



Y Bwletin

Gwasg y Nant – Valley Press Mis Gorffennaf 2009 – July 2009

Llywydd - President

Lezlie Wood Email: ldwood7@sympatico.ca
205-1465 Baseline Road Ottawa ON K2C 3L9 Phone: (613) 225-8845

Golygydd – Editor

Glenson T. Jones Email: ottawawelshsociety@rogers.com
51 McIntosh Place Kanata ON K2L 2N7 Phone: (613) 592-8957

Website: <http://www.ottawawelshsociety.com/>



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Digwyddiadau - Events for 2009

- NAFOW -WNGGA - Pittsburgh Sep 3-6
- Concert by Aled Wyn Davies Sunday Oct 4
- Lecture by Lord Roberts Week of Oct 18-24
- Faggots & Peas Dinner & Noson Lawen Saturday Nov 14
- Mari Lwyd party Saturday Dec 12
- Carol Service Sunday Dec 13

President's Message

Croeso a chyfarchion i bawb - welcome & greetings to all.

NAFOW is in Pittsburgh this year from Sept 3-6. There will be tours, interesting seminars and concerts.

There will be a concert by Aled Wyn Davies on Sunday, Oct. 4. Aled was the featured soloist at the NAFOW-Chicago banquet in September 2008. Those of us who were there enjoyed his singing and are looking forward to hearing him again.

The Faggots & Peas Dinner and Noson Lawen will be held on Saturday, November 14, at Westminster. Come and enjoy a delicious meal and good entertainment.

Our annual Carol Service is scheduled for December 13.

Lezlie Wood, President

OWS OFFICERS, 2009-10

President	Lezlie Wood
Vice- President	Dr. Pawl Birt
Secretary	John Price
Treasurer	Myfanwy Davies
Membership	Rick Bellwood
Bwletin	Glenson Jones
Members-at-large	Jean Howard, Tony Howard, Alison Lawson, Gareth Jones, Lyndell Hughes

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS 2009-2010

The committee has been working hard to organize the following exciting and varied events for 2009-2010. There is sure to be something on the list that will interest you. Please try to support us as much as you can.

Sunday, October 4th - Recital by the award winning young Welsh tenor, Aled Wyn Davies with Alan Thomas, piano and organ. 3 p.m. Westminster Presbyterian Church, 470 Roosevelt Ave- Adults \$15, Students \$5. For more info phone Alan Thomas, 613-829-2017.

Week of October 18-24 - a lecture by Lord Roger Roberts of Llandudno who is visiting Ottawa as part of a delegation from the UK. Exact date and details to be announced.

Saturday, November 14th - Faggots and Peas supper and Noson Lawen, Westminster Presbyterian Church. It isn't too early to start thinking of how you can contribute to the Noson Lawen - perhaps by giving a recitation or telling some jokes, performing a dance, singing a song or playing an instrument.

Saturday, December 12th - a Mari Lwyd party for all ages. This ancient celebration promises to be fun! Details to be announced.

Sunday, December 13th - Christmas Carol Service, Westminster Presbyterian Church, 470 Roosevelt, 7 p.m.

St David's Day weekend - to be announced

The **2009 North American Festival of Wales** featuring the 78th Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu will be held in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania on September 3 - 6, 2009. Don't miss this opportunity for fellowship and Welsh culture!

Our daytime programming will feature four days of interesting and informative seminars, workshops, concerts & much more. The festival eisteddfod again features the David G. Morris Award for Semi-Professional Soloist, with the winner receiving a trip to Wales to compete at the National Eisteddfod. The event starts on the Thursday with the opening ceremonies followed by the opening dinner and Folk concert featuring Ar Log & Dafydd Iwan. Friday's Grand Banquet will feature the awarding of the NAWAF Heritage Medallion to Mari Morgan along with a performance by tenor Gwyndaf Jones. Saturday's Grand Concert will feature the North American Welsh Choir which is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year. The choir features several of our local OWS members. On Sunday we will celebrate the 78th Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu of North America conducted by Eilir Owen-Griffith from Cardiff and accompanied by our own organ master Mr.

Alan Thomas. On top of all this there will be many interesting tours and seminars on all sorts of Welsh topics including Welsh language classes, The Diaries of Richard Burton and the origin of Welsh Lovespoons. All the information you need and to obtain registration packages please go to the website at nafow.org

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Westminster Presbyterian Church
470 Roosevelt Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario
May 21, 2009 7:00 PM

ATTENDANCE:

Rick Bellwood, Myfanwy Davies, John Griffiths, Lyndell Hughes, Stan Hughes, Sonia Kho, Alison Lawson, John Lawson, Bob Price, Lezlie Wood.

1. CALL TO ORDER

President and Chair: Lezlie Wood called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. MOMENT OF SILENCE

There was a moment of silence in remembrance of members who had passed away since the annual meeting of 2008.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was accepted without a formal motion.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF MAY 22, 2008

An error was noted in the spelling of "Hughes" in the minutes of the 2008, under the heading, "Attendance." It was **MOVED** by Bob Price, and **SECONDED** by Myfanwy Davies, that the minutes of the annual general meeting of May 22, 2008, be accepted as corrected. **CARRIED**.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Alison Lawson reported that the Children's Christmas Party was cancelled due to a lack of interest, and that the Service of Carols and Readings had to be cancelled because of the weather.

6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Lezlie Wood distributed copies of her report to those present. In her report, she reviewed the society's functions during the previous year, including the Faggots and Peas / Noson Lawen, the St. David's Day Banquet, and the Gymanfa Ganu; she noted that the St David's Day Banquet was not well attended this year. She thanked everyone who had contributed in any way to the success of these functions.

It was **MOVED** by Lezlie Wood, and **SECONDED** by Myfanwy Davies, that the President's Report be accepted as presented. **CARRIED**.

7. TREASURER'S REPORT

Alison Lawson thanked John Davies for reviewing the financial accounts in his usual careful and complete manner.

Copies of the Treasurer's Report for the year ending April 30, were distributed to those present. The report included: balance sheet; a summary of transactions through the main account; a summary of net receipts by main function; a detailed expense and revenue sheet for each of: a) the St. David's Day Dinner Dance 2008; b) the Faggots and Peas Evening 2008; and c) the Maesteg Concert of September 2008; and a list of assets which have been expensed to zero.

Alison then made a number of clarifying comments on the

statements, in response to questions from the floor.

Alison informed the meeting that the Ottawa Welsh Society Scholarship, awarded yearly to a winner in the Kiwanis Music Festival, was usually \$300, but that for 2009 the amount requested by the Kiwanis Club was only \$200. It was agreed that the winner should receive an additional \$100, and that Bob Price would inquire as to how to arrange the payment.

Myfanwy Davies suggested that the winner of the Ottawa Welsh Society Scholarship again be invited to sing for the Society, perhaps at the Noson Lawen, or at another Society function.

It was **MOVED** by Alison Lawson, and **SECONDED** by John Griffiths, that the Treasurer's report be accepted. **CARRIED**.

8. MEMBERSHIP REPORT

It was **MOVED** by Lyndell Hughes, and **SECONDED** by Stanley Hughes, that the question of how to deal with lapsed memberships be left in the hands of the Committee. **CARRIED**.

9. ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

Lezlie Wood invited nominations for membership on the Executive Committee

John Griffiths nominated Rick Bellwood.

Alison Lawson nominated Pawl Birt.

Rick Bellwood nominated Myfanwy Davies.

It was **MOVED** by John Griffiths, and **SECONDED** by Myfanwy Davies, that the three persons nominated be accepted, and that nominations be closed. **CARRIED**.

Alison Lawson and Lezlie Wood agreed to continue on the committee. It was understood that Glenison Jones, John Price, and Jean and Tony Howard also intended to continue as members of the committee. John Lawson will remain on the committee as its web master. Bob Price will resign as of the end of the general meeting.

It was **MOVED** by Lyndell Hughes, and **SECONDED** by Myfanwy Davies, that the Committee be allowed to add to its own membership as it sees fit. **CARRIED**.

Alison reported that Rev. Clifford Evans had called to announce his resignation from the position of Chaplain for the Ottawa Welsh Society.

10. NEW BUSINESS

10.1 St. David's Day Dinner. There were about 50 attendees at the 2009 dinner. It was agreed that this was too low a count to make the event worthwhile, and that some changes should be considered. Possible options: a) continue as in the past, and hope for a larger turnout; b) hold a Saturday luncheon; c) hold a Sunday luncheon.

It was **MOVED** by Lyndell Hughes, and **SECONDED** by John Griffiths, that a note be put in the Bwletin soliciting suggestions from the OWS membership. **CARRIED**.

10.2 Honorary Membership.

It was **MOVED** by Myfanwy Davies, and **SECONDED** by John Griffiths, that, as a token of our gratitude for the many ways in which he has contributed to the Society over the years, Mr. Roy Morris be named an honorary member of the Ottawa Welsh Society. **APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Bob Price will write to Roy, announcing the decision.

10.3 Aled Wyn Davies Concert. Myfanwy Davies reported that a concert was being organized by Alan Thomas, to be given by Aled Wyn Davies on Sunday, October 4, 2009, in Westminster Presbyterian Church. Alan will bear all costs associated with the concert. Alan is asking for the OWS's support by attending the concert.

The OWS will manage the post-concert reception. Tickets are available now from Myfanwy.

A second concert is to be given in Toronto on Tuesday, October 6, 2009.

10.4 Wales Smithsonian Cymru. Myfanwy Davies announced this as the title of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, to be held June 24 - 28, and July 1 - 5, 2009, on the National Mall, in Washington, D.C. Wales will be the featured nation at this 43rd annual festival. At the same time, Wales will also hold a second festival in Washington, to coincide with the first. Between the two festivals, there will be over two hundred participants from Wales, representing film, music, theatre, tourism, visual arts, music. The provisional program for the combined festivals is available online.

A notice of the event will be published in the Bwletin.

10.5 Other.

Myfanwy reported the passing of two former members of the OWS: Evelyn Brown and Bertram Coates.

Alison reported that John Lawson would try to have the website in a satisfactory form within two months; otherwise, the Committee would have to hire someone to handle the work. It was agreed that the decision whether to hire someone should be left to the Committee.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Lezlie Wood announced that the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM., following approval of a motion by Myfanwy Davies and John Griffiths.

Robert Price Secretary (May 23, 2009)

New Members

More Jones's....

Gareth Gwyn Jones, his wife Marie-Louise and son Caleb Gwyn will relocate to the National Capital Region in August 2009. Gareth, a native of Bangor, North Wales, left home to read engineering at Liverpool University in 1993. During his university days, he began his association with Welsh groups, and served as president of the Welsh society. Upon graduating, he moved to London to work for Bechtel, an international engineering, construction and project management company. From 9 to 5 he worked on international oil and gas, high speed rail and power projects. Outside of work hours, Gareth frequented the Gray's Inn Road Welsh Society and held the position of second tenor with the London Welsh Chorale. After 7 years in London and a couple of site visits to Kazakhstan, he decided it was time to move from the big smoke... and landed in Taiwan in 2002. Gareth worked on the Taiwan High Speed Rail project and met his wife to be, who was working at the Canadian Trade Office in Taipei.

Marie-Louise is originally from Orillia, ON. During their time in Taiwan they founded the Taiwan Welsh Society which grew to 100+ members, hosted Bryn Terfel during his Far East Tour and the Morryston Orpheus Welsh Male Voice Choir. BBC

Wales visited Taipei to film a documentary about Gareth's expat life which aired in Wales in 2006 on the 'Ar dy Feic' program

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cymru/tramor/asia/taiwan.shtml>

In 2005, Gareth and Marie-Louise moved from Taipei to Boston. Moving from xie xie ni to "thank you" and forsaking chop-sticks for silverware was quite a task, not to mention adjusting to life in leafy suburbia. Marie-Louise continued her work for DFAIT at the Consulate General of Canada in Boston, while Gareth worked in the private sector for a management consulting firm. They quickly integrated into the Boston Cymrodorion Society and Marie-Louise continued her Welsh studies, at Cymdeithas Madog (Albany '07) and at Harvard. Gareth also became active as VP within the Wales North America Business Chamber www.wnabc.com. Their first child was born in 2007. Caleb is now two and is trilingual Welsh/English/French (well, able to count to 10 in all 3 languages..) and starting on his Mandarin. Their diplomatic posting to Boston comes to an end this summer, so they are relocating back to headquarters in Ottawa. Gareth and Caleb are looking forward to living in Canada for the first time. Above all, the Jones family is looking forward to being part of the Ottawa Gymdeithas Gymraeg, and to flying the Welsh flag outside their residence in Aylmer.

They can be reached at:

Gareth.Jones@CeltiConnect.com

Or connect through:

www.linkedin.com/in/garethgjones

www.linkedin.com/in/marielouisehannan

[A warm welcome to Gareth, Marie-Louise and Caleb; Gareth has volunteered to join our OWS Executive.]

PASSAGES AND MILESTONES

On April 17th, the Society lost a former President as **Evelyn Brown** passed away. She was very active in the Welsh Society for many years, and served in a number of positions on the Executive. In 1979 she became President. She was also a member of the Ottawa Welsh Choral Society for a long time.

Ten days later we lost **Bertram Coates**, who attended a number of Society functions over the years with his wife Gemma. Bertram was also born in Wales and had served in the British Merchant Navy before coming to Canada.

Early in June we heard of the death of **William Kelly**. Bill was Deputy Commissioner of the RCMP when he retired, and then he and his late wife, Nora, turned their attention to writing books about the history of the Force.

On June 23rd came the sad news that **Ken Thomas** had passed away. Ken & his wife Grace attended a number of Welsh functions, particularly when Grace was singing with the Ottawa Welsh Choral Society and the Gwalia Singers.

Our condolences also go out to **Tony and Jean Howard** on the recent passing of Tony's sister, and to **Muriel Mercer** on the death of her friend, Gerry Wyman.

On a much happier note, we congratulate **Roy and Kay Morris** who celebrated **50 years** of marriage on May 16th. **Gwen and Jim Dodson** marked their Silver Anniversary on May 19th, while **Alison and John Lawson** celebrated 40 years in June. Congratulations to all!

Special Celebration - Dr Stanley Hughes

A Welsh-born Ottawa expert on mycology has donated his large collection of books and papers on the subject to the National Botanic Garden of Wales.

Mycology is a branch of biology concerned with the study of fungi, & Stanley Hughes is a recognized expert on the subject.

On Monday April 20, Carmarthenshire-born Dr Hughes was guest of honour, and was made an honorary founder member of the National Botanic Garden of Wales in recognition of his donation of some 40,000 documents to the garden's library.

Dr Hughes and his wife, Lyndell, travelled from their home in Ottawa, Canada, to help celebrate the opening of this collection.

[Heartiest congratulations to Dr Stanley Hughes. Stan and Lyndell are active members of the OWS.]

Rhys Lewis - Cycling Across Canada

Our son Rhys Lewis, was in a car accident 5 years ago and spent 18 months in a wheelchair. He is now cycling across Canada to raise much needed funds for the head injury charity 'Rehabuk' that helped to give him his life back.

I wonder if any of your members could send him messages of encouragement to help him on his way. They can read his story and follow his journey at www.justgiving.com/cyclingcanada

He left Vancouver on June 6 2009 and this morning was on Highway 1 heading for Medicine Hat.

We are a Welsh family from Llanberis, Gwynedd. Both our families worked in the slate quarry.

I do hope you have time to encourage him, he really has turned his life around.

Diolch, Ken and Catrin Roberts

[Editor's Note: Rhys plans to cover the 5000 mile journey in 4 months. By July 13 he had covered 1,334 miles (Vancouver to Strathmore Alberta). You can follow his progress on his blog at <http://www.crazyguyonabike.com/doc/CyclingCanada>]

AWR SGWRSIO

Dewch ac ymunwch gyda ni i sgwrsio yn Gymraeg. 'Rydym yn cwrdd bob mis i ymarfer yr iaith wrth drafod bob math o bwnciau.

LLE? Tafarn Y Clock Tower, 575 Stryd Bank

PA AMSER? 7-9 p.m.

PA DDIWRNOD? nos Lun olaf pob mis

Bydd croeso cynnes i bawb sydd yn siarad Cymraeg neu yn ei dysgu.

Bydd y cyfarfod nesaf am 7 o'r gloch, Nos Lun, Gorffennaf 27.

Ffoniwch Alison Lawson 725-2704 am wybodaeth.

CALLING ALL WELSH SPEAKERS AND PEOPLE LEARNING TO SPEAK WELSH

Come and join us in practising speaking Welsh. We meet on the last Monday of each month from 7-9 p.m. at the Clock Tower Pub, 575 Bank Street. This pub is easily accessible from the Queensway in both directions. Everyone is welcome-please come and support us.

Phone Alison Lawson 725-2704 for more information.

Welsh Proverb

Nid yw chwedl yn colli wrth ei hadrodd - A tale does not lose through the telling.

Welsh Language Programme 'Pawb a'i Farn' airs from Washington DC.

By Pawl W. Birt (Is-Lywydd)

As part of the Smithsonian Institute Folklife Festival in Washington D.C. recently, a special recording of the popular S4C television programme "Pawb a'i Farn" was made in Washington at the Newseum, not far from the Capitol. The usual format of the programme in Wales is to invite a panel of three or four 'experts' on various fields, as well as a local audience who are encouraged to participate fully in the hour-long programme. Questions are put to the panel, and after each of them have made their comments, the discussion reverts to the audience. The anchor-man for this programme is a well-known figure on Welsh-language television Dewi Llwyd, who can also be seen very often presenting the nightly news programme in Welsh. He also presents a current affairs programme on Radio Cymru called Dewi Llwyd ar Fore Sul. Some members of the Society may remember when he came to Ottawa some ten years ago to record interviews for a television programme about bilingualism in Canada for S4C (The Welsh Language TV Channel). 'Pawb a'i Farn' is usually recorded in different parts of Wales, to give all parts of Welsh-speaking Wales a chance to air their views about current and local affairs. For the programme in Washington, the BBC (who provide the programme for S4C) invited Welsh-speakers from mainly the US, but also Canada (Pawl W. Birt) and two from Argentina. Many were already present at the festival but some including myself were very generously invited to come down to Washington to participate.

On the panel we had Rhodri Morgan, First-Minister of the National Assembly for Wales, Alison Hill, a Welsh journalist now working in the US, and Gareth Howell who had worked for the UN. The programme was recorded on a hot evening in Washington in the television studio of the Newseum, on the same street as the White House. Five people were selected to ask the questions to the panel. These included myself and I can reveal that we were asked beforehand to submit possible questions and then we would be told on the night which ones would be used. To be honest, most of the questions were quite 'safe', and not too controversial and this led to a consensus between panel and audience. My question which came first was "to what extent will Wales benefit from this major festival in Washington?" Other questions revolved around Barack Obama and American relations with the rest of the world, Welsh contribution to the US, and a question that attracted a lot of comment on 'sustainability' in Wales, and North America. One of the questioners, by the way was Iris Williams, who was famous as a singer in Wales in the 60s and 70s, but who now lives in New York. She is best remembered for her superb recording of the hymn 'Pererin Wylf.' to the tune of 'Amazing Grace'. All in all, it was a remarkable event, a programme entirely recorded in Welsh from Washington, with people from all walks of life, and accents from North and South Wales (and Patagonia!).

Those who would like to see the programme can access it on the S4C web-page where broadband programmes are listed. It will be available until 5th August, 2009. Here is the website: <http://www.s4c.co.uk/clic/>

Smithsonian Exhibition of Welsh Folk Life

by Myfanwy Davies

Each summer the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. mounts an exhibition that highlights various aspects of world culture, and shows how these traditions have added to the American mosaic. This year, Wales and Latin America were the two featured groups.

I flew down to the American capital to visit this exhibition for a couple of days, and was very impressed at the size and scope of the endeavour. I had first heard of it about 10 years ago when I was on the Scholarship and Grants Committee of the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association. The WNGGA was one of many groups that provided financial support for this project and I believe it paid for itself many times over, as thousands of people from all walks of life visited the exhibition during its 10 day run.

I had imagined that the exhibit would take up several rooms in one of the Museum buildings, but in fact, two dozen tents were used to house the various activities, and they were spread over one third of the National Mall. This is a very popular destination as it runs between the U.S. Capital building and the Washington and Lincoln Memorials.

When I arrived on Thursday morning, I started by visiting the tents that were set up to highlight various crafts and trades that are carried on in Wales. I talked to one chap who was hand carving a wood pulpit. He was using sketches of one that had been made about 200 years ago.

I then visited a Textile tent and watched a gentleman using a spinning wheel. A group of school children were fascinated that the mound of sheep's wool on the floor that was being transformed into thread. While I was admiring the woven textiles, I spoke to a man from Melin Tregwynt about the variety of products they produced, from socks, to purses to clothing to stuffed animals.

My next stop was an ironworks tent where a couple were firing up the furnace and pounding pieces of metal into beautiful iron gates. Beside them was a tent featuring slate workers. One man was using a chisel and hammer to split the layers of slate, while the other was carving names into a rectangular piece that would be used as a house name plaque.

I then stopped in a tent titled Cymru a'r Byd/Wales and the World, which told the story of how the Welsh have dispersed over the globe. Sharing this tent was a chap who had produced a book about the Welsh in Patagonia, and we discovered we had met in Esquel when I was there last year. Small world!!

Following that conversation, I stopped into the Sports tent, and while they had lots of pictures from rugby games, they didn't have any stars of the sport there. Darn! I would have loved to meet Shane Williams or one of the other Welsh players. Next door was a Family Activity tent where children of all ages could colour replicas of the Welsh flag, or flowers, and I chose to produce a Red Dragon. I then signed my name to it and attached it to the Family Tree display that had been erected. I chose to place my card next to that of Catherine Zeta-Jones, and while I didn't see her, I understand she visited the show earlier in the week with her children.

By this time it was early afternoon, the sun was beating down, and the heat was intense, so I decided to stop for a cold drink and some lunch. I passed by the beer tent and visited the

Welsh Food tent. Unfortunately this was not a highlight of my visit.

They offered 6 items on the menu, and I chose the Drover's lunch, thinking the ham, cheese and salad would be a good choice. It wasn't. There was very little ham or cheese, and the salad was soggy. I shared a table with some locals, and they were not impressed with the food either. One of them had cawl, while the other had Glamorgan sausages with the same soggy salad.

The food tent was flanked by the two largest entertainment stages. The bigger of the two is the Red Dragon Stage, while the smaller and more informal is the Rugby Club. After my lunch I moved to the Rugby Club where I enjoyed hearing a mother and daughter combination from Aberystwyth singing Welsh folk songs.

Then it was time to move to The Square Mile tent which hosted a number of workshops, discussions and demonstrations. Each afternoon Kate Wolveridge of the Welsh National Opera led a choral workshop that was very popular. She has a wonderful sparkling personality and had everyone clapping rhythms, singing a folk song (Going with Tom to Tywyn) and finishing with Cwm Rhondda.

Following the workshop I walked to the Red Dragon Stage to watch "The Boy Who Went to the West Wind". This 90 minute production was performed by members of the Welsh National Opera, WNO wind players and children from the British School in Washington who had practised with the WNO members earlier in the week.

Some of the Festival entertainment took place at other sites around Washington, and later that afternoon I attended a performance at the Kennedy Center. They have erected a Millennium Stage in the lobby of the building, and use it for free shows to entertain the public, and those attending later shows at the Center. On this occasion we were entertained by Kate Wolveridge, members of the WNO woodwind section, and the mother-daughter singers. They all performed Welsh music and were warmly received by the audience who filled the chairs, stairs and every other available space.

By the time that show was over, the early morning start, along with the incredible heat, got the better of me so I skipped the scheduled movie and returned to my cool hotel room to sleep.

On Friday morning, I returned to the Mall area and started visiting the tents I had missed the day before. I began by watching a man making a coracle. He was planning to work on it through the two weeks of the exhibition, and have it finished by the last day, July 5th. Do you know that there are at least four different styles of coracle, and the shape depends on the river it is made to sail?

Next to the fishing tent was one that featured outdoor sports, and the people there told of mountain climbing, hiking and water sports that are popular in Wales. Further along I found tents where one chap was carving love spoons, another was building a triple harp, while a third man was making wooden clogs. It was fascinating to talk to these artisans and see how much talent and care they put into their products. They certainly were wonderful ambassadors for Wales, as were all the other participants I

spoke with.

One of the more popular spots during the exhibition was the storytelling circle, and I paused to listen to this ancient form of entertainment. The visiting schoolchildren, and many adults, were mesmerized by the young chap telling a story of magic.

I then moved onto another tent that highlighted the printing, and binding of books. I overheard the proprietor telling a curious onlooker about the Welsh language and explaining the unusual letter combinations.

My next stop was in the pottery tent where one young lady was working a pottery wheel to produce jugs and coffee mugs, while another was decorating baked pieces of china with delicate designs of flowers and birds.

After listening to part of an interview show that was being broadcast from the Media tent to Patagonia, I moved to the cooking demonstration tent and gladly took a shaded seat for the next show. The chef used Welsh ingredients such as cockles and laverbread to make a quiche and cole slaw for a light lunch.

Unfortunately they did not share the food with the audience, so I decided to take a break from the heat and grab some lunch in the Smithsonian Castle. I then visited an indoor display called The Welsh Table. It featured samples of the work of 10 modern Welsh potters and some of the pieces I found very attractive.

I braved the stifling heat to return to the Mall and attended another choral workshop with Kate & the WNO. I spent the rest of the afternoon catching other musical acts in the Rugby Club & the Red Dragon Tent. I enjoyed shows by Sild, Party Cut Lloi & the Hennessys before having a chat with Robin Huw Bowen, the acclaimed Welsh Triple Harpist. Robin had just performed with Crasdant, a very popular Welsh folk group, & participants in the Buffalo Gymanfa that I helped organize in 2004.

A massive thunderstorm broke the heatwave as I made a quick trip back to my hotel, and I returned downtown in the pouring rain to attend a showing of the Welsh film "Sleep Furiously". It is set in a small farming community in rural Wales and tells of their struggle to keep the ways of their past while coping with the encroaching future. The director, Gideon Koppel was in attendance and answered questions about the film afterwards.

Saturday was a little cooler, and the Mall was much more crowded. This is obviously a very popular festival and I was thrilled to see so many people interested in Wales, and the folklore of our homeland.

I wandered through the masses to attend a talk on harps that featured Robin Huw Bowen and Sian James discussing their instruments and the various musical styles they play. I also checked out the progress of the coracle and harp that were being built and watched a strong man building a stone fence.

I ran into some friends from the WNGGA and sat with them to compete in a Welsh Trivia contest. Our group did quite well, taking first place with a score of 35 out of 42. The prize was four tickets to a concert by Iris Williams.

The Rehoboth Welsh Choir participated in the choral workshop that afternoon and then gave a concert in the Red Dragon tent. They performed a variety of Welsh pieces, and were given a wonderful reception. At the end of the concert, hymn sheets were passed around and we had a mini gymanfa.

I joined a couple of the choir members for a beer, followed by dinner and then we moved on to the Museum of the American Indian for a concert by Iris Williams. I was not familiar with this lady, but certainly enjoyed her cabaret style show. She has been singing for many years and has performed with Tom Jones, Bob Hope, Victor Borge, Rosemary Clooney & others.

She has had several hit records including Pererin Wyf (Amazing Grace) and the theme to The Deerhunter (He Was Beautiful). She helps various charities and has been awarded an O.B.E., among other honours. She is also a member of the Gorsedd of Bards at the National Eisteddfod.

Her show this evening featured songs by Rogers and Hart, Jerome Kern and the Gershwins. She also sang beautiful renditions of Autumn Leaves (in Welsh), Pererin Wyf, and Unwaith Eto. Her lovely voice and warm personality made this a very special evening.

That completed my three day visit to the Festival and I flew home the next day. I would have liked to have stayed another week to attend performances by Catrin Finch and Only Men Aloud! but that wasn't possible. However I am glad that I was able to attend some of the activities and I think this was a marvellous way for the general public to learn more about Wales.

How do you want to celebrate St David's Day?

St David's Day is a time when we celebrate with pride our connections to Wales. The Ottawa Welsh Society has traditionally organized an evening dinner dance for this event. Unfortunately, for many reasons, attendance at this event has gradually declined over the years. At this year's AGM it was agreed that we should canvass the membership regarding their preferences. This is your chance to let us know what kind of event would encourage you to participate in the celebrations.

Please let us know which of the two following choices would appeal to you. You can also provide your own comments:

- 1 The traditional Saturday evening dinner dance with guest speaker.
- 2 A Saturday lunch with guest speaker and also entertainment.
- 3 Your own suggestion.

We need your input in order to decide what to do this coming year.

PLEASE get in touch with Alison Lawson or Glenison Jones either by email to: alisonlawson@sympatico.ca

Or by phone to:

Alison 613-725-2704 or Glenison 613-592-8957

Or by mail to:

Alison Lawson, 449 Mansfield Ave, Ottawa ON K2A 2S6

WE NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU BY

MONDAY, AUGUST 17th.