

St. David's Society News

SEPTEMBER 2017 Volume 37, Issue 4

2017 Minnesota Welsh Hymn Festival

Sunday, September 24, 1:30 p.m.

The annual Minnesota Welsh Hymn Festival will be held on Sunday, Sept. 24, 1:30 p.m., at the

First Presbyterian Church,
220 E. Hickory, Mankato, 56001.

Visiting conductor for the singing (in Welsh and in English) will be a member and former president of our St. David's Society, **Danny Proud**, Madison, Wisconsin.

Danny is a descendant of a member of a Welsh Male Voice choir who, when he visited Chicago with the choir, decided to stay. Now, generations later, Danny, who grew up in the Chicago area, continues the Welsh singing tradition.

He was a member of the North American Welsh Choir and traveled with that group to scores of North American sites, as well as on its final tour to New Zealand.

Danny is a member of the Welsh North American Ass'n. Board, the group that sponsors North American Festivals of Wales (NAFOW). He has directed cymanfaoedd in several locations.

The performing choir will again be the **St. Peter Choral Society**, led by Sara Hayden McKay.

The event is free. An offering to defray costs will be received.

Te Bach (lit. "small tea") will be served in the church dining room after the hymn sing.

Remember to bring your Welsh hymnal, if you have one. Official hymnals will be available for purchase at the event. Sheets of the day's hymns will be free but in limited quantity, so plan to arrive early if you'll need one.

This event is sponsored by the Minnesota Welsh Association.



Recital by Jeremy Huw Williams, baritone; Paula Fan, piano, this fall

Minnesotans will be honored to hear Welsh baritone Jeremy Huw Williams sing here this fall. His recital will include songs by Welsh, French and American composers, including David Evan Thomas's song cycle "Heard in a Violent Ward," based on writings by John Clare. He will be accompanied by Paula Fan.

DATE: Monday, October 30, 2017, 6 p.m.

COST: Free admission

WHERE: University of Minnesota School of Music, West Bank Campus. Ultan Recital Hall, located in Ferguson Hall
2106 4th St. S.,
Minneapolis, 55455.

WHERE TO PARK: Pay parking is available in the nearby 21st Ave. Ramp. This ramp has 13 disability spaces. The elevator is located at the northeast corner (21st Ave. & 4th St.) This is also the disability accessible entrance. Map for the parking ramp is shown on the next page.

WHO BRINGS THIS RECITAL?

The recital is sponsored by the University of Minnesota School of Music and the St. David's Society of Minnesota Foundation. Williams and Fan will be working with voice students at the University on Tuesday.

**Turn to next page for more on the performers.
and map to parking garage.**

Meet the October 30 performers



Paula Fan

Pianist Paula Fan has performed as soloist and chamber musician on five continents. She joined members of Beijing's Central Philharmonic Orchestra for the first concert of Western chamber music since the Cultural Revolution, and was the first-ever accompanist-coach invited by the Chinese Ministry of Culture.

Dr. Fan has recorded 17 albums and has broadcast for the BBC, NPR and Radio Television China. She has coached and accompanied singers from the world's great opera houses, and is a specialist in wind chamber music.

She is a committed Earthwatch volunteer and a founding member of Solar Storytellers, a solar-powered piano trio sponsored by the Arizona Research Institute for Solar Energy.

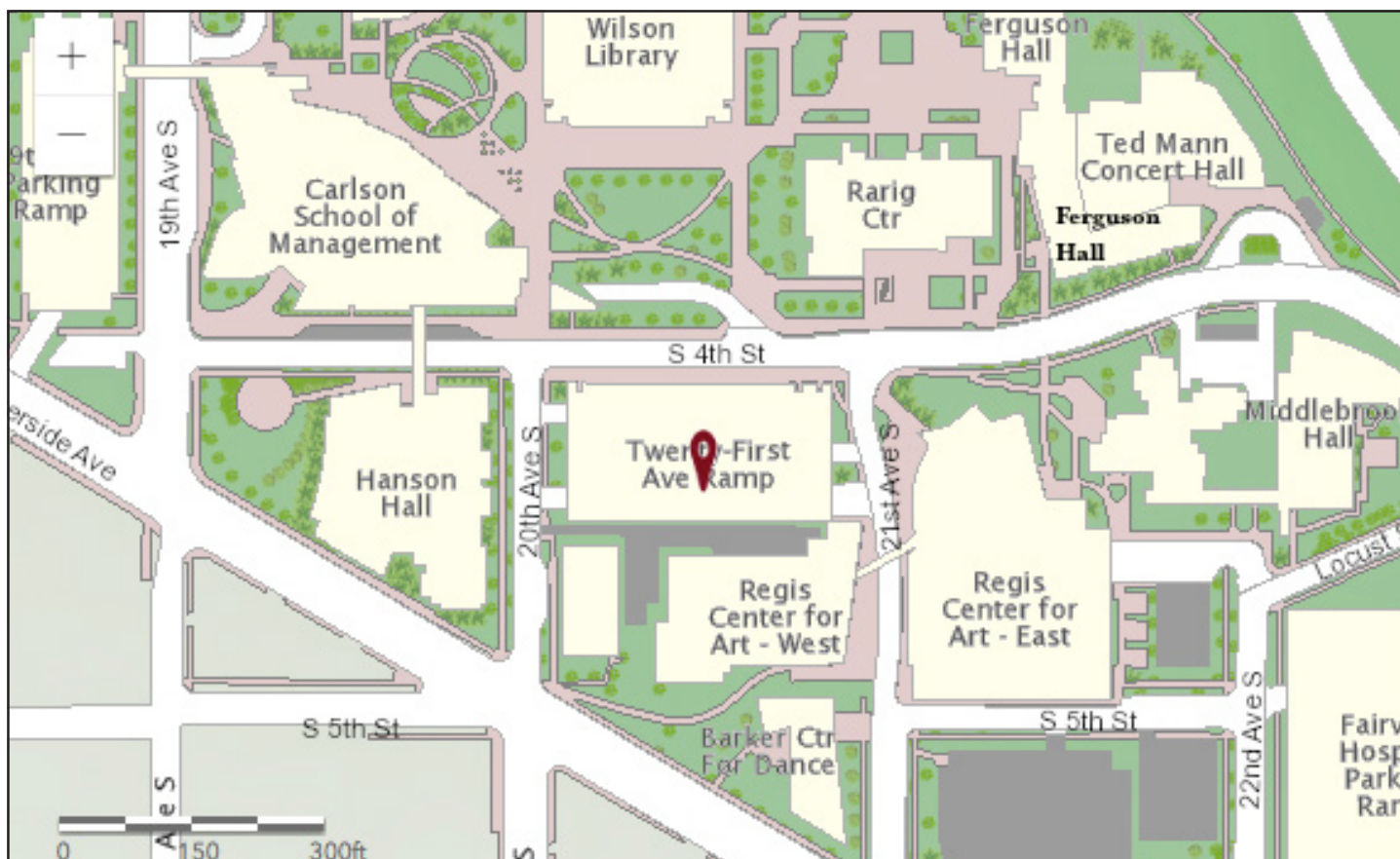
Dr. Fan is pianist with the Tucson Symphony Orchestra and the first Regents' Professor from the College of Fine Arts at the Fred Fox School of Music at the University of Arizona.

Jeremy Huw Williams

Welsh baritone Jeremy Huw Williams has appeared in 60 operatic roles as a principal singer with Welsh National Opera. He has given performances at major venues in North and South America, Australia, Hong Kong and most European countries. He is renowned as an exponent of contemporary music, having given premieres of works by Hoddinott, Mathias, John Tavener, Michael Berkeley and Huw Watkins.

Williams frequently records for BBC Radio 3 and his many commercial recordings include eight solo discs of songs. He received the inaugural Sir Geraint Evans Award from the Welsh Music Guild, given annually to a person or persons who have made a significant contribution to Welsh music.

Williams studied at St. John's College, Cambridge; at the National Opera Studio; and with April Cantelo. In 2011, he was awarded the degree Honorary Doctor of Music from the University of Aberdeen.



New work by David Evan Thomas has world premiere in St. Paul

Music of “our” composer, David Evan Thomas, played a major role on August 7, 2017, in the opening concert of the week-long fourth annual Source Song Festival at Sundin Hall on the campus of Hamline University. This concert featured new works sung, played and composed by artists from the Twin Cities, or with ties there.

The major work, by Thomas, “To Joy,” had its world premiere that evening. It features 14 segments, each demonstrating the craft and uniqueness for which his work is known.

Texts for the songs varied from John Keats to Alfred, Lord Tennyson; Alexander Pope to Job 38 (KJV); Isaiah 52 to John Donne; and seven more.

The cast for NAFOW in Rochester, N.Y., on Labor Day weekend: Bailey Briggs, Spencerport, N.Y., who played a reporter; Richard Rames, singer from our Society; Holly Windle, Lady Rhondda; Gwen Foulkes, Davenport, Iowa, singer; Jan and Don Barbee, singers; and David Evan Thomas, producer, singer and accompanist.



David Evan Thomas also featured at NAFOW

At the North American Festival of Wales in Rochester, N.Y., over Labor Day weekend, the program David and Holly Windle prepared for our 2016 St. David's luncheon on the sinking of the *Lusitania* was presented.

David was at the keyboard. Minnesota singers besides David were **Holly Windle, Richard Rames, Janice and Don Barbee.**

At the Eisteddfod, David also adjudicated two Eisteddfod competitions: Solo Voice for Adults and Solo Voice for Semi-Professionals. Winner of the latter receives the David G. Morris Award which gives the winner \$3,500 to travel to compete in the 2018 National Eisteddfod of Wales in Cardiff.

Other members involved in leadership at NAFOW 2017 were **Danny Proud, Kay Thomas and Karen Wojahn**, all three members of the WNAA Board. NAFOW is sponsored by the Welsh North American Association.

Karen also accompanied and hosted the Late-Night Hymn Singing in the hotel each evening, as well as adjudicating the Hymn Singing competition at the Eisteddfod.



Local singers to compete at Llangollen in 2018

SONOMENTO is the premier adult choral ensemble at MacPhail Center for Music. This group of 40 SATB singers is planning to concertize in the U.K., and to participate in the International Eisteddfod Music Festival in Llangollen, July 1–12, 2018.

The choir is currently seeking experienced choral singers from the community to join in this endeavor. The group rehearses on Monday nights

from 7–9 p.m. and tour rehearsals will begin next March, 2018.

For more information about the choir and how to join, please contact musical director Craig Fields at cfields49@gmail.com or 763-229-5426.

Sonomento sings with a full, soloistic tone (like the traditional Welsh choirs!) and they would love to have you join them! The cost of the 11-day tour, including airfare, is about \$3,700.



Photo by Emily Wojahn.

St. David's Society members and friends attending NAFOW (North American Festival of Wales) in Rochester, N.Y., on Labor Day weekend included:
Front: Karen Wojahn, Windom; Jim Rustad, St. Paul; Kay Thomas, St. Paul; Kay Gavin, Roseville; and Jan Barbee, Crystal.
Back: Ellis J. Jones, St. Peter; David Evan Thomas, Minneapolis; Don Barbee, Crystal; Richard Rames, Minneapolis; and Holly Windle, Minneapolis.
Present, but not pictured: Ruth Jones, Minneapolis; AdaMae Lewis, Ames, Iowa; and Danny Proud, Madison, Wis.

Plan now to attend NAFOW August 30–Sept. 2, 2018, Washington, D.C.
next year or the following year: Aug. 29–Sept. 1, 2019, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Members enjoy June picnic Officers elected at Annual Meeting

The 2017 Annual Meeting of the St. David's Society of Minnesota was held June 24, 2017, after a tasty and enjoyable picnic at Rosebrook Park in Roseville.

The picnic was held before the end of the Fiscal Year, so a preliminary Treasurer's Report was presented by Treasurer Sally Evans. In a nutshell, as of June 23, 2017, the Society had a positive year-end operating account balance of \$546.16, thanks to donations of money, time and in-kind services by Society members. June income was lower than expenses by \$258.44, and that number was expected to increase when additional invoices were received.

Ron Adams reported that investment accounts continue to do well. As of June 30, 2017, our General Reserve and Membership Reserve accounts had a combined value of \$18,136.43 (General Reserve value = \$5,704.03, and Membership Reserve = \$12,432.40). The Society now has 61 Lifetime Members, so \$1,525 will be deposited into the operating account in July.

Resignation of President Judith Evans Warner was accepted with regret.

Officers for the coming year are:

President: Janice Barbee, Crystal;

Vice-President: Ilene Alexander, St. Paul;

Treasurer: Sally Evans, Bloomington;

Secretary: *Open—volunteers welcome.*

Talk to any Board member.

Board Members-at-Large:

Ron Adams, St. Louis Park, ('18);

David & Marla Gladen, St. Paul, ('18);

Barbara Powell Sherman & Robert Sherman,
St. Paul, ('18)

Investments: Ron Adams

Sunshine Report

Sunshine chairperson, Betty Kinsey, reports sending cards to Grandpa **Ellis Jones** when his second set of twin grandchildren was born; a get well card to **Mae Anderson**; and a sympathy card to **Danny Proud** on the death of his father. Cards were also sent to **Ilene Alexander** and **Betty Kinsey** after surgery.

Irish Fair report

Thanks to all who helped with the Society table at the Irish Fair in early August. Some helped well beforehand, some set up, some staffed the tables during the fair, and some had that always popular job of taking the display down and removing it.

Chairperson David Conradi-Jones was out-of-the-country that weekend, but had a marvelous group ready to step in: Doris Strong (who did all sorts of before-the-event work); Jan and Don Barbee; Larry Moore; Ron Adams; Wendy Worner; David and Marla Gladen; and Laura Littleford.

Sally Evans, who makes the Welsh cake arrangements, would like to thank Pete Browne of the Infamous Welsh Cookie Company. Thanks to his generous donation of a case of tea cakes to sell at our table, we have an additional \$75 in income for programming and expenses!

Sally still has several packages of tea cakes (frozen to preserve freshness) for sale for \$5/ pkg.: (5 traditional, 2 apricot almond and 1 cherry hazelnut). Those interested can contact her by e-mail (stpaulsally@gmail.com), or cell phone (678.485.7306).



Photo in Ceredigion by Mary Mergenthal.

Free Welsh Wool

This isn't just any old wool...it's Welsh wool! Yours for the taking. Make a shawl or table runner or skirt. Winter's comin' on!

Betty Kinsey and Mary Mergenthal each have a skirt-length of Welsh wool. At 29" x 58," either can be used for

a straight skirt with a back pleat, or for an A-Line skirt.

Betty has brown wool, with the typical Welsh tweed design. (612) 871-7587 or mnbkinsey@hotmail.com

Mary has blue and green tweed design spun and woven at the Trefriw Woollen Mills in Gwynedd, North Wales. Hers came packaged with lining and zipper. (651) 644-1650 or mary.mergenthal@gmail.com

An historic spot in Llanidloes, Wales



Photo by Ilene Alexander

Well-Read Dragons choose books for the coming year

At its August meeting, the group chose books for the next program year.

October 7 – *A Childhood in a Welsh Mining Valley* by Vivian Jones was a natural choice. Jones served Plymouth Congregational Church here for 15 years. He notes in the Foreward that he wrote the text for his American friends to explain his earlier life. But, though he got it written, he never found time to contact a publisher.

Now Y Lolfa in Talybont, Ceredigion, Wales, a longtime publisher of Welsh titles, has brought the book to life. Vivian recalls childhood impressions of many aspects of village life in a mining valley. The reader learns of the varied role of the colliery, the Chapel, the barbershop, the school, the cinema and more.

The group meets on the first Saturday of alternate months at 11:30 a.m. in the party room at Davanni's in Shoreview (on Lexington Ave. just south of Cub). Please plan to purchase lunch there.

You're welcome whether or not you've been able to read the book.

For info, please contact David Conradi-Jones, 612-247-1107, dae29cj@gmail.com

December 2 — Short Stories. Each member will read and tell about his or her choice of short story by Mary-Ann Constantine from one of her interconnected titles: *The Breathing* and/or *All The Souls*, both from Seren Books.

February 3 — The group will read *The Long Dry* by it current favorite author, Cynan Jones, published by Coffeehouse Press [here in Minneapolis](#).

April 7 — *Bred of Heaven: One man's quest to reclaim his Welsh roots* by Jasper Rees, Profile Books.

June 2 — *The Vegetarian Tigers of Paradise* by Crystal Jeans, published by Honno.

August 4 — Choice of poetry by any Welsh poet.



Park in Newtown, Wales

Photo by Ilene Alexander

St. David's Society of Minnesota
3425 Wisconsin Ave. N.
Crystal, MN 55427

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Calendar of Coming Events

Sun., Sept. 24, 1:30 p.m. Minnesota Welsh Hymn Festival — See p. 1

Sat., Oct. 7, 11:30 a.m. Well-Read Dragons — See previous page for year's list.

Sun., Oct. 8, 2:00 p.m. Sgwrs Cymraeg — Welsh Language Class,
8844 Stevens Ave. S., Bloomington, 55420. llawryf@yahoo.com

Mon., Oct. 30, 6:00 p.m. Recital: Jeremy Huw Williams and Paula Fan p. 1 & 2.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Reports on picnic, Annual Meeting, Minnesotans at NAFOW, and Irish Fair.

News of SONOMENTO...local singers going to Llangollen International
Eisteddfod next year (You're invited!)

Locations and dates for 2018 and 2019 North American Festivals of Wales!