be learned by attention to every character.

The main character could be Mary Bicknor, the companion of a wealthy old woman, who is forced into marriage to the brutish Easter Probert. Or, the main character may be Probert himself. Or Phoebe, the daughter of the estate owners. Who knows? The group discussed several possibilities and, as always, opinions were as varied as people present. Another reason to be part of a book club when reading any volume.

Author Margiad Evans was born Peggy Eileen Whistler in London in 1909. She visited Benhall Farm, the home of her aunt and uncle in 1918, and promptly fell in love with the Welsh Marches. In 1920, her family moved nearer to that



Art by Dan Proud.

area and her understanding of Border life developed, including her use of the pseudonym by which she is known today.

The book for Feb. 1 is *Testimonies* by Patrick O'Brian (note spelling of author's name). An English scholar moves to a small cottage in a North Wales valley. It's across the road from Gelli, the farm of Emyr and Bronwen Vaughan and their bratty son Gerallt. Nain and Taid [Grandmother and Grandfather] also live there. They endured many tough years on the farm and now want everything good for Emyr.

The unfolding of actions and emotions between the reserved, inexperienced academic and the earthy farm people is not unpredictable, but is without the cruelty seen in our December title.

PLEASE NOTE: All are welcome, anytime, to meetings of the Well-Read Dragons. The group meets at 11:30 a.m. on the first Saturday of alternate months, with members ordering lunch first and then proceeding to the meeting room for conversation and discussion.

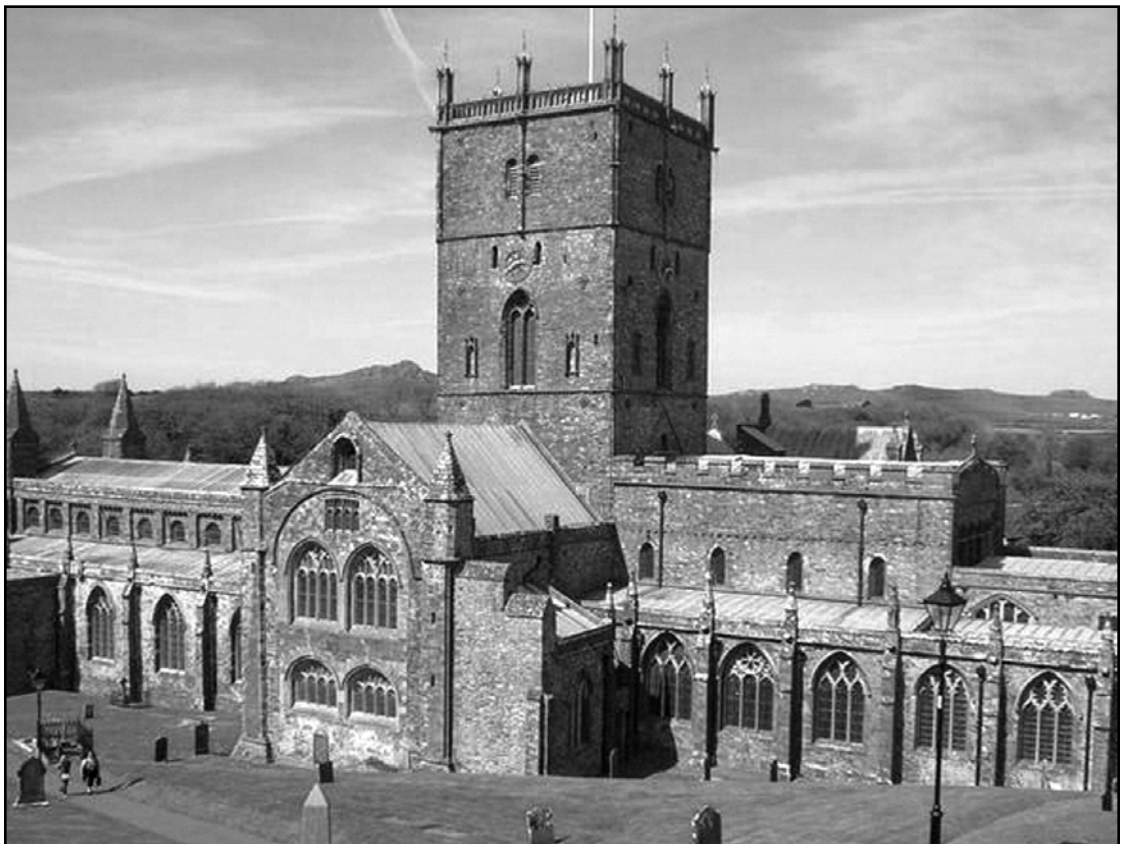
The February 1 meeting will be held in a new spot—Black Bear Crossings at Como Pavilion in St. Paul.

**See directions on p. 1 and back page.
We will meet in the Larry Kitto Room.**

If you are interested in coming, you're welcome even if you haven't been able to read the book.

St. David's Cathedral is located in St. David's in Pembrokeshire on the most westernly point of Wales. It is built low to protect it from marauding invaders, including the Vikings.

The present Cathedral is a Cathedral of the Church in Wales. It was a cathedral of the Catholic Church until the mid-16th century.



IN MEMORIAM: Ralph Crews

Ralph Wilson Crews, Lt. Col. USAF, Retired, of Golden Valley, died December 28, 2013, at the age of 95. He was born on May 28, 1918, to Walter and Mabel Crews in Saxe, Virginia. He attended the two-room Saxe School, Drakes Branch High School and graduated from Virginia Polytechnic Institute, now known as Virginia Tech, in 1942 with a degree in civil engineering.

He was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Air Corps and immediately left for Europe on the Queen Mary and served in WWII in England, France and Germany. When he returned in 1946, he was assigned to Lowry Field in Denver, Colo., where he met his wife, Betty Joanne Anderson.

He had assignments in Texas, New Mexico, Illinois, Ohio, California, and Wyoming. He attended Ballistic Missile School at Ft. Bliss and received a master's degree in Research Management from the University of Chicago in 1953.

Continued next column

Dragon News

News of Society members & friends



SUNSHINE REPORT: Betty Kinsey, Society Sunshine chairwoman, reports sending a sympathy card to Betty Crews on the death of her husband, Ralph. The Society reports sending a get well card to Betty after a fall.

Please let Betty know when you know of a member who is ill or has suffered a loss, or is rejoicing over a birth, marriage or something else.

You can reach her at (612) 871-7587.

Scholarships available

The St. David's Foundation was formed to award scholarships to deserving members or children of members who wish to participate in a learning opportunity to further their knowledge of the Welsh language, culture, history or genealogy.

Deadline for applications: St. David's Day, March 1, 2014.

For more information or to request an application, please contact Foundation President Don Anderson, 1918 Johnson St. NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418, (612) 789-8923, andymae2@juno.com.

After serving 22 years in the Air Force, he retired as Lieutenant Colonel and his last assignment was on the construction of 150 Minuteman Missile sites. These missiles were a major deterrent to war with the Soviets. When a dignitary once questioned whether we would ever get our money's worth out of the massive nuclear weapons, he could only reply, "You better hope not."

He worked 14 years for the Federal Aviation Agency. He was a long time member of Spirit of Hope United Methodist Church, the Golden Valley Historical Society, St. David's Society, American Legion and enjoyed reading, maps, and collecting stamps.

He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Betty Joanne, of Golden Valley; and his five children: Richard Crews of Encinitas, Calif.; Mandy Heard (Don), of Eau Claire, Wis.; Betsy Carnahan (James) of Edina, Minn.; Stephen Crews, of Jacksonville, Fla.; and Kenneth Crews (Elizabeth) of Los Angeles, Calif. He is also survived by nine grandchildren.

Memorials can be made to Spirit of Hope United Methodist Church in Golden Valley, Minn., or to the Golden Valley Historical Society.

Interment was December 31, 2013, at Glen Haven Memorial Gardens, with a memorial service the same day at Spirit of Hope United Methodist Church.

In case you're wondering...

- **Why do we celebrate St. David's Day?**

David is the patron saint of Wales. He died March 1, 589.

- **How long have the Minneapolis Welsh celebrated St. David's Day?**

This will be the 104th celebration, though our Society is 103 years old.

- **Where will we celebrate St. David's Day?**

At the Ramada Plaza Hotel, 1330 Industrial Blvd., NE Minneapolis. *South of I-35W on west side of Industrial Blvd.*

- **When will we celebrate St. David's Day?**

Saturday, March 1, St. David's Day itself.
Registration begins at 11:30 a.m. Ballroom seating at 12:00.
Two menu options. YOU MUST INDICATE PREFERENCE ON ENCLOSED YELLOW REGISTRATION FORM AND RETURN TO PAM ROSE BY FEBRUARY 21.

- **What follows the meal?**

A chance to hear from Elfryn Thomas, Brillion, Wis. about celebrating St. David's Day in Wales and about his decision to move to Wisconsin. And a chance to hear (and likely sing) some Welsh music.

- **Can I attend if I've never come before?**

Of course, and feel free to bring a friend, a cousin, a grandchild, or your uncle!

Prefer to receive the newsletter online?

Notify Kay Gavin at kaywgavin@hotmail.com.

**She will notify you when the next issue is available on the Society's web page.
Help the Society save printing & mailing costs.**

OFFICERS & REPRESENTATIVES

President Mary Mergenthal, 651.644.1650, '15
mary.mergenthal@gmail.com

Vice-President Bill Kimes, 763.862.3130, '15
jbkimes@msn.com

Secretary Pam Rose, 952.854.4743, '15
pamresearch@hotmail.com

Treasurer Ron Adams, 952.237.0506, '15
cymraeg@comcast.net

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Ilene Alexander, 651.645.4475, '15
ilene.dawn@gmail.com

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janicegwb@yahoo.com

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judithewarner@aol.com

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Archivist — Ilene Alexander, 612.237.6121

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Past-President — Pam Rose

Membership Chairperson — Kay Gavin, 651.484.1778

Newsletter Editor — Mary Mergenthal

Officers of St. David's Foundation —

Don Anderson (pres.), 612.789.8923;

Mae Anderson, Betty Kinsey

Next Deadline: February 24

MAIL COPY TO: Mary Mergenthal
2393 Bourne Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55108-1618

OR E-MAIL TO: mary.mergenthal@gmail.com

**Please consider a tax-deductible
contribution to the
St. David's Society
or
the St. David's Foundation.**

**Gifts can remember
or honor a Welsh friend or relative.**

**You are also encouraged to remember the
St. David's Society or Foundation in your will.**

**For information, please contact
Don Anderson, (612) 789-8923, or
Ron Adams, (952) 237-0506.**

Please...when attending St. David's Society
events, eschew cologne, aftershave, etc., to be
respectful of members with fragrance allergies
and to allow their attendance/enjoyment.

**PLEASE HELP US MAKE ALL SOCIETY
EVENTS FRAGRANCE-FREE.**

Diolch yn fawr.

**Please check your mailing label.
Memberships were due July 1, 2013.**

St. David's Society of Minnesota MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____

If family membership, include all names to be listed.

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ - _____

Phone _____ E-mail address _____

Membership category: Single Annual (\$15) _____; Couple/Family Annual (\$22) _____

Supporting Annual (\$50) _____; Life (\$175) _____

Check enclosed for \$ _____ (Make check payable to St. David's Society of Minnesota, note "membership")

Mail to: Kay Gavin
2737 Aglen St.
Roseville, MN 55113-2046
or contact Kay at: kaywgavin@hotmail.com

Membership year is July 1-June 30.
You may pay for multiple years in advance.
Diolch yn fawr.

St. David's Society of Minnesota
2737 Aglen St.
Roseville, MN 55113-2046

Visit us on the web:
www.stdavidsofmn.org

Return Service Requested

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Calendar



IONAWR
JANUARY

Calendar design by Dan Proud.

COMING EVENTS

Sunday, January 12, 2–4 p.m. — “Reading and Listening,”
Black Bear Crossings at Como Pavilion in St. Paul. Contact
ilene.dawn@gmail.com if you have a poem, book selection,
newspaper clipping or family letter to read.

Saturday, February 1, 11 a.m.–2 p.m. — Well-Read Dragons,
Black Bear Crossings at Como Pavilion in St. Paul.

NOTE NEW LOCATION!

Saturday, March 1, 11:30 a.m. — **St. David's Day**
Ramada Plaza Hotel, 1330 Industrial Blvd. (via I-35W), Mpls., 55413

Thursday, March 20, 7 p.m. — “Welsh and Celtic?”
Tecwyn Vaughan Jones from Blaenau Ffestiniog.

Location tba. Suggestions welcome.

Call Mary Morris Mergenthal, (651) 644-1650.

Sunday, May 4, 2–4 p.m. — Spring Gymanfa Ganu,
Westminster Presbyterian Chapel, downtown Minneapolis.

**If you need a large-print version of the newsletter,
please call Mary Mergenthal, (651) 644-1650.**