

# Y Bwletin

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[www.ottawawelsh.com](http://www.ottawawelsh.com)

Editor / Golygydd: Marilyn E. Jenkins

## Sywddogion Y Gymdeithas/ Officers of the Society

**President/Llywydd:** John Price  
[john.price@sympatico.ca](mailto:john.price@sympatico.ca)

**Vice-President/Is-Lywydd:** vacant

**Secretary/Ysgrifennydd:**  
Marilyn Jenkins  
[marilyn.e.jenkins@sympatico.ca](mailto:marilyn.e.jenkins@sympatico.ca)

**Treasurer/Trysorydd:**  
John Williams  
[john.williams2@gmail.com](mailto:john.williams2@gmail.com)

**Membership/Aelodaeth:**  
Sian Jones  
[sianwynn@hotmail.com](mailto:sianwynn@hotmail.com)

**Members at Large:**  
Gaye Brittle  
[rgbrittle@hotmail.com](mailto:rgbrittle@hotmail.com)  
  
Wendy Wynne-Jones  
[w.wynne-jones@sympatico.ca](mailto:w.wynne-jones@sympatico.ca)

Alison Lawson  
[alisonlawson@rogers.com](mailto:alisonlawson@rogers.com)

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**Editor's comment:** Many thanks to contributors to this edition of *Y Bwletin*. If you have news or contributions to make, please contact:

[marilyn.e.jenkins@sympatico.ca](mailto:marilyn.e.jenkins@sympatico.ca)

Y Gymdeithas ar y We / The Society on the Net:

[www.ottawawelsh.com](http://www.ottawawelsh.com)



Ottawa Welsh Society/Cymdeithas Cymry Ottawa

### Carol Service

People today may not be such regular church-goers as they were even a generation ago, but the traditional Service of Nine Lessons and Carols still seems to have a drawing power that other church services have lost. For those of us who grew up in the UK, perhaps it's memories of a carol service celebrated at a local church or chapel or at school (at least it was better than more lessons, exams or free periods supervised by a strict teacher as we filled in time in the lead-up to the Christmas break).

This year's service is scheduled for 13 December at 3:00 p.m. at Westminster Presbyterian Church. We hope to see you there in large numbers for the singing, reading and for the fellowship time in the Hall after the Service. Contributions to and help with the *te bach* are always gratefully received.

However, we do seem to feature the same readers year after year. Are there no aspiring readers out there who would like to read a passage of scripture in Welsh or in English (or even in French)? There may be some who feel that they cannot read from the Bible since they are not believers. I am not sure that this is a complete argument since people can quite legitimately read such passages for the beauty of the language or for the sense of occasion or even because they are confident that they read well, something on which I think the Welsh can generally pride themselves.

We also seem to feature pretty much the same carols year after year. There are a lot of beautiful carols that are not well known or played very frequently. Do you have favourites that are not featured? Why not let us know and if we can come up with the music, we might be able to include them.

Since it will soon be time to start organizing the service, please feel free to contact John Price at (613) 724-3846 or at [john.price@sympatico.ca](mailto:john.price@sympatico.ca) to volunteer your skills as a reader or to suggest a new hymn we might sing. Some people may be disappointed that the service is no longer held in the evening but this

decision was taken to allow people to attend the service and at least start their homeward journey before it is very dark, especially at a time when driving conditions may be more challenging.

Despite the time change, which has been in effect for a few years now, the service and its beauty are still present. Do come, do volunteer and do let us have any suggestions you might have. See you at the Noson Lawen!

- John Price, President

### Reminder

We welcome any donations of food to the *Te bach* following the service. Just drop off your goodies in the kitchen before proceeding upstairs to the service.

### SINGERS WANTED!

Dear Friends:

Once again Alan Thomas has kindly agreed to direct an ad hoc choir to perform in the OWS Service of Lessons and Carols, to be held on Sunday, December 13. This year the choir will present two carols. Please consider taking part, and send me a note to that effect; and would you indicate as well your preferred section: SATB. My email address is [robertprice@magma.ca](mailto:robertprice@magma.ca).

Because the Christmas season is so busy, please mark your calendars right away, and reserve Sunday afternoon, December 13 for this enjoyable event. I look forward to hearing from you.

- Bob Price

**Ontario Welsh Festival Headquarters:  
The Lord Elgin Hotel  
April 22-24, 2016**

When was the last time you did some sightseeing in the beautiful downtown core of Ottawa?

We invite you to leave all your cares and troubles at home for the weekend of April 22-24, 2016 – just lock the door and come and enjoy a weekend stay at the stately Lord Elgin Hotel! You will be at the very centre of all the action for the whole Festival. Many of our activities will be held here, including the Te Bach, Noson Lawen, children's activities, seminars, the banquet and the nightly hymn singing afterglows. You can browse through the various displays at the market place. You will meet old friends and make new ones from across Ontario, Canada, the United States and Wales. Who knows, you might end up having breakfast at the next table to the Three Welsh Tenors!

When you are ready to go to the concert on Saturday evening or the Gymanfa sessions on Sunday, there will be a bus waiting to whisk you the few short blocks to Dominion Chalmers church – or you can enjoy a leisurely stroll down Elgin Street to get there. In addition, the hotel is ideally located just steps away from many attractions including the National War Memorial, the beautiful walks along the Rideau Canal and Ottawa River, the impressive National Art Gallery and the splendid Parliament Buildings. In fact, we are hoping to organise a tour of the National Art Gallery, focusing on pictures with Welsh connections, such as those of Robert Harris. Tours of the Parliament Buildings can be booked at the nearby Visitors' Centre on a daily basis.

The hotel is offering a special Festival rate of \$147 per night. Just phone them at 613-235-3333 (mention you are with the Ontario Welsh Festival) to reserve a room. How can you resist?

- Alison Lawson (on behalf of the OGGA committee)



*Photo courtesy Ottawa Tourism*

**Rideau Canal Ottawa**

**Alan Thomas retires from Westminster**

Alan Thomas, longtime organist at Westminster and for many local choral events, has decided to retire from his church duties at the end of August 2016.

He has expressed the fervent hope “that the OWS will be able to continue its connection with the church, and that I shall continue as guest organist”.

He feels that it is a good idea to retire while he is “still in reasonable shape”. It can be difficult for a musician to realize when they need to step back.

Alan is looking forward to the Christmas service and to working with the Côr Alltudion this December. We will all be looking forward to the future with Alan.

- Marilyn Jenkins

Note: there will be a further article on the occasion of Alan's retirement.

**Noson Lawen and Social Supper  
(aka the Faggots and Peas!)**

Saturday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Westminster Presbyterian Church  
470 Roosevelt Ave. just south of Byron

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. ---- Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

Adults \$20.00, Children Age 5-12 \$5.00  
under 5 free

Please phone or email your ticket orders to  
Wendy Wynne-Jones  
613-260-7763  
w.wynne-jones@sympatico.ca

Deadline for ordering tickets is  
**Tuesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Please also let us know of any food issues/allergies

**NO TICKETS WILL BE SOLD AT THE DOOR**  
*This is a very popular event, so DO order your tickets now!*

We will need some physical help – volunteers to help in the kitchen, setting up (morning), taking down at the end (this is really important at the end of the evening!!). Please let Wendy know if you can put your strength and skills at our disposal!

**Digwyddiadau/Events:**

November 7	5:30 p.m.	Noson lawen
November 16	1:30 p.m.	OWS Exec.
December 13	3:00 p.m.	Lessons & Carols
March 5, 2016	St. David's Luncheon	
March 6, 2016	Gymanfa Ganu	
April 22-24, 2016	Ontario Welsh Festival	

**Noson Lawen**

We will need people to take part in the Noson Lawen. Singing, playing an instrument, poetry reading, dancing, jokes, stories – all are welcome.

Please contact [alan.thomas@sympatico.ca](mailto:alan.thomas@sympatico.ca) if you are interested in taking part in plenty of time, so we can set up an interesting programme for everyone!

### Ottawa connection with Welsh Patagonia

Within a day of reading of plans to mark the founding of the Welsh Colony in Patagonia, I discovered a personal connection with that venture. A family history project found two brothers, my very distant cousins, taken to Glandiad. As is often the case in such searches into the past, a mix of despair and valor is found. It is one story of how some Cymry found themselves on the shores of South America.



My great grandfather was an Austin, a surname in Wales only a tad less common than Thomas, Davies, Evans,

Jones, or Jenkins. Marriage (1802) to Elizabeth Teague separated my Austin forbears from the pack and uncovered the story of three children previously unknown.

#### Despair

Born in Merthyr Tydfil, William Teague Austin (b. 1852), Mary Austin (b. 1854) and Thomas Teague Austin (b. 1856); all three were admitted to the Union Workhouse 6 July 1859. But the children were not strictly orphans. Their father, William, appears in the 1861 UK and Wales census, employed as a gas fitter. Was he unable to care for them? Did he put them in the workhouse or were they taken from him by the authorities? More sobering is the lack of charity of a large set of Austin relatives, my great-grandfather's family included, who did nothing to help William and his children. Nothing more is known about Mary after she entered the workhouse.

#### Valor

In 1865 the orphans, William (age 13) and Thomas (age 11) Austin, were taken on the voyage to Patagonia by Daniel & Mary Evans. A corruption of the names Austin (Awstin) and Teague (Tegu) was a factor in identifying the boys in the lists of colonists.

Little is known about William. He married Jane Hughes, on 19 Jun 1873, at Seion, Rawson, Chubut, Patagonia.



Thomas prospered, becoming a leader within the Colony and making his mark as an entrepreneur by establishing a cooperative to ensure fair markets for the farmers.

Thomas settled in Casados, Chubut, Patagonia. He died 9 Jul 1926.

Down the years and across the miles, the Austin boys who went to Patagonia are my 1<sup>st</sup> cousins 3 x removed to my mother. Thanks to the efforts of a 1<sup>st</sup> cousin in the UK, we have been able to find and write to one Austin cousin born in the Welsh Colony and now living in Santiago Chile.

It is a story less drastic than the famines and clearances that brought other Celts to our shores but an inkling of what it took to overcome hiraeth and push some of the Welsh out of their valleys.

- Christopher Smart

Sources that might interest others looking for more on Glandiad

The 1865 Settlers from Mountain Ash on the Mimosa to Patagonia, Argentina: <http://www.clwydfhs.org.uk/miscellanea/themimosa.htm>

The Full list of passengers on the 1865 voyage of the Mimosa: <http://www.immigrantships.net/v3/arrivalsv3/>

Other links to the history and current affairs of the Welsh in Patagonia: <http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/SOUTH-AM-EMI/2003-07/1058690649>

<http://www.glandiad.com/>

<http://www.cymru-ariannin.com/en/index.php>

Film: Patagonia: <http://www.austinfilm.org/film-patagonia?>

Review of Film, Patagonia: <http://www.austinfilm.org/essential-cinema/program-notes-patagonia?>

For more go to: <http://www.austinfilm.org/page.aspx?pid=2533&txtSearch=Patagonia>

Wales on Line: <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/patagonias-welsh-settlement-cultural-colonialism-2514111>

<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/patagonia-could-form-template-falklands-2513209>

Possible lead to the history of Thomas Teague Austin after his arrival in Patagonia: <http://www.myheritage.es/site-family-tree-26226581/austin>

## In Memoriam



**Dawn Robin Bard**  
1956 – 2015

Dawn Robin Bard was loved by all who knew her. She had a great intellect and a wonderful sense of humour. She was gentle and very kind and she loved her family dearly.

Dawn lived all of her life in Ottawa. She was diagnosed with diabetes at age 11, but this did not deter her from living a full life. She delighted in spending time with her younger siblings, taking them on outings and teaching them to have fun, to enjoy music and to be independent. As a student, her teacher remembers her as “smart as a whip, an excellent student and very creative. She was a joy to teach and delightful to know”.

As an adult, Dawn worked at the HRU at the Civic Hospital and completed a Master’s degree at the University of Ottawa, while working full-time. Her co-workers remember her warmth and smiling face.

In her spare time, Dawn pursued many interests, including all things aboriginal and Celtic. She was a great friend to harpist and Mohawk Elder Iain Ro-Ha-Hes Phillips in the 1980s and 1990s. At various times, she served as President of the Ottawa Welsh

In the 1990s, with failing eyesight, Dawn was forced to curtail the activities she loved, including singing in the OWCS. She spent the last years of her life at St. Vincent’s hospital where she brightened many lives with her smile and even temperament. She was well-loved by the residents and volunteers and was visited often by nieces and nephews. Despite failing eyesight and the loss of her legs she managed to continue her service to others through her work on the residents’ council and other committees. She was a great friend to residents and volunteers alike. Dawn always noticed when someone was missing from the Monday night Bingo game.

Comments by friends and relatives:

Cousin Karen: When my mother passed Dawn sent me a bracelet that she found and made her think of her. Such a beautiful soul will be deeply missed.

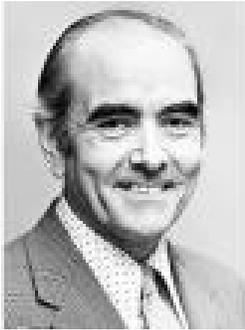
Nephew Owen & niece Soraya: We will never forget you, we will love you forever - you had a very kind heart!

Brother Jeremy: I can say that my life is better because of her presence, because of her enduring love and her legacy of strength in fighting that horrible disease called diabetes. Someone once told me that death is healing and I can feel that now here. Dawn is now whole...

- Marilyn Jenkins

\*\*\*Thanks to family members, Paul Birt, volunteers from St. Vincent’s and co-workers for their comments which helped assemble this remembrance of a gentle, kind soul who died too young.

## In Memoriam



**Rev. Clifford Evans  
1922-2015**

Clifford was born in Cardiff, Wales, shortly after World War 1 on September 13, 1922. He had a tough childhood, his health being fragile due to epilepsy following measles. His parents separated when he was 7 years old and his brother Ernest who was 16 years older became his surrogate father. They had hard times through the depression years and Clifford ended up leaving school at 14 to enter the working world. He delivered bread on a horse and buggy, delivered tools by bicycle to the dock area and worked with a fishmonger de-heading fish before he realized that white collar work was more up his alley. He went to commercial College to learn shorthand, typing and bookkeeping and several clerical jobs followed.

World War 2 came along and because of his childhood epilepsy he was exempted from the forces and avoided the tragic fate of so many of his peers. The family still did not escape the horror of war and in January 1941 as the family huddled in a bomb shelter their house was destroyed in a German air raid. Many of the neighbours lost their lives but luckily Clifford and family escaped. Clifford was shell-shocked for a month after.

Clifford loved learning and had a lot of information packed in his brain. It was always amazing to discuss history, religion or politics with him as he had an immense grasp of dates and facts. He loved language and texts and drama and could recite Shakespeare, poems and scriptures at the drop of a hat. He had studied theology at Richmond College, London, earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in German and Political Science part-time over many years at Carleton

University. He had even gone back to school at age 55 to complete a Masters of Library Science at Western University.

Clifford's interest in the Church began during the war years. It started with a crush on a choir girl but that didn't last and he was soon asked to lead the youth club, as there were very few young men around to help with the teenagers. He began studying to be a local preacher which led him to consider entering the Methodist Ministry.

It was at the annual garden party at Richmond College that Clifford met Christine. In a serendipitous turn of events, a few weeks later they were seated next to each other at a huge church gathering of 2000 people. Christine invited him to stop for tea after the service and so began their relationship. In 1953 they were married.

After 10 years on the Methodist Church Circuit looking after 8 Churches in Swindon, during which 2 sons were born, first David and then Peter, he decided he would prefer to work in one Church with a more concentrated ministry. He applied to positions in Canada and Australia and was offered the job of Assistant Minister in charge of the youth at Queen Mary Road United Church in Montreal. In August 1959 they all set sail from Southampton to start a new life in Canada. They enjoyed their new home and were soon adapting to harsh winters and hot summers.

In 1962 they moved to Ottawa and Clifford was offered the Ministerial position at City View United Church where he would stay for 13 years. It was during this time that Clifford began serving as Chaplain to the Ottawa Welsh Society where they made great friends in the Welsh Community and enjoyed Gymanfa Ganu, picnics and great social events. Clifford was known for his great sense of humour and quick wit which got him out of many tight corners in Church meetings.

In 1964 Richard was born to complete the Evans clan. Clifford was a very disciplined and hard worker and Richard commented at his Dad's funeral that if there was a strong lesson he had learned from his

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Dad it was his work ethic. After a busy weekend he would always be up early Monday morning choosing the hymns for the following week and deciding on his sermon topic.

In 1977, after earning the library science degree, he had a career change and began working in Government libraries. He enjoyed learning a new discipline but began to miss the interaction with the congregations he had had in the ministry. After five years as a librarian he decided to return to parish work and was placed in Williamstown / Martintown in the Seaway Valley. These were happy and fruitful years and many great friends were made in their new country lifestyle.

Retirement came for Clifford in 1988 and 1989 for Christine. After much searching, they found their dream bungalow in Almonte, across from the Mississippi River. Having always lived in manses, this was their first opportunity to own a home and they were soon renovating and creating a showpiece garden. Clifford loved to walk. He became quite a fixture in the town in his brown raincoat, Tilley hat and wraparound Ray Bans. He was affectionately known as Mr. Date Square at the coffee shops after his penchant for always ordering date squares with his latte. After a stroke 2 years ago he was unable to go on his daily walks. Walking had been his elixir of life and had kept him active into his 90's. After another stroke and worsening condition, the house and contents were sold and they moved to a retirement home in Port Perry to be closer to family in Toronto, especially grandchildren, Owen and Meredith.

His final year, although hampered with physical disability, was a good one improved by proximity to family. He was still his bright and cheerful self. Until the end his glass was perpetually half full. He would never complain about any of the physical and mental struggles he was dealing with but we knew it was hard for him. He was at peace with the idea of death. He talked about it matter-of-factly, and would say, "I've had a great life, we all have to die sometime". We can feel better knowing that he didn't suffer through a long illness and is now in a better place. Clifford, your love and laughter will forever be in our hearts; until we meet again.

- Christine and Richard Evans



**Vronwen Davies**  
**1930-2015**

Vronwen was born in December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1930 in Pontypool, Wales, the only child of Kathleen Griffiths and Edwin Vaisey. Her mother liked the name Bronwen, but wanted the alliterative VV initials, so she lived her life as an anglicized mutation.

After elementary school in Wales, Vronwen studied Domestic Science in King's College in London. She grew up in the war years, and was able to make something out of nearly everything. Over the years the children "enjoyed" many gastronomic delights, and were encouraged to keep various items "just in case". This was particularly helpful when a neighbour broke one of his windows, and Vronwen just happened to have a replacement!

For several years, she ran the canteen for BBC in London, and then moved back to Wales to work in the kitchens at ICI in Merthyr Tydfil, where she regularly fed thousands of workers.

In December of 1956 when she met Albert Davies at a Christmas dance her life changed completely. They immediately hit it off and were married the following April. By 1960, Gwen and Myfanwy had arrived, and Albert was offered a job with Atomic Energy of Canada.

They settled in Ottawa, welcoming Catrin to the family, and soon became involved with the Ottawa Welsh Society, which, in those days, served as a surrogate family

## In Memoriam

to a lot of young families in a similar situation. Many close friendships that were formed survive to this day, and legendary parties were held at 9 Aero Drive.

Among the legendary parties held at 9 Aero Drive were Vronwen's annual birthday/New Year's Eve event. Each year there would be a different theme ranging from Disney to CATS to a Roman Orgy. One year she opted for a Medieval Feast and bought all the mead available at the LCBO!

The Davies family helped revitalize the Ottawa Welsh Society, and were very active in organizing events. Albert served as President twice over the years, and Vronwen once. Vronwen catered many of the functions, such as Daffodil teas, Faggots & Peas, Medieval Feasts and Family Nights. On one occasion she made so much cawl she had to buy new garbage cans to transport it. The family always owned a station wagon so they could transport various pots of food or boards of cakes.

In 1968, Vronwen and Albert hosted a meeting to discuss forming a male voice choir. Peeved that women were excluded, Vronwen refused to attend the meeting, although she did provide refreshments. When it became evident that there were too few men available to sing, the choir became a mixed voice ensemble. The entire family was involved with the Ottawa Welsh Choral Society over the years, and participated on every tour the choir undertook. They all served on the Executive and hosted many choir parties.

Whenever a Welsh choir visited Ottawa, Vronwen was involved. Once there were 117 people in the house. The ping-pong table was used for food provided by the various hosts. But the pièce de résistance was a 46 pound hip of beef that was too big for the oven – Vronwen just chopped off a piece and popped it in. The singing was amazing and the neighbours loved the experience.

The family also supported the Ontario Gymanfa Ganu Association. Vronwen was so well-known that she was once elected as trustee while wearing a paper bag on her head. She also worked on the 1977 and 2000 Welsh National Gymanfa planning committees, and helped ensure the success of both Festivals. She had a lovely soprano voice, and enjoyed singing very much. She also

treasured the friendships that she formed over the years, and enjoyed travelling to various Gymanfa locations, so she could tour the surrounding areas.

Vronwen had hoped to do a lot of travelling after Albert retired from AECL, but sadly, his death in December of 1978 as the result of a car accident made that impossible. The shock for Vronwen was profound, and she struggled to come to terms with it, moving to a bungalow in Carp and becoming involved in small town life. She dabbled in retail, selling Suttles and Seawinds clothing, and helping a friend in an art gallery.

Vronwen was very involved in her community, working for Welcome Wagon for a few years, and helping out with the Brownies and Girl Guides while the girls were growing up. She was probably best known for her cakes which were works of art. Hundreds of wedding, shower and birthday cakes, along with other wonderful desserts came from her kitchen.

Over the years, Vronwen became a strong supporter of her four grandchildren. She loved attending the dance shows where Aidan and Dylan Morris, or Angela Dodson were performing. She also watched some of Benjamin Dodson's baseball games, although she didn't really understand the rules.

In 2009, Vronwen suffered a medical crisis which necessitated surgery and a long convalescence. Eventually diagnosed with dementia, she moved into St. Patrick's Home, which she tried to rename for St. David - at least on March 1<sup>st</sup>. She received wonderful care and was involved in the daily activities, but her health continued to decline. In June, she developed complications following surgery and passed away, in the presence of her three children and two of her grandchildren.

In keeping with Vronwen's giving attitude, she asked that her body be donated to science. At her request, her memorial service took the form of a mini-gymanfa, followed by a party. Eventually her ashes will be mixed with Albert's and the family will scatter them on a hillside in Wales, overlooking the sea, and facing westward towards Canada.

- Myfanwy Davies