



Society picnic August 16

We'll be looking for you at **OASIS PARK** in Roseville, **Sunday, August 16, 1:00–4:00 p.m.** The air-conditioned building has bathrooms and free parking. We're reserved for noon–5 p.m., so come early to visit and help set up, if you can.

Please bring a dish to share. Coffee, tea, and cold water will be provided. Feel free to bring your own beverage if you choose.

Hear the state of our finances and
vote on the slate of prospective officers:

› **Co-presidents**, Steve Griffith and Larry Moore;

› **Treasurer**, Pam Rose;

› **Board members**, Janice Barbee, David Richards, and Hywel Roberts.

Also, Hywel will give an update on his documentary filmed in Wales (*see p. 6*).



**Oh, what a lovely day it'll be,
The weather warm and sweet,
Packed with friends we cherish,
No better folks could meet.**

VITAL: Online address of the park is shown as 1700 W. Co. Rd. C2, but there is NO vehicle access from Co. Rd. C2. **The building is located near the junction of Maple Lane and Aldine St.**

HOW TO GET TO OASIS PARK

From the south (in St. Paul):

- Take Snelling north.
- Cross Larpenteur and Hwy. 36.
- Turn left on Co. Rd. C.
- Drive to Fairview Ave. Turn right.
- Pass Co. Rd. C2 (small sign), turn right on Maple Lane.

From the southwest (Minneapolis):

- Remember Hwy. 280 is CLOSED!
- Drive I-35W north.
- Exit on Co. Rd. C and drive east (right).
- Drive to Fairview Ave. Turn left.
- Pass Co. Rd. C2 (small sign),
turn right on Maple Lane.

From the north:

- Take Snelling or 35W south.
- • From Snelling, turn right on Co. Rd. C.
- Drive to Fairview Ave. Turn right.
- Pass Co. Rd. C2 (small sign),
turn right on Maple Lane.
- • From I-35W, take Co. Rd. C exit,
when you reach Co. Rd. C, go east (left).
- Drive to Fairview Ave. Turn left.
- Pass Co. Rd. C2 (small sign),
turn right on Maple Lane.

ALL: At the end of Maple Lane, turn right.
Ignore the arrow marker.

SOCIETY OBITUARIES

Robert Minish

Robert “Bob” Arthur Minish, 87, died May 24, 2026, following declining health due to pulmonary fibrosis.

Bob was born on Christmas Day, 1938, the son of William and Agnes Minish. A photo of Bob and his mother was featured in a group of six mother and baby photos for the Christmas Day edition of the Minneapolis newspaper, hoping to feature some happy news in the dark days of that era.

His childhood was interrupted by tragedy when his mother died when he was three years old. His “Aunt Tootie” came to live with Bob and his brother Bill until his father married Beth Vestal. The family grew with the birth of brother Don.

A love of learning marked Bob’s life. He began his pursuit of knowledge in the Robbinsdale school system, graduating from High School in 1956. Graduation from the University of Minnesota followed with a BA in Philosophy in 1960, and a JD in Law in 1963. He was the recipient of the honors of Phi Beta Kappa, Order of the Coif, and Law Review Note Editor.

During those years, he acquired two new roles, as husband in 1961, two years after he met Marveen on a blind date at a fraternity party held at the Biltmore Motel, where Washburn McReavy Edina Chapel stands today. In 1963, the role of father came to enrich Bob’s life with the birth of daughter Roberta. He became a fond grandfather in 1998 with the arrival of Nicole.

The hallmarks of Bob’s life were justice and friendship. His active pursuit of justice began with joining the young law firm of Popham, Haik, Schnobrich, Kauffman, and Doty, where he served two terms as president. When the firm dissolved in 1991, Bob and other colleagues joined the Chicago firm of Hinshaw and Culbertson, forming Hinshaw’s Minneapolis office, where he continued his practice until retirement.

Friendship was the other focus of Bob’s life. and philanthropic organizations provided acquaintances who became lifelong friends: Alpha Tau Omega fraternity at the U of M, Sons of the American Revolution, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, and as a charter member and later president of the Minneapolis City of Lakes Rotary Club.



The late Bob Minish, center, in his memorable vest, with his wife Marveen on left and Holly Windle, right. Photo by Ilene Alexander.

He gladly served many organizations, including, as president, Friends of the Sibley Historic Site, the **St. David’s Society of Minnesota**; and, as a director, Fort Snelling State Park Association, Arthritis Foundation-North Central Chapter, Miracles of Mitch Foundation, and Minnesota Air Guard Museum.

In the St. David’s Society, Bob was also one of the founders of the Well-Read Dragons Book Group in 2004; plus, he named the group.

Friendship surrounded him in all areas of his life. His love for the BWCA took him on many canoe trips with friends and family, paddling bow or stern. His lake experience introduced him to cabin life in the cabin his father-in-law built on Sandpoint Lake, Ontario.

Lake life expanded as the lawyer for Jim Peterson, owner of the *Outdoor News*. When, tongue-in-cheek, he advised Jim that it might be prudent to invite his lawyer to the yearly fishing opener weekend party, which Jim gave for fishing notables and tackle manufacturers, a new world opened up for Bob.

These sportsmen taught Bob the finer points of catching walleye. When, in 2025, Bob donated his collection of antique fishing tackle to the Minnesota Fishing Museum and Hall of Fame, Bob was proud to say he had fished with five of the first ten inductees.

Bob’s love of life encompassed so many things:
2 family; friends; the North Country; literature;

music; Native American artist Carl Gawboy; Danish philosopher/ theologian Søren Kierkegaard; genealogy; biblical wisdom: Amos 5:24, Micah 6:8 (*King James version*); all with his zest of learning and love of a cup of good coffee and conversation with a friend.

His final project has been a memoir of his career and the history of the Popham Haik law firm. The final chapter will be completed by his family and digital Vol. 2 will join digital Vol. 1 at the Hennepin History Museum.

Bob is survived by Marveen, wife of 65 years; daughter Roberta (Jim); granddaughter Nicole; and brothers William and Donald.

His service was held May 30 at Washburn McCreavy Edina Chapel.

Lois Willand

Lois Virginia Willand, 90, died May 29, 2026. She was born July 17, 1935, to Theodore Carlson and Lois (Davis) Carlson in Minneapolis. Losing her mother at a young age to cancer, her father and she returned to the family farm in Minnetonka Mills, where she lived for three years with her father, aunts and uncles. Her father married Leona Carlson in 1940, and they moved to Hopkins, Minn., where Lois spent the remainder of her childhood. She graduated from Hopkins High School in 1953, and St. Olaf College in 1957.

She wore several hats during her adult years. She worked as a medical social worker for the Glen Lake Sanatorium, taught elementary school in Bloomington and St. Paul, authored the "Use-It-Up Cookbook," and worked in administration at the University of Minnesota.

In retirement, she was an active volunteer in her Prospect Park neighborhood and founded the community e-list. She was passionate about family, music, and history. She recently completed her extensive research on the Indigenous hymn "Many and Great, O God."

She was preceded in death by her husband, Jon Willand. She is survived by daughters Tona and Martha Willand, and son-in-law, Adam Entringer.

Her memorial service will be held Sept. 12, 1–4 p.m., at the Prospect Park United Methodist Church in Minneapolis.

250+ Welsh-American years

Visit the NEW online exhibit that showcases several items from the Great Plains Welsh Heritage Project archive and museum to tell the story of the Welsh in America for 250+ years. A fund-raising project is underway to construct a large additional building specifically designed for appropriate exhibition and protection.

Please visit the exhibit at this link:

<https://www.greatplainswelsh.org/america-250>

Should you wish to contribute to that expansion project, contact Great Plains Treasurer Jim McNeal, 602 S. 11th St., Wymore, NE 68466.

chapjim1955@hotmail.com

FREE Welsh books and music

Your editor (Mary Morris Mergenthal) will be bringing FREE Welsh-related books to the picnic on Aug. 16. Also, if any reader is interested, she'll bring Welsh CDs/cassettes (mostly vocal).

Please contact

mary.mergenthal@gmail.com, 612-670-8510, if you'd like to see a list in advance.

The dirtiest clean Welsh sheep joke

A farmer was out on his Welsh hillside tending his flock one day, when he saw a man drinking with a cupped hand from the stream which ran down from one of his fields. Realising the danger, he shouted over to the man, "*Paid a yfed y dwr! Mae'n ych-y-fi!*" ["Don't drink the water. It's disgusting!"]

The man at the stream lifted his head and put a cupped hand to his ear, shrugged his shoulders at the farmer, and carried on drinking.

Realising the man at the stream couldn't hear him, the farmer moved closer, "*Paid a yfed! Dwr ych-y-fi! Defaid yn cachu yn y dwr!*" ["Don't drink. Water's disgusting. Sheep poo in the water.]"

Still the walker couldn't hear the farmer. Finally the farmer walked right up to the man at the stream and once again said again, "*Dwr yn ych-y-fi! Paid a'i yfed!*" ["Water's disgusting. Don't drink it!"]

"I'm dreadfully sorry my good man, I can't understand a word you say, dear boy! Can't you speak English?" said the man at the stream, in a splendid English accent.

"Oh, I see," said the farmer, "I was just saying, if you use both hands you can get more in....."

Phyllis Kinney—Memories of a Notable Woman

By Mary Morris Mergenthal

Society member David Evan Thomas recently informed me that Phyllis Kinney, a vital figure in Welsh music, died June 29, 2026, at age 103.

This is surely not an attempt at a proper obituary for this important and lovely woman, but rather an attempt for me to sort my experiences with her.

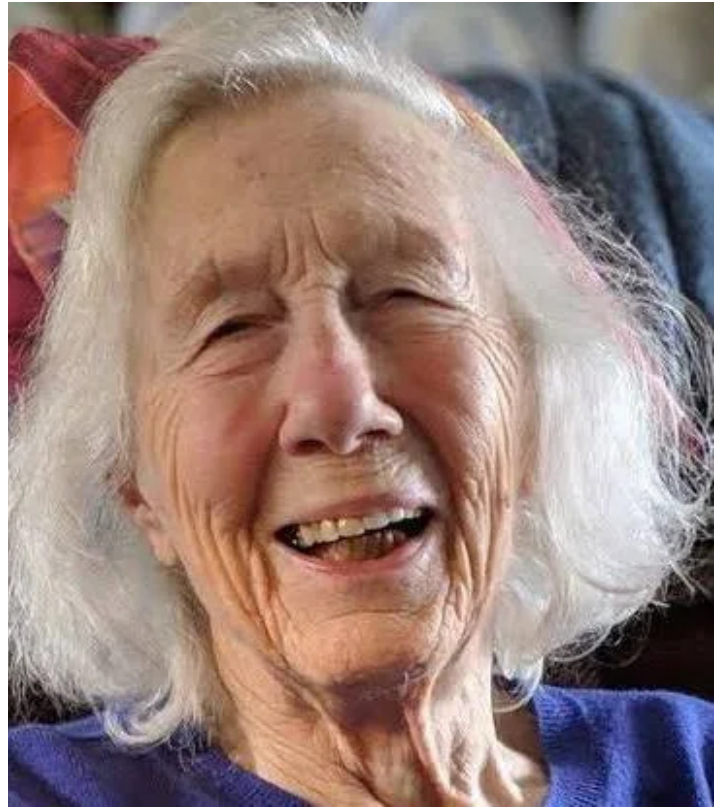
When I owned/edited the North American Welsh newspaper *Y Drych*, I was fortunate to be able to visit her home in Cwmystwyth, Ceredigion, several times. Always a delight! (*Cwmystwyth*=Ystwyth Valley, *Ystwyth*=winding river.)

Phyllis was born in Pontiac, Michigan. She studied at the Juilliard School and was a soprano with the Carl Rosa Opera Company during the 1940s. On a tour of the U.K., she sang in Cardiff and there met Welsh folk singer Meredydd Evans. Clearly that meeting changed her life. They married and Phyllis immersed herself in the culture of Wales and became a leading authority on Welsh folk music.

Merêd [as he was popularly known] was a long-time collector of Welsh folk songs and often recorded for the SAIN label (owned by Dafydd Iwan). He was also a well-known political figure, being heavily involved in the beginning of *Plaid Cymru* [the Party of Wales]. *Plaid Cymru* [*Plide Kuhm-ree*, vote Wales] was founded by Saunders Lewis in 1925. Many decades after that, on one of my visits, other friends and even B&B hosts were impressed that I'd be visiting Merêd, because he had served as a pall bearer for Saunders Lewis!

Cwm Ystwyth was an old lead mining settlement and they lived in a former miner's house, with steps between rooms and narrow stairs, due to being built into the hillside. It was oh, so lovely, and the welcome was always so warm and the tea so hot and delicious. I remember Mered asking me to come into his library (oh, the books...ceiling to floor wall-to-wall except for windows overlooking the valley). He wanted to express his personal sympathy because he knew that Jennings had died during that past year.

I remember, too, Merêd was fascinated by the 1992 Norman Maclean book, *Young Men and Fire*. It tells of the 1949 Mann Gulch fire in Western Montana. He was so possessed with seeing the area, he convinced Phyllis that they should fly to



Phyllis Kinney

Source—BBC

Montana! On one of my visits, he told me about this and pointed out that their Northwest flight would land at MSP. "Keep me posted," I said, "I'll watch for layovers and meet you." (Remember, this was before cell phones and Internet...not that he would have used either, anyway.)

So, they came! I met them at the airport, having researched that the only place they might get tea there was McDonalds! I told them this, but also told them Jennings had tea ready if they were willing to leave the airport. Merêd declared: "I'd like to put my knees under a table!"

So off we headed for our house. We drove Cretin Ave. through Highland and MacGroveland. In the backseat, Phyllis was amazed. "Why would they name a street 'cretin' [creh-tin, in British slang, a derogatory term used to insult someone who is acting incredibly stupid, foolish, or obnoxious]. I told her that the street was named for Bishop Cretin, the first bishop of the Diocese of St. Paul, appointed in 1851. (Well, I didn't remember the date, then, to be honest).

But we weren't home yet! We continued to
4 University Ave., then to Raymond Ave., and crossed

Energy Park Drive nearing St. Anthony Park. Again, from the back seat: “Look at that, now they’ve got “Mary Morris Energy Park Drive!” (I think of it most every time I drive through that intersection, always with a smile.)

Once we got to Bourne Avenue, they were so happy to relax, eat the goodies Jennings had, of course, prepared and drink tea. All three enjoyed one another immensely and were sorry to end the pleasant, though brief, visit.

In 1987, my daughter Rebekah and I had tea outside with their daughter Eluned and her husband John Gurr, who lived in the cottage next door. Merêd, who was not just a musician but a noted scholar, engaged Rebekah in casual conversation about something or other. When she moved away for more treats and tea, he leaned over to me and said, “She’s a bright one, that’s for sure!” Needless to say, I was touched.

In 2002, all four of us visited Wales (Jennings, a toddler, and his parents and me). Merêd and Phyllis came to see us in Aberystwyth at the home of our mutual friends, Gerald and Enid Morgan. Merêd gave little Jennings an old shilling as a keepsake. He still has it.

Phyllis was a delightful, talented woman—one whom musicians and Welsh people on both sides of the Atlantic will remember fondly for a long, long time. I was so blessed to have known her.

Mary Morris Mergenthal, July 9, 2026

Notes:

- 1) When I sent these memories to David, he encouraged me to include them in this newsletter.*
- 2) After Meredydd’s death in 2015, David provided a program about him at our St. David’s banquet.*
- 3) For readers who don’t know me, my late husband was named Jennings, as is my grandson, now 27.*



Cwm Ystwyth, Ceredigion, Wales

Photo by Anne Knowles.

The Legendary King Arthur and his Welsh Connections

By Hywel Roberts

In May, cinematographer Blake Darst, and I returned to Wales for a week to continue filming for our upcoming documentary “The Legendary King Arthur and his Welsh Connections.” The film depicts how the Arthurian legend has been passed down for 1,500 years, since its birth in Welsh poetry in the sixth century.

We spent three days filming in Aberystwyth, the home of the first University College in Wales, and the National Library of Wales. Jane Cartwright a professor of Welsh at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, has published widely on saints, cults and hagiography [the biographies of saints]. She shared with us early saints’ perspective on Arthur, from early documents written by scribes and monks.

Eirug Salisbury, a poet and a lecturer at the Department of Welsh and Celtic Studies at Aberystwyth University, has presented extensively at literary festivals around the world. He shared early tales of Arthur in Welsh legends.

Jamie Medhurst is a lecturer in film and television studies, and Director of Learning and Teaching in the Department of Theater, Film and Television Studies at Aberystwyth University. Jamie shared with us how King Arthur has been portrayed in the film industry over the years.

Dr. Martin Crampin is a Research Fellow at the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies in Aberystwyth, with a particular expertise in the study of ecclesiastical art. He shared how Arthur was portrayed in various stained-glass windows around Wales, the most

interesting window being at Llandaff Cathedral in Cardiff.

At Llandaff Cathedral we filmed Aneurin Karadog, an acclaimed Welsh poet, linguist, and broadcaster, known for his multilingual hip-hop and mastery of *Cynghanedd* [strict traditional Welsh meter]. Aneurin shared with us how Arthur is connected with ancient Welsh poetry. He has won numerous prestigious literary awards, including the National Eisteddfod chair in Abergavenny in the summer of 2016. On our last day in Cardiff we met with Telesgop, an award-winning multimedia production company with over 30 years experience creating compelling content for TV, radio, digital media and educational projects.

Now, most of our filming has been completed, and we are moving along with the production. The film will be in Welsh and English with sub-titles. The first showing will be at NAFOW in Cleveland, Ohio, in August of 2027. Our goal is to present the documentary in North America, Wales and to the world-wide Welsh diaspora.

This is a not-for-profit project, aimed at sharing this important historical documentation of the connection between *Brenin* [King] Arthur and Wales.

Please write hyweltroberts@gmail.com if you would be interested in helping to fund this project. You will be credited for your support at the end of the film.

Editor’s note: The St. David’s Society and the Foundation have each voted to contribute \$3,000 to the documentary. We are hopeful that the film will spread more awareness of Wales and attract more people to the Society.



Between Rhayader and Llangurig, the highest village in Wales. The River Wye winds quietly nearby.
Photo by Ilene Alexander.

Membership Application/Membership Renewal Form St. David's Society of Minnesota

www.stdavidsofmn.org

www.facebook.com/stdavidsofmn

PLEASE PRINT YOUR INFORMATION

Name (for Partner/Family* memberships, please include all names): _____

Address (including city, state & zip): _____

Phone Number(s) for Directory: _____

E-mail Address(es): _____

_____ I do not use or seldom use email. Please send newsletters by post.

Individual and Partner/Family Membership Categories and Rates

- ___ Individual Annual (July 1- June 30) \$25/year
- ___ Partner/Family * Annual (July 1- June 30) \$40/year
- ___ Individual Lifetime (*one-time payment*) \$225
- ___ Partner/Family* Lifetime (*one-time payment*) \$300

* Partner/Family Rate covers 2 adults and may include children under 18 years of age, under the same roof .

Organization Membership Categories and Rates

- ___ Affiliated Organization (July 1- June 30) \$50/year
- ___ Supporting Organization (July 1- June 30) \$75/year
- ___ Sustaining Organization (July 1 - June 30) \$100/year

Please make checks payable to: ST. DAVID'S SOCIETY OF MN

Send membership status questions to: pamresearch@hotmail.com

Mail this form and check to: Pam Rose, Treasurer
8514-13th Ave S.
Bloomington, MN 55425

IN PREPARATION FOR A NEW MEMBER DIRECTORY, OUR TREASURER, PAM ROSE,
IS CONTACTING PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT UP-TO-DATE WITH THEIR DUES.

PLEASE REACH OUT TO PAM IF YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION HAS CHANGED.

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

FIRST CLASS MAIL



Castell Powis Garden

Photo by Ilene Alexander