



Message from the WNAA President



*WNAA President
David Matthews*

Dear Members and Friends of the Welsh North American Association

The last eighteen months or so have been a rollercoaster of a ride and not a pleasant one. Many people have, firsthand, experienced the impact of Covid on their health, while we all experienced restrictions that, in many ways, have reshaped our lives. NAFOW Philadelphia 2020 was cancelled and more recently NAFOW Ottawa 2021 was cancelled because of the restrictions that Covid put on our free movement and gatherings.

The WNAA boards have met on a regular basis through the medium of Zoom and through each meeting has ridden that same rollercoaster of disappointment and hope. BUT THE NEWS IS GOOD! With the concerted effort and hard work of our board, a NAFOW 2021 will take place this September in Utica, New York. Read all about it in this issue of HWYL.

This will be an extraordinary gathering as we all have missed, so much, the camaraderie, the harmony, the celebration of the Welshness that exists within each of us. It will be an opportunity to renew and strengthen our friendships, join in wonderful hymn singing, learn from each other and guest speakers, and ‘partake’ in those informal as well as the more formal gems of gatherings that will take place throughout the festival.

It would be, as ever, unfair to pinpoint individuals who have worked hard, so hard, over the last eighteen months, so I will say simply, Megan and team. But I will take this opportunity to point out our thanks to Myfanwy Davies and team for the work they did in Ottawa in the hopes of putting on NAFOW Ottawa. I would also like to thank the St. David’s Society of Utica and the Remsen-Steuben Historical Society and Ted Engle for embracing our move to hold NAFOW in Utica.

While we forge ahead with hope in our hearts, let us for a moment remember the people who have left us; our friends who lent service, knowledge and strength to our organization - David Llewelyn Williams, Rachel Christopher, Sue Richards and Berwyn Jones. They will be sorely missed.

Looking forward to seeing you in September! My wife, Mona and I plan to drive the 4000 km or so from Calgary to Utica to celebrate this festive ‘reunion’ with you!

Diolch I chi gyd! Thanks to you all!
Hwyl! David

NAFOW Shuttle from Syracuse (SYR) Airport Offered



If you plan to fly to NAFOW 2021, the nearest airport is in Syracuse, New York. Car rentals and other public transportation may be difficult to arrange, so be sure to sign up for the shuttle option on the registration form:

Pick-up at SYR—Wednesday, September 1: 3:30, 6:30 and 10:30pm

Pick-up at SYR—Thursday, September 2: 1:30, 3:30

Return from Utica to SYR—Monday, September 6: 7:30 am and 11:30am

2021 North American Festival of Wales

We are pleased to announce that the 2021 North American Festival of Wales will be held in person in Utica, New York.

Please read additional articles within this issue of HWYL to learn more about the change in venue and our plans.

Festival dates are September 2 through 6, 2021.

Registration information will be online July 1, 2021.

Register through: www.nafow.org

2021 North American Festival of Wales Host Hotel

The festival hotel is the Delta Hotel by Marriott Utica New York, 200 Genesee Street, Utica, New York 13502.

Festival rates:

Rooms: \$99+ tax per night CAD

Free self-parking in attached garage

Room rates are available now, subject to availability. Make your hotel reservation through www.nafow.org.



Delta Hotels by Marriott Utica New York

FYI from IHQ



WNAA Executive Secretary Megan Williams

I am ecstatic to be back planning an in-person North American Festival of Wales. The decision to relocate from Ottawa to Utica was not an easy one and we look forward to welcoming those who feel comfortable in returning to an in-person festival September 2-5. We are working hard on details and trying to eliminate as many variables as possible. With that in mind, registration will be open no later than July 1.

Thank you so much to the St. David’s Society of Utica and the Remsen-Steuben Historical Society for welcoming us to Oneida County, New York. We look forward to returning to an area so rich in Welsh history. As you can see in the newsletter, quite a bit of our seminar program will feature Welsh history of the local area.

We have a great hotel, refurbished in 2018, which is conveniently located next to Westminster Presbyterian Church and two short blocks from the Stanley Theatre. We have a great room rate of just \$99 and booking can be made by visiting www.nafow.org.

All outside venues that we will use as part of the festival are only a five-minute walk from the hotel and offer onsite free parking. Please note that as we are unsure of festival attendance, we have a smaller than usual room block contracted at our headquarters. If you plan to attend, it is extremely important to reserve your room early. This will help us in our planning and guarantee you are at the center of the weekend’s fun!

If you fly to the festival, the nearest airport is Syracuse (SYR). Transportation options are limited and therefore we will be running a charter service two to three times a day on Wednesday and Thursday arrivals and on Monday for those departing. A sign-up for the charter will be included on the registration form. For those driving, there is free self-parking on site.

We will also be offering several ‘virtual’ events through Labor Day weekend; details will be made available on our website and to our e-list over the summer.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Utica as we take a small step forward in continuing to preserve and promote Welsh heritage in North America.

Hwyl am y tro, Megan Williams, Executive Secretary

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Website: festivalofwales.org

WNAA MISSION

The Welsh North American Association strives to preserve, develop and promote our Welsh cultural heritage and traditions, including the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu, and to do all things necessary and appropriate to accomplish these goals.

Sponsorships and Donations

We cannot express enough gratitude to those who helped support us financially during this unprecedented year. We anticipate the impact of COVID to be noticeable to the organization for the 2021 fiscal year as well.

Donations, pledges and sponsorships for 2021 will be crucial in making the 2021 festival a success and in helping to sustain our Welsh heritage in North America. Please contact Megan Williams for more information:

wnaahq@gmail.com or send donations to:
WNAA, PO Box 1054, Trumansburg, NY 14886

Annual General Meeting

Due to the cancellation of the 2020 festival, the next AGM will be held Saturday, September 4, 2021 in Utica NY in conjunction with the 2021 North American Festival of Wales.

HWYL is published in the fall, winter and spring by the Welsh North American Association.

Editor: Jan Jones Batty

Direct comments or inquiries to:
editor@theWNAA.org

2021 Thursday Evening Opening Concert



Caitlin McKee

We look forward to the talents of Caitlin McKee who presents "Songs in the Key of my Life" at the Opening Concert which will be held at the Delta Hotel.

Born and bred in Cardiff, Caitlin has had a passion for performing since a young age. She earned her BA Performing Arts degree at Trinity St. Davids Carmarthen and spend a semester studying Musical Theatre at Wilkes University in Pennsylvania.

Caitlin then studied for an MA in Musical Theatre at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama where she was awarded The Worshipful Livery Company of Wales - Excellence in Musical Theatre Award. In 2019 Caitlin had the privilege of traveling to Hong Kong with Theatr NaNóg to perform as Karen in its award winning musical Eye of the Storm at the Spark Science and Arts Festival. Later that year she embarked on a UK tour with the same musical.

Caitlin's credits also include Hen 1 (Warren -BBC1), Angry Wife/Whore (My Lands Shore - All Star Productions), Bethan Bimbo (Cysgun Brysur - Arad Goch), Principle Soloist for A Tribute to Dame Shirley Bassey and a featured role in BBC's Casualty. Caitlin's college credits at college include Jacks Mother/Cinderella's Mother (Into The Woods), Various Women (I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change), and Vocalist (Broadway To the Bay).

NAWF Banquet on Friday Evening



Join us for the North America Wales Foundation annual banquet.

Established in 1980, the North America Wales Foundation was the initiative of several individuals, inspired by the late Jack K. Evans, a native of Wales. The Foundation has a commitment to preserve, share and promote the common culture and traditions of Wales and North America. The NAWF has distributed hundreds of thousands of dollars in awards over the years and runs an annual scholarship and grant program. Spend an evening learning about the work of the Foundation, the individuals and programs it supports and end the night with a musical performance, connecting us to our Welsh heritage.

The Stanley Theatre, Utica, New York

The Grand Concert venue for this year's North American Festival of Wales is the Stanley Theatre, two short blocks from the host hotel.

The Stanley was built in 1928 at a cost of 1.3M and took 13 months to construct. European crafts persons in the area saw to it that the theatre was beautifully appointed with decorative plaster and iron work.



Architectural features include a grand stairway which is a replica of the stairway on the Titanic, and a 35 foot wide chandelier that hangs over the central part of the auditorium.



Left: A view of the Stanley Theatre stage
Right: The chandelier that hangs over the theatre auditorium

2021 Festival Book Advertisements

Promote your Welsh organization or business by placing an advertisement in the program booklet. What a great way to get the word out! Full, half and quarter page ad sizes are available, and a limited number can also be printed in full color.

On the festivalofwales.org website, click on ABOUT THE FESTIVAL and choose ADVERTISE AT NAFOW. Fill out your ad information online, or mail in the advertising form.

The deadline for placing a festival book advertisement is August 1, 2021.



2021 Grand Concert at North American Festival of Wales in Utica, New York

The Grand Concert for the 2021 North American Festival of Wales in Utica, New York, "Related by Song: Celebrating the Welsh Love of Music," will be held at the stunning Stanley Theatre. We are pleased to announce the artistic lineup for this year's event.



Catrin Davies

Catrin Davies, our Artistic Director, has spent the past twenty years immersed in the world of opera as an administrator, singer, director, producer, and consultant, teaching and directing at Towson University, the Road Scholar, and primarily at the Peabody Conservatory. Currently, she is the resident director at Summer Garden Opera, and Artistic Director of the Young Victorian Theatre Company.

Ms. Davies specializes in Welsh repertoire, and won the mezzo-soprano competition at the National Eisteddfod in Wales in 2012. She is also a three-time first-prize winner at the North American Festival of Wales.

Following her victory at the National Eisteddfod, Ms. Davies was invited to perform with the Three Welsh Tenors. In addition, she is a frequent soloist with Welsh choirs, and has performed with them at the Smithsonian, in Stratford (Canada) and Philadelphia, and in Wales. Among other venues, she has brought her recital of Welsh song to the Engineers Club, Baltimore, the Cosmos Club, Washington, DC, and the Academy of Art Museum, Easton.



Nerys Jones

A native Welsh speaker, Nerys Jones was born and educated in Llanfair, Caereinion, mid Wales, and was an avid Eisteddfod competitor from a young age. She was one of the founding members of Cwmni Theater Maldwyn in its first production of *Y Mab Darogan*, which played a pivotal role in her desire to pursue her musical career.

Nerys gained huge success during her time at English National Opera (ENO) in London, perfecting her talent for playing 'pants roles.' Her roles at ENO included Hansel, Cherubino, Despina, Garcias, Zerlina, Mercedes, Kitchen Boy, Flower Maiden, 2nd Lady, Proserpina, Flora, Melissa, Sister Mathilde and Pitti Sing. Roles at other opera companies include Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*; Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*; Dryad in *Ariadne auf Naxos*; Stewardess in *Flight*; and Angelina in *La Cenerentola*. She performed with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Scottish Early Music Consort and the National Youth Orchestra of Wales.

Since moving to Seattle, Nerys has worked with the Seattle Opera, Tacoma Opera, Vashon Opera, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Seattle Chamber Society, Northwest Philharmonia, Northwest Sinfonietta, and OSSCC. She made her 2019 Seattle Opera debut as Inez in *Il trovatore* and returned to sing Giovanna in *Rigoletto*. Recent roles include Female Chorus in *The Rape of Lucretia* and Marcellina in *The Marriage of Figaro* at Tacoma Opera. Upcoming performances are with Vashon Opera and the OSSCC along with recitals and choral works. Seattle has been home for 16 years but she regularly visits her family in Wales.



Todd Thomas

American baritone Todd Thomas is recognized with operatic companies and critics alike as one of the true Verdi baritones currently gracing stages today. Todd, originally from Elmira, New York makes his home in Philadelphia, PA with his wife of 26 years, Lisa Helmel Thomas. He earned a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance and a Master of Music degree in Opera Theatre from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. His parents emigrated from Merthyr Tydfil and settled in Wellsboro, PA. Todd's love of music has been constant, with his earliest memories of family raising their voices in song on Saturday night after dinner.

Mr. Thomas encourages young singers to find a connection with their endowed musical gifts as a guest master teacher and clinician. In addition to his active singing career, in 2013 he formed the Todd Thomas Music Scholarship which awards cash prizes to deserving graduating high school seniors from Chemung County, PA, embarking on their college careers in the full time study of music-based curriculum.

Recently as Macbeth, Opera News depicted his performance as "warm and centered in his tone with subtle phrasing that emphasized the introspective, almost poetic quality of the tormented king." Of a recent Falstaff performance, Opera News said, "Thomas's forthright vocalism (featuring wonderful top notes) and apt physique give him a leg up in this part, but he also captured the generous, earthy spirit of Shakespeare's creation, giving the evening its comic and emotional fulcrum...it's hard to imagine there are many better Falstaffs working on North American stages today."



Jenny Oaks Baker is a Grammy-nominated, Billboard No. 1 violinist with 18 albums to her credit. She and her four children, musical group Family Four, have performed with U.S. orchestras including the Utah Symphony, Millennial Choirs and Orchestras and Tabernacle Choir & Orchestra at Temple Square, and in concert halls around the world. Their debut album, entitled "Jenny Oaks Baker & Family Four" hit #4 on the Billboard Charts. Their new Christmas album, *Joy to the World* debuted at #7 on the Billboard Charts.

Laura, 19, plays violin. Hannah, 18, plays the piano. Sarah, 16, plays the cello. Matthew, 14, plays the classical guitar. They have performed together since each child started playing their instruments when they were three or four years old.

Their husband and father Matt Baker is a business executive and is incredibly supportive of his wife and children.

Westminster Presbyterian Church, Utica, New York

This year we have hit a home run for our Gymanfa Ganu and church service venue. The Westminster Presbyterian Church or, more accurately, the Westminster Moriah Olivet Church, is excited to host us on Sunday, September 5. They are no strangers to Welsh music, as the “Moriah” in the long name is the original Welsh congregation founded in 1820 by Calvinist Methodists.

The neo-gothic worship space contains seven Tiffany stained glass windows, and the communion table is inscribed with the Welsh words “Er Cof Am Danaf” meaning “In Memory of Me.”

The church is fully accessible. There is a parking lot and entrance at the rear of the church. An elevator brings attendees to the sanctuary level. Two sets of rest rooms are on the sanctuary level and, at the time of our event, there will be plenty of volunteers on hand to guide us.



Above: The pipes and beautiful ceiling inside the church.

At the June visit by the WNAA board, member Karen Wojahn received a quick orientation on the pipe organ from Richard Crawley, the church Director of Music, who is also on the faculty at Syracuse University.



Thanks to the miracles of modern technology, Karen was able to communicate with Steve Jensen and answer any of his questions about the organ.

Left: Karen Wojahn gets a quick orientation on the pipe organ
Right: One of the church's seven Tiffany glass windows



89th Gymanfa Ganu Conductor and Organist



Meirwyn Walters

We're pleased to announce that Meirwyn Ioan Walters will conduct the Gymanfa Ganu. A nationally known conductor since 1986, Meirwyn Ioan Walters has traveled extensively across the U.S. conducting cymanfoedd. This National Gymanfa Ganu will be his fifth as he has conducted the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu in Minneapolis in 1999, Niagara Falls/Buffalo in 2004, Minneapolis in 2014 and most recently the 2017 National Gymanfa Ganu in Rochester, New York.

Mr. Walters was raised a “Welshman in America” born in Boston, and learning Welsh as his first language. At a very early age he gained an appreciation of Welsh music including Welsh hymn singing with its unique attention to melodic tunes, rich harmonies and profound lyrics. In conducting, he follows the footsteps of his father, the late Dr. Gwyn Walters. Mr. Walters has been extensively involved at the national level in Welsh-American affairs including having served as a Trustee of the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association.

He was graduated from Harvard University, with honors, studied theology and law at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and took a Doctor of Laws at Boston College Law School. He is a trial attorney, Adjunct Professor of Law in the Business and Economics Department at Gordon College, and an ordained Presbyterian elder. He is an author and his book, Intentional Preaching was published in 2020 (Hendrickson Publishers). Residing in Hamilton, Massachusetts, Mr. Walters and his wife, Nina, have three children, David Gwyn, Mari Elizabeth and Carys Reese.



Steve Jensen

Our organist, Steve Jensen, began playing the piano and organ at the age of nine. He had his first regular church job at the age of thirteen. During grades 9-12 he studied at Lawrence Conservatory of Music in Appleton, WI. He continued his organ study during college at Carthage College in Kenosha, WI.

His first Gymanfa Ganu was in 1977 in Fort Atkinson, WI. The conductor was Lyn Harry of Canada. Mr. Harry requested that Mr. Jensen play the following year at the National Gymanfa Ganu in Minneapolis in 1978. Since then Steve has played for many local and state Gymanfaoedd.

Mr. Jensen is currently employed as a Compliance Officer for US Bank in Milwaukee, WI and serves as Organist at Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Milwaukee, WI.

NAFOW 2021 Seminars

As always, NAFOW has a great lineup of seminars. Refer to the festival website, festivalofwales.org, for more details.



“Hiking along the Welsh Coastal Path” and the **“Snowdonia National Park”** Hywel Roberts is the Director of Wild Wales Tours & Walkabouts. He is a storyteller, adventurer, sailor, film director, naturalist and an avid hiker. One of his most recent documentary films is “Attempting the North West Passage”. Hywel is a native of Wales, speaks fluent Welsh, and is passionate about his homeland and the Welsh culture. He lives in rural Minnesota on the Mississippi River.



“Welsh-American Utica, Fact and Fiction” David Lloyd discusses the Welsh-American community in Utica, NY, as it was during 1948-1968, and reads from his new book of stories, *The Moving of the Water*, set in that same community. Poet, fiction writer, and critic David Lloyd is Professor of English at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, NY, where he directs the Creative Writing Program.



“Finding Emanuel” Heather DeFer presents the story of a traveling preacher in Wales, whose beginnings were a mystery...until now. She is a Teacher Consultant for students with Autism and Behavioral Needs and is a Genealogy Student, finishing certifications in Genealogical Methodology and DNA Analysis in 2021.



“Discovering Traditional Welsh Quilts” Join Susan Jones Graff as she presents a study of the history of traditional Welsh quilts and traditional Welsh quilters. Susan Jones Graff is a fifth generation Welsh quilter with BA in textiles and has received numerous textile awards. She is retired from the National Park Service.



“Heddwch Nain Mamgu/ Our Grandmother's Peace” 40,000 Welsh men died in World War 1. In response, women in Wales organized an unprecedented campaign for world peace. They proclaimed solidarity with the women of the United States and called upon the government of the United States to join the League of Nations, to forge “peace for future generations.” Susan Davies Sit, President of the Welsh Society of Western New England, and Ann Griffith, Vice President of the Washington DC St. David’s Society are excited to present this peace project.



“A Welshman's Adventure in Canada's Subarctic” WNAA President David Matthews and his wife spent 37 years as teachers in the Northwest Territories. David focuses on his experience as a teacher and community member in two First Nation settlements.



“The Welsh Chapels of Central New York” Jay G. Williams III, from Clinton, NY is a lawyer, town justice and pastor. He has written two books on Welsh chapels. In his seminar, he presents photos and a history of the many Welsh chapels in central New York state.



“The Welsh Government and North America” Eoghan O'Regan, originally from Anglesey, leads a team as Deputy Head of North America for the Welsh Government. This seminar will inform about the work that the team is undertaking to raise the profile of Wales and the Welsh Government overseas.



“The Welsh of New York and the Washington Monument” and **“Looking in the Mirror: Y Drych and the Creation of Welsh-American Ethnicity”** Robert Humphries is an independent historian whose work focuses on Welsh immigrants in the United States, particularly in the Midwest. He has published articles in the *North American Journal of Welsh Studies* and the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*. In 2017 he wrote and co-produced, with the late Martha Davies, the mini-documentary film *Pobl y Paith/People of the Prairie: The Welsh in Nebraska*.

Additions to the NAFOW 2021 Lineup



Wales Week joins the festival lineup. Dan Langford will lead a discussion on ways Welsh societies can engage their membership.

Join Jan Jones Batty for a lighthearted look into **Sharing Tips for Researching Your Relatives in Wales**. Jan is an amateur genealogist with several years' experience researching her ancestors in Wales. She has discovered a few research tips unique to the Welsh genealogy experience. During this session, we will follow Jan's guidance and share our own tips for discovering our Welsh heritage. There will be no whining about an excess of Joneses (Jan has cornered the market on that) and no discussions of DNA testing or family specifics. We will make time for brainstorming and sharing resources related to Welsh genealogical research.



Be sure to check the schedule for the **Say Something in Welsh** get-together.

2021 Youth Voice Competition Winners

The WNAA, in partnership with Undeb Cymru a'r Byd, launched a youth voice competition to mark the 2021 celebration of St. David's Day. The competition was open to Welsh language entries aged 7-11 and 12-16. Executive Secretary Megan Williams said, 'We were so excited to see the interest in this brand-new competition and hope to repeat it next year. What better way to celebrate St. David's Day than showcase young Welsh talent to those in North America and around the world.' In the past, the WNAA has held an Eisteddfod in conjunction with its annual North American Festival of Wales and this new competition is an extension of this tradition. Adjudicators Edward Morus Jones, Mary Jones McGuyer and Elen Wyn Keen.

Age Group: 7-11 Years Old



1st Place—Cari Lovelock: My name is Cari Lovelock I am 10 years old and live in a small village called Llannerchymedd on the island of Anglesey. I live with my Mum, Dad, big sister Nel and my dog Frank. I started singing when I was 4 years old and enjoy singing in various competitions across Wales. I love singing and acting and I am a member of a group called Adran Bro Alaw where I have lots of fun with my friends who also like performing. In my spare time I play the piano and harp.



2nd Place—Iwan Marc Thomas: I am Iwan Marc Thomas and I live in Pontarddulais with Mam and Dad. I am 8 years old and in Year 3 in Llanedi Primary school, which is a small rural school of 25 pupils and two teachers. I have my education through the medium of Welsh. My singing teacher is Ms. Miriam Bowen and I have had lessons since I was about 4 years old. I enjoy singing and also going to compete in local eisteddfodau before Covid19 came. I won second prize for recitation in Eisteddfod Tyr Urdd (virtual) last year. I am also having piano lessons and enjoy playing my ukulele. I sing in church on Sundays and sometimes it is put on the Parish Facebook and Llanedi chat. I go running regularly with my Anti Els and cousins Evan and Emiah, and we have a lot of fun and keep fit at the same time. I also walk many miles with Mam and Dad, there are many lovely walks with great scenery around the Pontarddulais area. Once the fine weather comes, I shall be planting seeds in trays and putting them in my cold frame. When they are big enough, I shall be selling them so that I can have some pocket money. I enjoy reading very much and read books in Welsh and English. My favourite author is David Walliams. I have read 8 books since Christmas. I had new books as birthday presents last Monday. I am really pleased to have won second prize in this competition and would like to say thank you for the chance to compete.



Joint 3rd Place—Trystan Bryn Evans: My name is Trystan Bryn and I live in a small village called Harford north of Carmarthenshire. I am 10 years old and attend Carreg Hirfaen Primary School in a village called Cwmann. I have been singing since I was 6 years old and enjoy having singing lessons with Eirian Jones. I enjoy singing and competing at local Eisteddfods and Concerts. Also, in my spare time I enjoy playing the piano, playing a little rugby and working at home on the family farm. Over the last few months, I have joined the Only Boys Aloud and thoroughly enjoy rehearsing every week, meeting new people and learning new songs. Unfortunately concerts and Eisteddfods have not been running recently but I have been enjoying practicing at home and doing a few virtual events online over the past year.



Joint 3rd Place—Non Prys: I'm Non Alaw Prys and I'm ten years old and in my last year at Ysgol Gynradd Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwll-llantysiliogogoch! My main hobbies are singing, acting and dancing and I enjoy performing with Ysgol Glanaethwy Junior Choir. My favourite sport is football and I'm a member of the Llanfair Foxes girls team.

Continued on next page

2021 Youth Voice Competition Winners (continued)

Age Group: 12-16 Years Old



1st Place—Manon Jones: I live in Rhostehwfa, Llangefni on Ynys Mon. I am one of three sisters and I attend Ysgol Gyfun Llangefni. I have always had an interest in singing. I competed for the first time in an eisteddfod when I was seven years old and since then I have competed regularly individually and as a choir member. I enjoy dancing, acting and performing and I attend a local dance and drama academy. As a member of the academy I had the opportunity three years ago to dance on the stage in the 'West End' in London. Whilst we were there my mother took us to see the musical 'Wicked' and since then it has been my ambition to sing in the future.



2nd Place—Owen Roberts: Owen Jac is a very keen musical theatre performer and soloist from Aberystwyth and a pupil at Ysgol Gyfun Penglais. Owen is a regular on stage at Aberystwyth Arts Centre. He recently secured the role of Nipper in Oliver. He has been in theatre for the past 6 years with The Wardens Pantomime and has been in the chorus for Beauty & The Beast, Jack & The Beanstalk, Aladdin & Cinderella and was last seen playing Michael Darlington in Peter Pan. Owen is a member of Academi Gerdd y Lli, Adran Aberystwyth and Only Boys Aloud. He recently performed with Only Men Aloud on their Merry Little Christmas tour. He is also a keen gymnast and is currently in the Welsh Development Tumbling Squad.



Joint 3rd Place—Megan Wyn Morris: My name is Megan Wyn Morris and I am 12 years old. I am a year 7 pupil at Llandovery College. I have a brother called Gryffydd who is 10 and 2 dogs and we live in a small village called Talley near Llandeilo with my Mum and Dad. I have been singing since I was 5 years old and I enjoy it very much. During lockdown I have been having lessons online with John Ieuan Jones and it's great fun. I also enjoy dancing and acting, and I am currently filming "Save the Cinema" with Sky which is being filmed in Carmarthen which is not too far from home.



Joint 3rd Place—Siwan Mair Jones: Hello, my name is Siwan Mair Jones. I am 14 years old and I live in Carmarthen, Carmarthenshire, Wales. I attended Ysgol y Dderwen Primary School and I am now a Year 10 pupil at Bro Myrddin Welsh Comprehensive School studying Music, Drama, History including the core subjects at GCSE. My main interests are singing and performing. I enjoy taking part in Priory Chapel in Carmarthen, in school concerts and productions, as well as competing in the Eisteddfod. In the Urdd National Eisteddfod at Caerphilly in 2015, I won a solo competition for years 3 & 4 and was invited to sing at the St David's Welsh Festival at Disneyland Paris in March 2016. It was an unforgettable experience! Another highlight was winning two main competitions at The National Eisteddfod of Wales in Anglesey in 2017, the Cerdd Dant solo and the Folk Song solo under 12 years old. I've been fortunate to win many prizes during the years as a soloist, in duets, and as a member of many choirs. I also enjoy cooking, playing netball, going to the theatre and travelling.

Practice and Learn Your Conversational Welsh

Cymdeithas Madog's Board of Directors has launched a free service for Welsh learners: monthly "Siop Siarad" conversation groups on Zoom. Siop Siarad is held on the third Saturday of each month (unless otherwise indicated). There are three sessions: two at the beginning/intermediate level and one at the advanced level, each facilitated by an experienced Welsh speaker. Read more about the details on their calendar page: <https://speakwelsh.org/courses/calendar/>. They are also on the lookout for advanced or fluent Welsh speakers willing to volunteer as a moderator for these sessions. Please send an email to secretary@madog.org if you are interested.



Registration is open for the July Cwrs y Cliciau. You can register for one or both weekends (July 16-18 and July 23-25). Each weekend consists of three 75 minute language sessions; one per day for beginning, intermediate and advanced learners. All registered students will be able to attend our fun additional activities, including: Special guest presentations on Saturday, July 17 and Saturday, July 24, Zoom trivia night on Wednesday, July 21, and the announcement of the Eisteddfod winners on Sunday, July 25 (we will send out information about the topic and PRIZES later).

As always, go to www.madog.org to learn more, and click on 2021 cwrs registration.

Affiliated Welsh Organizations

Welsh Society of Western New England



A Wine and Welsh Cheese Event

Submitted by Susan Davies Sit

The Welsh Society of Western New England (WSWNE) covers western New England and was founded as a branch of an earlier southern Connecticut Welsh society. During non-COVID times, it meets twice a year.

Its St. David's Day Luncheon in early March welcomes about 50 attendees and includes a presenter/speaker, a merchandise table, and a large map of Wales with everyone's roots pinned. Two members come in Welsh national dress. The Christmas Luncheon also attracts about 50 people, and the day's events include a presenter and music, merchandise table, and the observance of Christmas traditions and decorations.



Board Members Ed Brown and Beth Roberts Brown in traditional dress for St. David's Day

During each Welsh genealogy workshop, which meets for 90 minutes twice a month via ZOOM, members teach, research, and help each other. When in-person gatherings were allowed, it met once a month for a full day. It is expected that the Zoom Genealogy meetings

will continue after things are back to normal.

The Welsh conversation group includes all levels of Welsh learner and is not a class. It meets weekly via ZOOM. Questions in Welsh are presented for homework, and members answer them together every Tuesday evening. Pre-pandemic, the conversation group met in a cafe once a month.

When in-person gatherings are allowed, the WSWNE hosts New England's WalesWeek/NewEngland with support from Wales and London. To learn more about this event: find it on Twitter: @WalesWeek or on the WSWNE website.

Usually there are about fifteen cultural events around New England in VT, MA, CT and RI, with the numbers growing every year. WSWNE participation in these events publicizes its connection to Wales as well as business opportunities and travel to Wales.

Once a year, it hosts a Noson Lawen to honor Owain Glyndwr - via ZOOM this year! A Noson Lawen was held in September 2020 and January 2021. Both are international, as performers from Canada and Wales join in. It has been highly successful. Welsh cake baking demonstrations are always popular.

Early in 2020 membership included 58 families, but this has expanded to 70 member families throughout the United States due to the online conversation and genealogy groups.

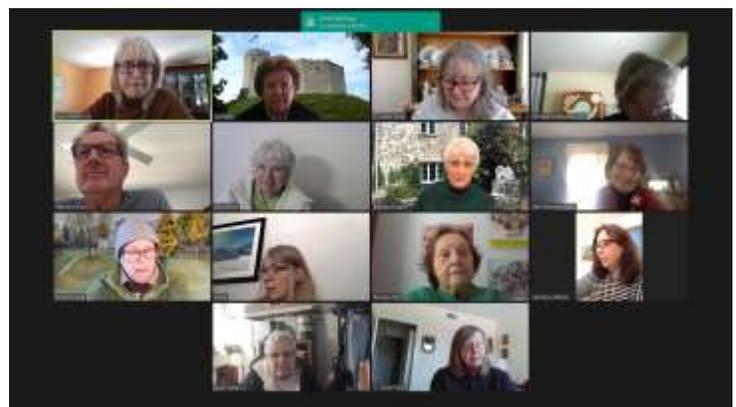
Officers are: Susan Davies Sit (President), Susan Jenkins Meers & Annie Rodgers (Co-Vice Presidents), Mary Jones Pallos (Secretary) and Mark Taylor (Treasurer).

Website: WelshWNE.org, Email: InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com, Twitter: @WelshWestNewEng and Facebook: WSWNE.



Above: Three of our younger members at St. David's Day Luncheon

Below: The genealogy group meeting via ZOOM



Affiliated Welsh Organizations

Welsh Society of Wellington, New Zealand

Information provided by Bob Bevan Smith, Secretary

The Welsh Society of Wellington was formed in 1907 by a wharf worker at Wellington harbour who met Welsh folk off visiting ships. Currently we have about 30 members in the Wellington region.

Major activities of the society have always centred on St. David's Day, but in the past we have taken part in Wellington City parades, such as Santa parades, visiting Welsh Rugby teams etc.; and also going to see visiting Welsh performers such as Bryn Terfel, Harry Secombe and others. We occasionally have outings to local places or events of interest, such as a day trip by ferry to the local Somes Island.

Also, we have in the recent past had a singing group which performed at annual carol festivals. We are currently planning a show about the 'Mari Lwyd.'

We don't have regular meetings as such, but there is an informal coffee circle who meet monthly for gossip etc., and we normally meet for Christmas and other significant occasions such as birthdays. Many of our members also attend the Welsh Gymanfa Ganu Association of New Zealand biennial events, which are hosted by a group of New Zealand cities in rotation, last hosted in Wellington nearly a decade ago.

We also have an Annual General Meeting, which we will hold on 1st May this year. The current President is Margot Griffith, from Ferryside, Carmarthen. Bob Bevan Smith is currently the society's Secretary.



Annually, we have three competitions: one for Poetry, another for a short Story, for both of which we have a silver cup on which the winner's name is engraved, and an Arts & Craft competition for which there is a wooden shield, to which small nameplates of winners are attached. In addition, there is a light-hearted competition in which members bring a plate of six Welsh Cakes, and someone (frequently me, if I can wangle it) is asked to taste and judge them.

We have a website <https://nzwelsh.wordpress.com> which also features other Welsh societies in NZ. Our email address is welsh.wellington@gmail.com.

Left: The Welsh Society of Wellington's Rugby parade float from a few years ago.



Above: Your HWYL editor could not pass up copying the above from the March 2021 edition of "Cymdeithas Gymreig Wellington, the WSWNZ's newsletter."

Welsh Heritage Week 2021

It is with great pleasure that we announce that Welsh Heritage Week will be held in person this year at the University of Scranton, Scranton, PA July 18 to 25, 2021.

For those of you on the Facebook page who don't know: WHW is a fun week of learning about the Welsh language, music and heritage. We have language classes, singing classes, Welsh folk dance class, session band (any instruments welcome) to learn Welsh folk music and harp classes (total beginner to experienced).

If you have any questions, contact Beth Landmesser, 570-815-7689 or hwyl@ptd.net, and you can follow us on Facebook.



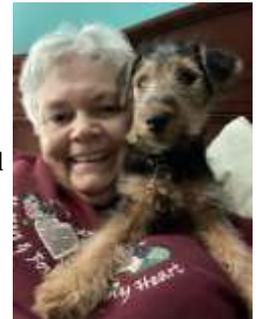
Staying Welsh During the Pandemic

What have you been doing “Welsh-wise” during these many months staying at home?

Member Nancy Jones Miller and her husband Clarence adopted a Welsh terrier, Cariad, known as “Cari.” Cari is currently learning how to be a good girl and not chew everything in sight.

Apparently Jan Jones Batty (coincidentally Nancy’s cousin) has been playing too much Words With Friends. When she started a new “quick game” against the software, “HYWL” was the word that the game suggested. Who knew Welsh was part of the game’s vocabulary? A week or so later, her husband Bob found that “CROESO” was an accepted word.

Huw Christopher has found that staying connected has helped him stay Welsh. “Staying Welsh during the pandemic -- I cannot name all of the ways -- from the virtual NAFOW, to local society connections, to WNAA Board meetings, to choir gatherings on Zoom and YouTube. Thanks to the use of technology and the creativity of so many talented people I have had more opportunities to get my “Welsh fix” during the pandemic than before. I hope all of these ways do not suddenly disappear as we try to do everything in person once again. Hybrids are not just good for automobiles. They are good for Welsh connections as well!”



Above: Nancy and Cari at home
Left: HWYL as a Words With Friends suggestion
Below: Jeanne’s virtual Welsh class

Jeanne Jones Jindra spent Tuesday afternoons in Virtual Welsh Language classes with Dan Rowbotham from Llangeitho. “A great way to meet people from all over who share an interest in learning the language. Dan kept us laughing and at the end of the session, everyone demanded he start another one!”



 Myfanwy Davies and her husband dearly miss their visits to a local pub that aired rugby games. But she found a “workaround!” Myfanwy reports “I subscribed to DAZN, an online sports site so I could watch the Six Nations Championship, which Wales won.”

Evans Paschal reports that “I’ve managed to keep up my nightly lessons in Welsh on Duolingo during the pandemic without missing a day. As other Welsh students of Duolingo will know, pannas (Cymraeg for “parsnips”) are by far the most popular vegetable and feature frequently in the lessons. People cook pannas, eat pannas, buy and sell pannas, and work happily on farms that grow pannas. Because I often mention to my wife the occurrence of pannas in the lessons, she too has learned the Welsh word pannas. The strange thing is we now seem to be eating more pannas ourselves.”



Finally, and probably the most challenging activity, is Gwenith Closs Colgrove’s attempt to teach her Welsh Corgi to sing in Welsh. The first photo is Gwenith teaching Bronwen how to sing her favorite hymn “Calon Lan.” Bronwen is a Pembroke Welsh Corgi and is 2 ½ years old. She came to the Colgrove household from a ranch in South Dakota. The second picture is captioned “I can’t believe all those double ll’s and double dd’s. I am dog-tired!!!”



Get Your Welsh On!

If you just can’t wait until Utica to sing in the Language of Heaven, purchase CDs from past Cymanfaoedd Ganu at the WNAA website. Recordings are from 2019 (Milwaukee), 2018 (Alexandria), 2017 (Rochester) and 1953 (Rochester—5000 voices!). Books for sale: the official WNGGA hymnal (regular and enlarged size); Caneuon Y Ddraig (Songs of the Dragon) Welsh folk songbook; and the History of the WNGGA. Also there is the WNAA eHymnal CD, including 118 hymns spoken by a native Welsh speaker. Learn to pronounce, listen to the music and learn your voice part.



Gymanfa Ganu Hymnals

Don’t forget to bring your official WNGGA hymnal to the Gymanfa Ganu in Utica.



Hymnals will also be for sale at the registration table.



WELSH NORTH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
PO Box 1054, Trumansburg, NY 14886

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Contact List Cleanup



If you or someone you know had a change of address, or you know someone who should be removed from our list, let us know.

We would also like your email address; occasionally we send email updates. And indicate if you would prefer to receive your newsletter by email. Please direct corrections to our mailing address (above) or to: editor@theWNAA.org

Affiliated Welsh Orgs

If you would like us to profile your Welsh organization in an upcoming issue of HWYL, contact: editor@theWNAA.org.

BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR RESEARCH & GENEALOGY PAY FOR SHIPPING ONLY!



We have the following books that we would gladly send your way:

[Early History of the Welsh in the Proscairon District of Wisconsin](#) Translated by Phillips & Martha Davies
[History of the Welsh in Minnesota, Foreston & Lime Springs, Iowa](#) Translated by Martha Davies
[Hanes Cymry America \(1872\) A History of the Welsh in America](#) Translated by Phillips & Martha Davies

If your local Welsh or historical society and/or library would appreciate receiving any of the above volumes; we only ask that you pay for the postage of the book rate. If interested contact us at: gcolgrove@neb.rr.com