



Y Bwletin

Gwasg y Nant - Valley Press Mis Ebrill 2003 - April 2003

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Events for Spring 2003

Ontario Welsh Festival - Stratford	April 25, 26, 27
Celtic Homecoming	April 26
Ottawa Welsh Choral Society Spring Concert	May 3
Pot Luck Supper and Annual Meeting	May 20
Brockville Celtic Festival	June 6-8
Picnic	date TBA
Great Lakes Welsh Course	July 20-27
Wlpan Awst	Aug 4-29
N American Festival of Wales	Aug 28-31

Local News

1. Condolences to Alan Thomas on the lose of his mother
2. Congratulations to Laurie Jenkins and Rob Woods who were married on April 5
3. Congratulations to David G. Jones for taking first place in one of the categories of the E-Steddfod
4. Best wishes to Charles & Sandra Bassett who will be leaving Ottawa for 2 or 3 years. Charles will be taking up an appointment as the Canadian Executive Director at the Inter-American Development Bank, starting at the beginning of May.

Ontario Welsh Festival 2003

April 25-27 at the Festival Inn 1144 Ontario Street, Box 811,

Stratford ON N5A 6W1 -800-463-3581

Fri April 25	Registration 2-7 pm
	Noson Lawen 7:30 pm
Sat April 26	AGM 9:30 - Noon
	Poetry Reading 2-4 pm
	Banquet 6 pm
	Concert 8 pm
Sun April 27	Gymanfa Ganu 10 am & 2 pm

Celtic Homecoming

by the Goulbourn Jubilee Singers and Junior Jubilees

Saturday **April 26** 1:30 pm and 7:30 pm

Kanata Community Christian Reformed Church

46 Castlefrank Road Kanata

Admission Adults \$12, Children / Seniors \$7

For information: 599-8897 or 838-6078

The Ottawa Welsh Choral Society

A Spring Concert, The Celtic Connection

Saturday, **May 3, 2003, 7:30 p.m.**

Bromley Road Baptist Church

1900 Lauder Drive, Ottawa

Tickets at the door: Adults \$15, Seniors and Children \$10

For a map to the concert visit the web site

<http://members.tripod.com/owcs2001>

Ottawa Welsh Society

Pot Luck Dinner 6:30 PM Tuesday May 20

Annual General Meeting 7:30 PM

Bromley Road Baptist Church, 1900 Lauder Ave. Ottawa

Bring an appetizer, main course, salad or desert

(Please note that the church does not allow wine or alcohol.)

3rd Annual Brockville Celtic Festival

June 6-8, 2003

Irish, Scottish & Welsh Musicians and dancers, concerts, demonstrations, food merchandise, pub and church services

Info: Kevin O Dair home - (613) 345-4962, work 283-7002 x106;

kenvinodair@aol.com <http://www.brockvillecelticfestival.com>

The Ottawa Welsh Choral Society will be there. What about you?

The Great Lakes Welsh Course

July 20-27

The Cymdeithas Madog Welsh course for 2003 will be at Carthage College, Kenosha, Wisconsin. See <http://www.madog.org>

Wlpan Awst 2003

There will be an Intensive Residential Course for Welsh Learners held at the University of Wales in Aberystwyth Wales **August 4-29**.

Cost for private room, self-catering accommodation is £ 545.

Further information from maf@aber.ac.uk

The North American Festival of Wales

(formerly the National Gymanfa Ganu)

welcomes you to Vancouver - Richmond, British Columbia, Canada, **August 28 -31, 2003** for 4 days of enjoyment in celebration of our Welsh Heritage. Hear Wales' current Eisteddfod Champions, the Duvant Male choir, popular baritone Jason Howard and talented folk group, Mabon. Join the nightly singing and the Sunday Gymanfa Ganu. Participate in a variety of Festival activities in one of North America's top holiday destinations. www.nafow.org Info 1-877-831-0563 email: ellis@gustavus.edu

Ottawa Welsh Celebrate St. David

By John Roberts

The patron saint of Wales was duly and enthusiastically honoured this year by the Welsh community in Ottawa. The annual St. David's Day dinner-dance was exceptionally well attended -- over a hundred diners virtually doubled the attendance of the previous year -- and the Hellenic Centre of Ottawa, where it was being held for the first time, showed them that roast lamb is not exclusively a Welsh preserve. It even made a brave attempt at mint sauce, albeit with faintly Greek overtones!

The guest speaker was Alan Thomas, organist and accompanist at many of the Ottawa Welsh and Ottawa Welsh Choral Societies' musical events and, in recognition of his invaluable contribution over the years, a lifetime honorary member of the OWS. His speech about Wales and the Welsh was witty, extemporaneous and in a few places unprintable, much to the amusement and delight of a thoroughly appreciative audience. Among the toasts, announcements and greetings from other Welsh societies, a message was read from the Rt. Hon. Rhodri Morgan, AM, First Minister for Wales.

The Gymanfa Ganu that was held the following afternoon at the Westminster Presbyterian Church was also well attended. Marilyn Jenkins, musical director of the Ottawa Welsh Choral Society, drew rich harmony from choir and congregation alike, in hymns that were mainly old favourites but sometimes fairly new to the singers. The Rev. Clifford Evans, the Society's Chaplain, officiated and Alan Thomas accompanied the singing. John Griffiths (tenor) gave a solo performance in "Wrth Rhodio'r Byd Caf Gwmni Tad", and the Cantorion Cerdd Dant, the penillion singers who first performed in public at the Dylan Thomas dinner evening last November, sang "Cofia'n Gwlad Ben Llywydd" and the 23rd Psalm. Formed by Alison Lawson, and including Maureen Carpenter, Barbara Colton, Jennifer Davis, Olive Phillips and Eirwen Thomson, this group is bringing about a most welcome revival of penillion in Ottawa.

Both the St. David's Day events were favoured with comparatively mild weather (just above freezing), but those who enjoyed the animated Te Bach after the Gymanfa went out into the first falling flakes of the biggest snowstorm of the winter so far.

Celtic Spiral Tours is offering luxury escorted vacations in Pembrokeshire Wales. For information see www.celticspiral.com or email info@celticspiral.com

The Dean of **St. David's Cathedral** in St. Davids Dyfed Wales is inviting all who wish to become Friends of St. Davids Cathedral to assist them to maintain the fabric and life of the Cathedral.

You can do this in one of three ways:

1 – An annual subscription of not less than £ 5 for adults and £ 2.50 for members under 16.

2 – A single donation for life membership of £ 100 or more.

3 – A covenant for not less than 4 years which improves their income by allowing them to reclaim the income tax already paid by you. [I'm not sure this would apply to those living in Canada.]

Please make donations payable to "Friends of St. Davids Cathedral" and send to The Very Reverend The Dean of St. Davids, The Deandery, St. Davids, Dyfed, SA62 6RH Wales UK.

Ysbryd, The Spirit of Wales

Two proud Welshmen have launched a new Welsh product that they call Ysbryd *the Spirit of Wales*. See the line of sweaters on their website at www.ysbryd.com or email them at enquiries@ysbryd.com

I Can Remember

By Les Singfield
Anglesey North Wales
From Daily Mail Oct 25, 2002

I can remember when I was a lad
The name of each kid in our class.
I can reel them off the tip of my tongue,
Every spotty young boy, every lass.

I remember the day when I joined the Cubs
I remember my first day at school.
I still know the words of the pop songs we sang
On coach trips to Rhyl and Blackpool.

I can remember in those days of yore
The lessons we had every day.
I still know the poems and hymns we were taught
And the words of the school Christmas play.

I remember our 'divvy' number from the Co-op –
It was one, two five, four, nine, six.
I remember bread units and ration books too
And paying a bob to get in the flicks.

I can remember collecting jam jars for cash
And when sweets first came off ration.
I remember Dick Barton, Snowy and Jock
And a D.A. haircut was the fashion.

How is it, seeing my memory's so good,
And I recall these events from afar,
Yet no matter how hard I wrack my brain
I can't remember where I've parked the car?

Ap Huw's Testament by R.S. Thomas

There are four verses to put down
For the four people in my life,
Father mother, wife

And the one child. Let me begin
With her of the immaculate brow
My wife; she loves me. I know how.

My mother gave me the breast's milk
Generously, but grew mean after,
Envyng me my detached laughter.

My father was a passionate man,
Wrecked after leaving the sea
In her love's shallows. He grieves in me.

What shall I say of my boy,
Tall, fair? He is young yet;
Keep his feet free of the world's net.

From the **Museum of Welsh Life E-Steddfof, 2003**

It is my great pleasure to enclose the List of Winners at The Museum of Welsh Life E-Steddfod, 2003. 214 compositions were received from every corner of the world: From Helsinki to Ohio and Alabama; from Greece to Canada and from New Zealand to Llandrillo-yn-Rhos.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who took part in the E-steddfod this year. I hope that you enjoyed the experience and that you will compete once again in 2004. Congratulations to the winners and better luck next time everyone else.

The list of winners will be published on our website on March the 1st. Our aim is to include a selection of the written work at a later date and to post the prizes by Easter.

Yn gywir Yours sincerely
MEINWEN RUDDOCK
Trefnydd yr E-Steddfod Organiser
Archifydd / Archivist

Adran Bywyd Diwylliannol / Department of Cultural Life
Amgueddfa Werin Cymru / Museum of Welsh Life
Sain Ffagan / St Fagans, Caerdydd / Cardiff, CF5 6XB
Ffôn / Tel.: 029 2057 3427. Ffacs / Fax: 029 2057 3490
Gwefan: <http://www.aocc.ac.uk/awc/>
Website: <http://www.nmgw.ac.uk/mwl/>

Editors Note: The list of winners included Christopher Watkins of Wooster Ohio, Jan Tombrello Morgan of Birmingham Alabama, Idris Rees Hughes of BC and **David G. Jones of Ottawa**. Congratulations David! Two of David's entries follow.

Documentary Details: Debenham's Denbigh Decision

(Discarding dissent, diplomacy decides day)
[Entry to "Each word beginning with letter D"]

Dissent, derision dominated Donnybrook deliberations, debilitating Dwain Debenham's destiny. Despite divergence, dozens deemed debt decidedly destructive. "Denizens demand decision, direction," denoted delegates.

"Dragons decide, dilettantes dither. Don't dawdle!" declared Dr. Dafydd Davies' daughter Delyth, deploring delay. "Ditto!" drawled Dai Dafis, dozing. Departing, demonstrating determined demeanour despite deep despondency, Dylan Davidson declared "doscendo discimus."

Deservedly designated dominus, doughty Debenham doggedly dovetailed division, distilling decision. Delicate dexterity defined Dwain's dictum: "Decree Dewisant!" Dauntless, Dwain's dignity debunked discord. Dubitation descended - despite diametrical differences. Delegates decried doom, deploring derelict doxy. Denaturalized, demulcent delegates depicted delight. Dwain's deputed deputation departed deliriously.

Dawn duffed Dwain's destiny. Dwain dined, devouring dinner, delighted.

Domine Deus

David G. Jones

Games and Phrases My Mother Never Taught Me

[First prize winner of "Memories of Childhood Toys and Games"]

"Oh yeah, before I forget. Gimme two paks of gunky balls. Blue ones."

Excuse me!? All the training and guidance of my good friends at the Handy Andy auto parts store hadn't prepared me for that one. I really didn't know then where those little trim things inside cars came from. I guess I thought they were original equipment. And I certainly didn't know they were called "gunky balls." I thought the guys were having me on again, just like in my first week when a mechanic called up and asked for a left-threaded camshaft for a '63 DeSoto. I near went nuts looking through the catalogues.

In my growing up years, I would learn even more words and expressions that I would hear no where else but in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. And the differences weren't limited to language alone. We played games unlike those found elsewhere – games that required stadiums and coaches. The games were as strange perhaps as the language that accompanied them.

It's likely you have not heard of "clampers," "skooshin," and "bumpers." "Clampers" are what city folk call "ice floes" or "ice pans," – you know, the things larger than an icicle but smaller than an iceberg that drift around the ocean in the wintertime. They are not even as large as what Newfoundlanders call "bergie bits," the chunks that fall off icebergs.

Now I don't really know for sure if I am spelling "skooshin" correctly. It has probably never been spelled before. But I do know for sure there were two kinds. There was ocean skooshin and brook skooshin. In ocean skooshin, one ran from clamper to clamper without (you hoped) getting wet. You had to get on and off before the thing broke up or submerged. You had to get a great head up of steam going in this business, and you might do a mile or two before you wore out and returned to your start point, or fell in.

After an afternoon of ocean skooshin, you could always be identified (by those in the know) because your pant legs would be frozen right up to the crotch. Sometimes you were forced to quit for the day because your legs got too stiff to walk. At that point, you had to trek homeward walking like a man on stilts.

Now bay skooshin was quite different. Rather than running from clamper to clamper, you simply poled around the bay. You had to start judiciously by looking over the pack. You then culled out a good one that would support you while not being so heavy that it could not be easily navigated. We all like boat shaped clampers.

One's adventure started by, ahem, "borrowing" someone's clothes pole. With a perfect pole, an elegant clamper, and looking every bit as gallant as a gondolier on the Grand Canal, one poled around the bay till all hours, passing along tide and times tidbits to others.

We probably imagined that we looked every bit as Venetian as our Italian colleagues, though we were short passengers and operatic librettos. Like our sea-going skooshin brethren, we too fell in from time to time. But where they were into speed, endurance and agility, we were more into sedate, pensive navigation of relatively still tidal waters under the cool crisp moonlight of a winter's eve. While ocean skooshin was athletic skill and endurance, bay skooshin tapped our romantic sides.

Both forms of skooshin were great. Now some spoilsports might label these activities dangerous, but in several years I never saw or

heard of someone experiencing a real calamity. The police did take a dim view of these proceedings. One time, the Mounties chased my brother and I out about a mile (onto the ocean) until they (quite intelligently, I now think) gave up. We were able to reach shore undetected some considerable distance away. Reaching home, we hid in our coal bin for two hours, scared to death that we had been identified and that we would experience father's wrath in a tender place.

When we appeared for supper, our pants were still crispy cold though we could walk. We left a trail of water wherever we went. Our hands and faces, raw and chapped, were also full of coal dust. I would love to know how we explained all that away at the time.

Skoosin rivaled another wonderful winter activity called "bumpers". Bumpers was played at street intersections. When a car stopped, or just slowed down, you would leap for the bumper, crouch down and go for a ride. You might get ten or fifteen blocks at 40 to 50 miles per hour on the slippery road before the driver screamed at you to get off, or worse.

We bumper people were known to get together teams of two or three to make it especially challenging. Because it became near impossible for the driver to accelerate with a couple of hundred pounds of kid hanging off the car, some of these drivers became quite indignant. Sometimes they would pull over and chase you into the night, uttering death threats.

As you could tell a skoosher by his frozen legs, you could always identify a bumper rider by the fact his boot soles were worn off from hitting bare patches. He might also be known by his torn trousers, bruised elbows and bruised ego if he had failed to latch on properly, or disengaged at an inopportune moment.

Like skooshin, a lot of skill was attached to being a top performer. Real cool dudes could coast to a stop in the crouch position without falling over. The better ones could also steer with their feet, arriving with elegance back at the start point, or in front of their home.

I remember one winter night was especially cold. After quite a long wait, I was able to attach myself to a shiny new chrome bumper as the car sped off into the night. In accordance with standard safety procedures, I released when the car got going too fast for comfort. But to my horror, I discovered that my mitts had frozen to the bumper. I saw them drive off into the darkness, like some dying soul grasping onto the last vestiges of life. I still wonder what the driver made of that sight when he saw his bumper in the light of day.

We played many other games. Whether because we were inventive, or poor, or both, our games were free. One we played every summer. Whoever saw a foreign licence plate first had the right to punch everyone else in the arm. As they did, they shouted, "Free punch, car from away." That was the dumbest game I have ever encountered. It was also very painful during the tourist season. Nevertheless, that's how we entertained ourselves summer afternoons, as we slouched on the old church's stone fence, waiting for the police to come along and shoo us off.

When we weren't getting and giving punches, we were trying to out-brilliance each other with our knowledge of car makes and models. In time we all became experts. This fund of useless information (knowing what distinguishes a '57 Ford from a '58 Ford) continues to this day to clog up vast tracts of my brain.

If all this sounds like we were rough and tumble, I would say that on balance we were rather tame. Neither drugs nor alcohol were part of our lifestyle. One rarely saw cigarettes because they were simply too expensive. Swearing was quite pale to what one hears today on television. If someone got real angry, he might say something like, "Lord sufferin." A bit stronger expletive was "Jesus, Mary and Joseph," though such was acceptable in better circles, especially if you crossed yourself while you said it. None of this would have made a sailor blush.

This is not to suggest, however, that some of this may have been ill advised and could have resulted in injury, or worse. We did take risks. We did do things that common sense should have disallowed. But try as I might, I can't recall any greater tragedy than a cold dunking or the loss of a pair of mitts (which was, incidentally, a severely punishable offense).

My treasured experiences and memories are all about kids having fun together, without really doing anyone any harm. I do believe that such simple pleasures still exist, but you won't often find them in our great urban centres. It's why, perhaps, our families flock to the country and suburbs. They want to ensure, as best they can, that their children will grow up with some of the experiences (naughty or not), that they had in their own time. They have only to ensure that they don't ask too many questions about coal dust and crinkley trousers. And I trust they will be as wise in their guidance as I knew my parents were, for without that, we just might have lost more than our mittens.

David G. Jones

The **British Canadian Chamber of Trade and Commerce** wants to know if there is a level of interest in the Ottawa area in the establishment of a chapter of BCCTC here. They have asked me to conduct an informal poll to that effect.

See <http://www.bcctc.ca/>

If interested, please contact David G. Jones at 825-5062 or by email: ciadmilefalte2002@yahoo.com

Everything I need to know about life, I learned from Noah's Ark

- 1- Don't miss the boat.
- 2- Remember that we are all in the same boat.
- 3- Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
- 4- Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.
- 5- Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.
- 6- Build your future on high ground.
- 7- For safety's sake, travel in pairs.
- 8- Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.
- 9- When you're stressed, float a while.
- 10- Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.