



NADOLIG LLAWEN A BLWYDDYN NEWYDD DDA!



Photo Credit: Sally Evans

It has been a long while since you heard from us in newsletter form ... That does not mean that nothing has been happening. Quite the contrary! This edition of the St. David's Society Newsletter will not only give you a quick look at a few things happening in the next two months, it will catch you up on all the 2023 news, beginning with the Annual Picnic, held in July. From there, we'll head to Lincoln, Nebraska and Arvonia, Kansas with Society members who attended NAFOW. Our final stop is the Annual Fall Hymn Festival in Mankato, Minnesota.

Because COVID came to call, our beloved Holiday Tea and a Winter Pub Gathering and Poetry Reading by new member Chris Martin were cancelled, so we'll wrap things up with a heartfelt invitation from Janice Barbee, who has led us so cheerfully and ably through the pandemic. So, grab a cuppa, your favorite winter treat and a sweater or blanket to keep you warm. Off we go!

VIRTUAL GET-TOGETHERS

Sgwrs Cymraeg, Welsh Conversation Groups
When: **Second Sundays, Beginners Welsh on Zoom (4 PM - 6 PM)**

Fourth Sundays, Beginners, Intermediate & Advanced Conversation on Zoom (2 - 4 PM)

**Details do Change on occasion, so please contact Laurel Bradshaw, teacher of Welsh & conversation facilitator (llawryf@yahoo.com) to be added to her notification and email list.

St. David's Society of MN Foundation Annual Mtg

When: **Saturday, January 27, 2024, 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM** on Zoom [See Notice, Page 2]

Well-Read Dragons Book Group

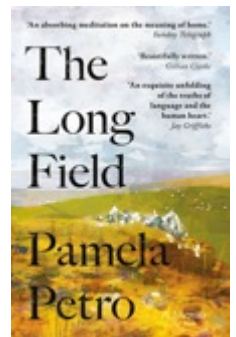
When: **Saturday, February 3, 2024, 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM** on Zoom

Zoom Link: <http://z.umn.edu/StDavidsGatherings>

Well-Read Dragons Book Group

Come! Join the Society's book group on Zoom as it discusses *The Long Field - Wales and the Presence of Absence, A Memoir*, by Pamela Petro on **February 3 and on April 6**, from **11:30am - 1:00pm**. The Zoom link can be found to your left.

This is not the first book written by Pamela Petro the Well-Read Dragons have enjoyed, and it comes very highly recommended: Not only shortlisted for the 2022 Wales Book of the Year Award, our president, Janice Barbee, who is reading it now says that it is "amazing" and "talks about so many of the things I love about Wales. ... I highly recommend it!" You can find more information about this book on the St. David's Society website, <https://stdavidsofminn.org>. And if you have questions, you can contact Ilene Dawn Alexander at ilene.dawn@gmail.com.



ST. DAVID'S SOCIETY OF MINNESOTA MEMBER NANCY POWELL'S MEMORIAL SERVICE

It is with great sadness that The St. David's Society shares news that Society member Nancy L. Powell died on December 26, 2023. What we know is that Nancy fell and broke her hip at home, and then then fell again in her transitional care facility. Nancy's brother and sister were here in Minnesota and arrangements were made for an informal gathering of remembrance, which took place on **Saturday, January 20, from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM** at Nancy's home in Minnetonka, Minnesota. If you were not able to attend the gathering and wish to send a card to the family, email Sally Evans and she will request an address. Sally is also looking for remembrances and pictures of Nancy to include with her obituary in our next newsletter.



Nancy Powell singing with the North American Welsh Choir in 2002, during its first trip to Wales.

SAINT DAVID'S SOCIETY OF MINNESOTA FOUNDATION ANNUAL MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT & UPDATE

The St. David's Society Foundation is thrilled to announce that it has a new Board of Directors! Kay Thomas graciously agreed to join Ronald Adams and Sally Evans in leading the Foundation. At the first meeting of the Foundation Board, Kay was elected President of the Board, Sally was elected Treasurer and Ron agreed to continue to serve as Treasurer and Investments Manager. They then got right to work, reviewing the Foundation Bylaws and identifying priorities for the 2023 Fiscal Year. All meetings held by this new Board were Executive Board meetings. Please join us at our **first Annual Meeting** of this **Foundation Board of Directors** on **Tuesday, January 30, 2024 at 7 PM**. We'll fill you in on last year's activities, vote on our first Grant Proposal Application, and share ideas for 2024 priorities. The meeting will be held via Zoom and a link will be sent out to the membership closer to January 30.

If you have any questions, or if you wish to receive the Annual Meeting Zoom link, please contact Kay Thomas at kthomas@umn.edu. To make a donation to the Foundation, please send your check, along with any information you would like to communicate regarding the donation, to The St. David's Society Foundation, c/o Ron Adams, Treasurer, 3600 Wooddale Ave. S., #213, St. Louis Park, MN 55416. To inquire about criteria for receiving a scholarship or grant, or to receive a copy of the Foundation Scholarship or Grant Application, please contact Sally Evans, Secretary, at stpaulsally@gmail.com.

**SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR ANNUAL
SAINT DAVID'S DAY LUNCHEON AND PROGRAM
SUNDAY, MARCH 3, 2024, 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM**

The St. David's Society Board is busy planning a lunch and program you will not want to miss! The Rt. Hon. Liz Saville Roberts will be joining us by Zoom as part of our celebration. Liz will talk about what is going on in Wales today and her work as a Plaid Cymru MP (Minister of Parliament). Plaid Cymru is the Welsh nationalist political party, committed to Welsh independence from the UK. Stay tuned for more details as the Society's Board finalizes the arrangements!


Here's a story from the internet: In 2021 in the House of Commons, Saville Roberts wished the Irish people a happy St. Patrick's Day in both Irish and Welsh. The Leader of the House later referenced the incident and called Welsh "a foreign language". In response, Saville Roberts tweeted: "... Welsh is not a 'foreign language'. It had been spoken in Britain for hundreds of years before English even existed."

CYMANFA AND CAWL CENNIN!

Two wonderful opportunities brought to us by Mary Morris Mergenthal

Come to sing Welsh hymns at an event organized by St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church (Mary's church). Longtime Society member Karen Wojahn of Windom, MN, will direct and the church's organist, Joshua Lindgren, will accompany us. Those who attend and sing will sit in voice part sections. Please bring your national Welsh hymnal if you have one; photocopies of the hymns will be available if you do not. There will be no charge for admission or *te bach*; contributions will be accepted. Immediately after the singing, authentic Welsh tea shipped in from Wales and Welsh cakes will be served. Welsh leek soup (*cawl cennin*), both with meat and vegetarian, will be served about 5 p.m. Cost: \$5/bowl, credit cards accepted. While soup reservations are not required, if you hope to stay for that, please notify Mary to help with planning (mary.mergenthal@gmail.com, 612-670-8510 calls/texts). Parking is available across the street from the church.

Spring Cymanfa Ganu (Welsh Hymn Sing)



Sunday, March 10, 2:00 p.m.

St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church
2323 Como Ave., St. Paul

Karen Wojahn, directing
Joshua Lindgren, organ

Welsh cakes with tea from Wales follow. (Free)
Welsh leek soup about 5 p.m. (\$5/bowl).
Parking lot across side street.

Questions & Soup Reservations: Mary Morris Mergenthal,
mary.mergenthal@gmail.com or 612-670-8510 (calls/texts)

TURN THE PAGE FOR 2023 IN REVIEW ...

PRESIDENT'S CORNER PART 1: ANNUAL MEETING AND PICNIC - JULY 30, 2023

About 20 Society members gathered at the Wabun Picnic Area in Minnehaha Regional Park and shared an array of delicious food offerings from those who joined us. Several people came from a distance away; it was great to see everyone in person! We each talked about our connection to Wales and what we had been up to in the 2022 – 2023 year, and we tried our hand at a pub quiz that Board member Hywel Roberts prepared. You'll have a chance at it yourself (*see page 18*) -- Not easy!!

We also elected the following roster to lead our Board of Directors.

1. **Janice Barbee**, President: Term expires in 2026 (Third and final term.)
2. **Pam Rose**, Treasurer: Term expires in 2026
3. **Ryan Ander-Evans**, At-Large Member: Term expires in 2024
4. **Ron Adams**, At-Large Member and Investments Manager: Term expires in 2025
5. **Hywel Roberts**, At-Large Member: Term expires in 2025
6. **Shannon King**, At-Large Member: Term expires in 2025
7. **David Richards**, At-Large Member: Term expires 2025

We discussed that the Board is looking for new people to join them in the next few years, especially as Ryan Evans will be stepping down when his term expires. Also, as this is Janice's third and final term, and we have not had a Vice President or Secretary for several years, we are looking for people willing to lead this wonderful Society into its next chapter!

Pam Rose reported on Society finances for the last calendar year.

St. David's Society of MN Account Balances (Quarterly)				
as of date	Checking	Investment 1 (General Reserve)	Investment 2 (Membership Reserve)	Total
9/30/2022	\$2,102.62	\$8,749.21	\$15,693.70	\$26,545.53
12/31/2022	\$2,346.46	\$9,451.37	\$17,454.75	\$29,252.58
3/31/2023	\$2,320.67	\$9,715.32	\$18,564.39	\$30,600.38
6/30/2023	\$2,055.93	\$10,098.21	\$20,210.82	\$32,364.96

St. David's Society of MN	Fiscal Year 7/1/2022-6/30/2023	YTD	FY Adjust *
Income-Current			
	Donations-Gifts	\$ 200.00	
	Donations-Memorials	\$ 25.00	
	Membership-Dues Annual	\$ 540.00	\$ (25.00)
	Program contributions	\$ 357.00	
Income-Current Total		\$ 1,122.00	
Income-Deferred			
	Life memberships - new	\$ 300.00	
Income-Deferred Total		\$ 300.00	
Income Total		\$ 1,422.00	\$ 1,397.00
Expenses-Committees/Routine			
	Website expenses	\$ 31.16	
	Communications-newsletter	\$ 163.75	\$ (93.07)

Expenses-Committees/Routine Total		\$ 194.91	
Expenses-Events			
	Annual Meeting	\$ 285.61	\$ (134.72)
	Holiday Tea	\$ 50.00	
	Programs	\$ 648.17	\$ (207.89)
Expenses-Events Total		\$ 983.78	
	Transfer to investment (Member)	\$ -	
	Transfer to investment (General)	\$ -	
Expenses Total		\$ 1,178.69	\$ 743.01
Net (Income-Expenses)		\$ 243.31	\$ 653.99

* FY Adjust - removes entries from prior FY

Thank you, Janice and Pam, for your executive leadership. Thank you, Ron Adams for watching and handling investment account responsibilities. Thank you to the entire Society Board of Directors for all you have handled and planned on the Society's behalf throughout the year!

Thank you also to everyone who made the picnic fun and memorable by your participation!

NORTH AMERICAN FESTIVAL OF WALES 2024: LINCOLN, NEBRASKA



Photo Credit: Laurie Williams

So Happy Together!

Minnesota was well represented at this year's NAFOW, hosted by Lincoln, Nebraska.

Below is our **first NAFOW Member Spotlight** – Wonderful photos from Society member Laurie Williams.



"We're here!"



Kay Gavin's and her award-winning art!

Arriving a day late for the group tour to Wymore, the organizers of NAFOW arranged a special tour of the Great Plains Welsh Heritage Project and the historic Bethel Cemetery in Wymore, Nebraska. A HUGE Thank You for a Great Day!



Croeso!



Our guides did so much more than show us artifacts – they shared the importance of all of the photos and museum pieces preserved. We also enjoyed learning about politicians, movie stars and other famous Americans that had Welsh roots.



The stories of Welsh cemetery residents were brought to life by their spirits. Some of stories were sad and tragic and others were inspiring.



Our final stop on the tour was Pleasant View School – the Little Welsh Schoolhouse on the Prairie where we were served a delicious pastie (meat pie for) lunch.



NAFOW Class of 2023. An impressive group!!



From the seminars and performances to the opening ceremonies and the concerts, there was so much to keep us busy and interested. Being with people from the United States, Canada and Wales, and sharing our love of Welsh music, poetry, and history is a wonderful way to spend a long weekend. If you have not been to NAFOW, you will have an opportunity to join in the fun and adventure in Pittsburgh in 2024!

[Editor's Note: All Photos appearing on pages 4 – 9, 11 & 19 were taken by, and are the property of Laurie Williams.]

Back in Lincoln



Dance classes, hymn training, evening sing-a-longs with many conductors, multi-generational poem recitations and family performances are just a few ways that kept everyone busy throughout the weekend!



Gifted singers from around the United States and Wales entertained us throughout the NAFOW weekend!

Our **second NAFOW Member Spotlight** comes to us from Society member Danny Proud, who shares four of his favorite NAFOW 2023 memories. Except for the 3rd photo of Triano, taken by Laurie Williams, all photos in this section were graciously shared by Danny.

1. Girls group Triano at the Wednesday Evening Kickoff and Saturday Grand Concert

Triano – triplets Charlotte, Jessica and Emily – joined by 8-year-old Nel Edward-Philips (granddaughter of Dafydd Edwards, who performed in Minneapolis in the 1990s) wowed the crowd at the Welsh Night program held outdoors on the Cornhuskers Hotel patio and 13th Street. They played ukuleles and sang folk songs before the start of the Grand Concert at Saint Paul United Methodist Church and were featured guests in the Grand Concert as well. They sang so effortlessly and confidently – what a delightful group!



2. Many Moccasins Dance Troupe at Wednesday Night Kickoff

Many Moccasins is a professional dance ensemble based in Winnebago, Nebraska. They have performed all over the world, educating audiences with a range of Native American dances. They provided a lively program that revealed aspects of their spirituality and customs.



3. Bus Tour to Arvonja and Emporia, Kansas

A couple dozen NAFOW participants stayed an extra two days to take advantage of an opportunity to visit and learn more about Arvonja and Emporia, Kansas, thanks to tour coordinator Susan Evans Atchison.

Arvonja is a small Welsh settlement that is being restored from its community center and schoolhouse to its chapel. After our Arvonja stop for lunch at the Township Hall and guided tours of the renovated buildings, we rode on to Emporia, the county seat of Lyon County, located halfway between Kansas City and Wichita, in eastern Kansas. Founded in 1857, downtown Emporia is well preserved; elegant century-old buildings are reminiscent of a bustling, prosperous commercial center. We enjoyed a buffet dinner in the town's historical museum downtown and took in two floors of antiques and memorabilia.

We were introduced to the historical figure William Allen White, a Pulitzer Prize-winning newspaper editor and commentator, the "Sage of Emporia," who had a national following but chose to stay in Emporia, working on the *Emporia Gazette*. Our last stop before returning to Lincoln was a tour of the Richard Howe House, built by Welshman Richard Howe, a master stone mason who completed construction on the house after the Civil War ended. The house is well-preserved and furnished as it was lived in for three generations.

I came away from this visit to Arvonja and Emporia with a greater appreciation of the contribution of Welsh immigrants to the area, who numbered in the thousands. They gathered in Welsh-speaking chapels, held *eisteddfodau* and *cymanfoedd*, and were leaders in their communities.



The Richard Howe House in Emporia, Kansas, built after the Civil War ended and still intact.

4. Eisteddfod Visual Arts Competition

The NAFOW Eisteddfod consists of various competitions – singing, recitation, poetry and prose, and the visual arts.

This year's Visual Arts Competition theme was "Roots/Gwreiddiau." This is the only Eisteddfod category in which NAFOW attendees vote to determine the winners. In the photo below, I am minding the shop in the Marketplace where the entries are on display.



Our **third NAFOW Member Spotlight** comes from Society Member Donald Barbee who provides a review of two new theater productions, both collaborations between Owen Thomas and Gareth Bale – the team that brought us ... well, you'll find out below! Read on.

“Grav” & “Carwyn” A Review by Donald Barbee

Anyone who has watched “Welcome to Wrexham,” a Hulu series about billionaire movie stars who buy and rehabilitate a fallen football (soccer) franchise in Wales, have an inkling about what the sport and its stars mean to the locals and community. The meaning, in short, is blood, sweat, tears, cheers and beers.

Anybody who was lucky enough to watch the performances at this year’s NAFOW, saw two fine Welsh actors embody the soul of rugby, and the nation, through two of its greatest stars. Those attending also had the chance to meet and chat with Owen Thomas, the author of these tour-de-force one-actor one-acts. He is also the fine poet playwright who brought the moving play “West” to Rochester, NY’s NAFOW and which was presented to the St. David’s Society on Zoom and in person in St. Paul.

“Grav” tells the story of one of Wales’ rugby icons, Ray Gravell, a fierce competitor who went on to become a much-loved media personality. Gareth John Bale brought him to life for NAFOW’s intimate performance, after many national tours of the production.

In “Carwyn,” a new production, Simon Nehan gave voice to another hero of the sport, Carwyn James, the unique man and coach whose astonishing mix of culture and passion propelled the British Lions to an astounding upset of the New Zealand Blacks—a victory still carved in the woodwork of the Welsh pubs drunk dry in celebration.

Except for the Olympics, the United States doesn’t channel that level of patriotic fervor beyond the local college or state lines. These plays, through their poetry and passion of performance, gave all attending the chills and heart wrenching drama of the personal price of glory for sport and country. The standing ovations, applause, cheers and tears were the sound of an audience treated to a visit with two of the lion hearts of Wales.



Photo Credit: The Tenby Observer (<https://www.tenby-today.co.uk/news/entertainment/one-man-show-carwyn-at-the-torch-theatre-a-heartbreaking-and-important-story-644186>)

Photo Credit: Foyles, Booksellers, UK

Our **fourth NAFOW Member Spotlight** comes from Board Member David Richards who discovered a family connection with Powell, South Dakota when attending a Lincoln NAFOW seminar! In his own words:

Powell, SD was a Welsh community established south of Ipswich, SD on what became South Dakota Highway 45. Residents of Powell included the Richards and Williams families, from which came my parents, as well as all the Hughes, Evans, Griffiths, Roberts and other Welsh families. Over time, natural events (described below) and the routing of the railroad through Ipswich led to the decline of the town. All that remains today is an historical marker on the highway, as well as the small cemetery located just east of Hwy 45.



Photograph By Ruth VanSteenwyk, October 27, 2018

The historical marker at Powell, where the first group of 300 Welsh immigrants settled on the prairie, reads as follows:

WELSH COLONY AT POWELL

On March 22, 1883, the 300 members of a Welsh Colony arrived by train at Aberdeen, South Dakota. Thirty families led by William E. Powell arrived here on the 29th and built the "Big Shanty" or "*Shanty Mawr*" on the Hugh Griffith claim on section 9, 1½ miles north where they all lived until moving on their own homesteads and their families arrived from North and South Wales.

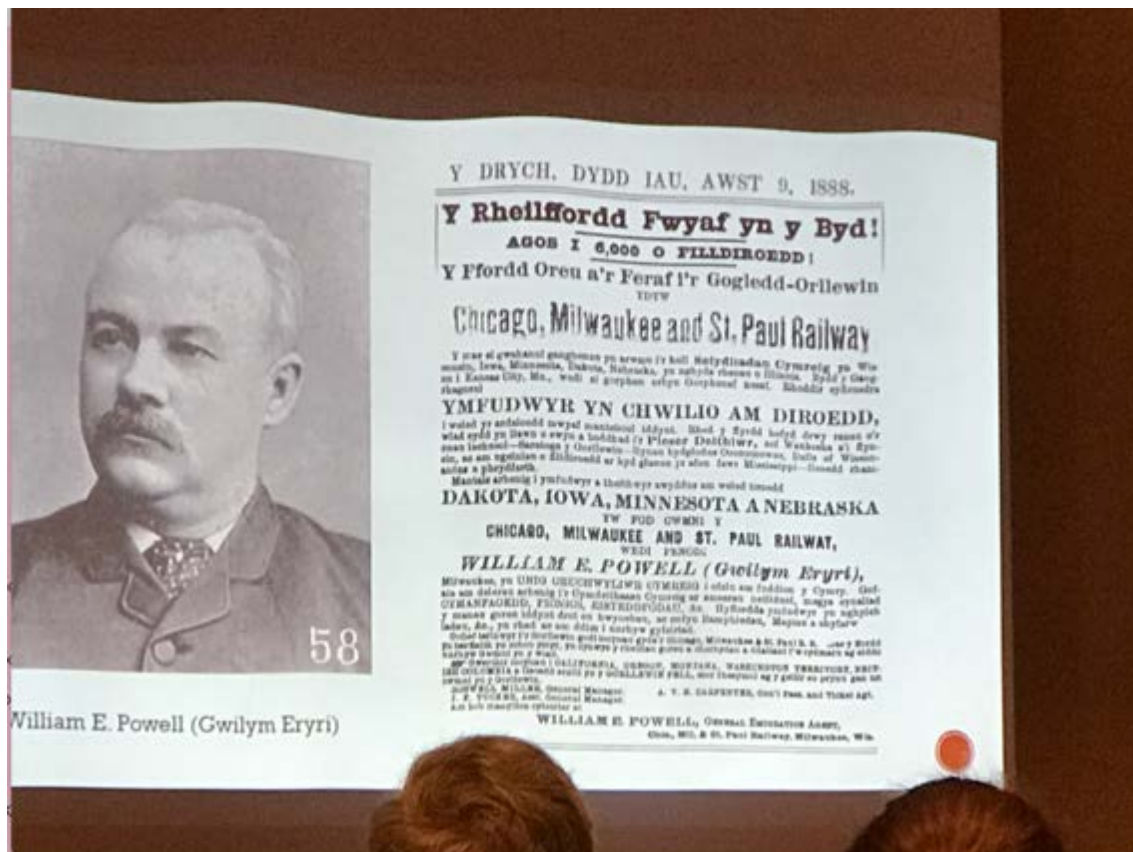
The "Big Shanty" was moved here, and the post office with Maurice Jones as postmaster set up July 7, 1883. A general store, J. T. Llewellyn, proprietor; a blacksmith shop, Morgan's "a Go"; Central School, John A. Williams, teacher and a Calvinistic Methodist Church, Rev. John W. Morgan, pastor; a Congregational church, Rev. J. T. Lewis, pastor, were organized and built. All but the general store and the CM church were disbanded because of death, discouragement and hardship and only the hardiest farmers remained.

The Methodist Church was destroyed, the store badly damaged and four farmsteads wiped out by a tornado June 2, 1911.

Determination of the new generation to continue worship in faith resulted in the immediate rebuilding of the church which was dedicated on its present site on Thanksgiving Day, 1911.

On June 8, 1958, to commemorate the faith and loyalty of those hardy Welsh pioneers, the 75th anniversary of the establishment of their trustful faith was celebrated by the congregation of the remaining church, now Presbyterian.

Erected 1966 by Descendants of the Pioneers and State Highway Commission



Inscription Transcription Credit for Previous Page: The Historical Marker Database
Photo Credit: David Richards, no ownership claimed.

The community was named after William E. Powell who, among other roles, was a railroad official in the area. He was mentioned (and shown, above) during a seminar at NAFOW in Lincoln.

Our **fifth NAFOW Member Spotlight** comes from Don and Janice Barbee who share their Top Five favorite experiences in Lincoln:

First, let us say we didn't attend every offering and event. How could we? There were so many! But we especially enjoyed experiences unique to the Lincoln, Nebraska NAFOW:

1. Dick Cavett on Zoom: We got new insights into our lifelong favorite talk show host, Dick Cavett, a Nebraskan whose grandfather emigrated from Carmarthen. He is still as witty and charming as ever at 86! He told fascinating stories of his career start, famous people he has met, and strange doings during filming his show (including a guest who died on the couch!)

2. "The History of the Welsh Language in Ten Words", based on a popular radio series, illustrated how Welsh is both ancient and a borrower from other languages, in a fun and fascinating presentation.

3. Welsh Democracy in 2023 – An Insider’s View: Peredur Owen-Griffiths, a member of the Welsh Parliament (Senedd), explained the process of Welsh government – how elections work, the mechanics of passing bills, and the relationship—both cooperative and contentious, between the Senedd and Parliament. He personally believes that if Scotland votes for independence, Wales will follow; an outcome that may not result in the short term but seems likely in the future.

4. Cinema from Wales: Of the four movies offered, we were charmed by “*Men Who Sing*,” an intimate documentary focused on the life of an aging member of a local men’s chorus, and the efforts of the chorus to thrive in changing times. We also saw another movie, “*Efacwis*,” a documentary which richly detailed the lives of children evacuated from London to Wales during WWII and interviewed them as adults.

5. The Grand Concert was a smash this year, presented by the popular composer Robat Arwyn, feted by several star classical Welsh singers, and a terrific trio of talented triplets.

Our **sixth and final NAFOW Member Spotlight** is a photo of Society member Catharine Morris, flanked by friends Laurel and Dawn Bradshaw, having just learned that she took a First Place Prize in the English Language Recitation Eisteddfod, delivering Dylan Thomas’ “When all my five and country senses see”. *LLongyfarchiadau*/Congratulations, Catharine!



Photo Credits:

Left Photo: Beth Landmesser, no ownership claimed.

Right Photo: Sally Evans

ST. DAVID'S SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING & PICNIC "PUB QUIZ" 2023

1. When was the Welsh flag recognized as a national flag: 1284, 1533, or 1959?
2. Name three counties in Wales today.
3. In which city is the National Eisteddfod held this year?
4. How long is the Welsh Coastal Path: 675, 870, or 960 miles?
5. How many castles are there in Wales? 378, 641, or 927?
6. What is the biggest lake in Wales?
7. What is the name of the smallest city in the UK that is in Wales?
8. How many letters are there in Llanfair PG on Anglesey?
9. Who has been the Wales First Minister since 2021?
10. Where was the Welsh capital before Cardiff?
11. What is lava bread made of?
12. Which Welsh author wrote "Charlie & the Chocolate Factory"?
13. What is the sea between Wales and Ireland called?
14. Which Welsh actor won an Oscar for the role of Hannibal Lecter in *Silence of the Lambs*?
15. Who was the only UK prime minister to have spoken Welsh as his first language?
16. What kind of food is the traditional Welsh dish *cawl*?
17. According to legend which vegetable were Welsh soldiers asked to wear on their helmets?
18. Where is the library of Wales situated?
19. How many National Parks in Wales? Please name them.
20. What is the largest castle in Wales?

MINNESOTA WELSH ASSOCIATION'S FALL GYMANFA GANU 2023

WHAT IS THE MWA'S ANNUAL FALL SING FEST?

By MWA President Laurie Williams

Each year in September members of the MWA, friends and guests come together for an afternoon of song, merriment, and camaraderie with old and new friends, celebrating the life, heritage, and culture of Wales. This year was no different, so instead of telling you about the day, I would like to tell you how true the statement above is by sharing a special story of one of our past sing fests.

In 2017 there was a couple, **Bryn and Menna Jones** from Wales, traveling across the US in search of living relatives, or information about an ancestor that migrated here in the early 1800's. They stopped in Mankato, which they had heard was an area with great Welsh connections. Having nothing planned for Sunday, they read about the MWA Fall Sing Fest in the local paper and decided to attend. During the Sing Fest, we gave Menna her very own national Welsh hymnal. After the Sing Fest Menna and Bryn came down to the *Te Bach* where we started talking and that led to a group of us meeting for dinner. What a fun and wonderful afternoon and evening!

Fast forward to 2023. I was invited by the North America Welsh Choir to go with them on their singing tour of Wales. The first night the choir arrived to sing at St. Mary's Church in Conwy, and who was sitting in front of the church? Bryn and Menna! They had, purely by chance, seen a flyer about the North American Choir being in town to sing and decided to attend the concert to see if they could connect with any of the people they had met in Mankato.

After the concert, 4 or 5 of us who had met in Mankato did connect - there were hugs and hellos but we only had a short time to get re-acquainted as the bus had to get us back to our hotel. Although sad to have to say goodbye so soon, it was so wonderful reconnect.

As we entered our hotel, we noticed a couple waving at us from the lounge. There sat Bryn and Menna, and two of their close friends, waiting for us to arrive. They could not say goodbye so soon either. We talked and sang for most of the night. And it was like no time had passed.

Even if Wikipedia tells us that a **Gymanfa Ganu** is "a Welsh festival of hymns sung with four-part harmony by a congregation, usually under the direction of a "choral director", it is much more. It is a place where friends become family. So, whether you are from Wales, from down the street, or an hour or so away to connect once a year and celebrate our heritage, *that* is what attending the Fall Sing Fest is all about.

I hope we will see you next year and reconnect. If possible, bring a friend or family member that may not have been to the Sing Fest, or has not attended one in a while. We would love to sing, enjoy a few treats and (re)connect with you all!



Photo Credits:

Left: Menna and Bryn Jones at the MWA dinner in September 2017 (Sally Evans)

Middle: Bryn and Menna Jones at St. Mary's Church, Conwy 2023 (Laurie Williams)

Right: Bryn Jones and Friends at Hotel (Laurie Williams)

ST. DAVID'S SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING & PICNIC "PUB QUIZ" 2023

ANSWERS

1. When was the Welsh flag recognized as a national flag?
1959
2. Name three counties in Wales today.
There are eight: **Clwyd, Dyfed, Gwent, Gwynedd, Mid Glamorgan, South Glamorgan Mid Glamorgan and Powys**
3. In which city is the National Eisteddfod held this year?
Pwllheli in Gwynedd
4. How long is the Welsh Coastal Path 675, 870, or 960 miles?
870 miles
5. How many castles in Wales 378, 600, or 927?
600 approximately
6. What is the biggest lake in Wales?
Bala Lake
7. What is the name of the smallest city in the UK that is in Wales?
St David's
8. How many letters are there in Llanfair PG?
There are **58 letters and 51 characters**; the **answer is 58**
9. Who has been the Wales First Minister since 2021?
Mark Drakeford
10. Where was the Welsh capital before Cardiff?
Swansea. By the 19th century it was the economic center of Wales and was recognized as the nation's capital.
11. What is lava bread made out of?
Seaweed
12. Which Welsh author wrote "Charlie & the Chocolate Factory"
Roald Dahl
13. What is the sea between Wales and Ireland called.
Irish Sea
14. Which Welsh actor won an Oscar for the role of Hannibal Lecter in *Silence of the Lamb*?
Anthony Hopkins
15. Who was the only UK prime minister to have spoken Welsh as his first language?
Lloyd George
16. What kind of food is the traditional Welsh dish *cawl*?
Stew/soup
17. According to legend which vegetable were Welsh soldiers asked to wear on their helmets?
Leeks!
18. Where is the library of Wales situated?
Aberystwyth
19. How many National Parks in Wales? please name them.
Three, **Snowdonia, Brecon beacons, Pembrokeshire Coastal National Park**
20. What is the largest castle in Wales?
Caerphili

PRESIDENT'S CORNER PART 2: OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS!

THE SAINT DAVID'S SOCIETY OF MINNESOTA WANTS AND NEEDS YOU!

By Janice Barbee

When the Minnesota Welsh formed The Cambro-American Society in 1911 (which was renamed The Saint David's Society in 1920), the founders wrote by-laws that restricted board directors to only two consecutive terms of two years each. The intent, I imagine, was to ensure that no one person was in charge for too long and to spread responsibilities around to many members of the Society. This design also gives many members a chance to share their knowledge and creative ideas when planning the Society's events and opportunities.

We will need some new people to step up and join the board in the coming years. For many years now, we have seen many of the same people serving on the Board of Directors. I have been on the board for ten years and president since 2017, a length of service which obviously violates our bylaws. Pam Rose was president for several years and is now our treasurer, allowing Sally Evans to step down after a five-plus year term. Ron Adams has been treasurer of the Society's Foundation for many, many years and has been the Society's investments manager for well over ten years.

As I shared at the Annual Picnic, I will not be continuing as president after my term ends, and we will need a new Society president beginning July 1, 2026. I don't think it is healthy for the Society to have the same president for many years. I hope someone now on the board or someone who will join the board soon will take over as president. We currently do not have a vice-president, and it would be good to have someone take on that role in the years before my term ends. The board might also create co-presidents to spread around the responsibilities.

Please consider becoming a member of the Board of Directors next year. Ryan Ander-Evans will be stepping down from the board after this year, so we will need a new board member by the next Annual Meeting in July.

The main duties of the Office of President are:

- Schedule and lead meetings of the Board of Directors (about 4 times a year, on Zoom)
- Coordinate planning and logistics for annual events: St. David's Day celebration, Annual Meeting and Picnic, Holiday Tea)
- Coordinate planning for other events and activities: Welsh speakers on Zoom, pub gatherings, Welsh movies, guest speakers and performers, etc.

The planning and logistics for the last two items are shared by board members and Society members not on the board.

A healthy St. David's Society is one where many people participate, bringing their talents and skills, and sharing their love of and interest in Wales and all things Welsh. We need to grow as a Society and bring in new members, especially those who, as one of our board members recently said, have brown hair (or blond, red, or black), not gray or white! We have a lot of very talented and knowledgeable members in our Society, and I encourage you to actively share your talents and interests and invite your friends and family members (especially of younger generations) to join. I, and all the members of the board, want to see this Society continue as a strong and vibrant place to honor and celebrate Welsh culture, history, heritage, and arts in Minnesota.

A REQUEST TO MEMBERS

The St. David's Society of Minnesota newsletter has always been an essential means for Society members to learn about Society news and events, connect with each other and to Wales, and learn about Wales and our Welsh heritage.

We are committed to maintaining this tradition and request your help: If you notice something interesting in the news - about Wales or Welsh activities here in the United States – *or* if you are inspired to write about something you think will interest other Society members, please send the information, news item or article to me (stpaulsally@gmail.com) and we'll include it in an upcoming issue. *Diolch yn fawr iawn!* Thank you, especially to everyone who contributed items for this edition! Your ideas, contributions and support are sincerely appreciated.

Sally Evans, Editor



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