

# PETHAU CYMREIG

Newyddiadur Cymdeithas Cymry Gogledd California, Ebrill-Mai 2000  
Newsletter of the Welsh-American Society of Northern California, April-May 2000



## The President's Message:

### A New Year!

Although this is the April issue, for WASNC, it is a new year since we now have a new board and new expectations. I am very pleased to be your president during this year and to help make some of these expectations come about.

The new WASNC year was set off with a huge success. Those of you who attended the St. David's Day Gymanfa Ganu in San Francisco will, I am sure, agree with me. I enjoyed the whole afternoon, listening to the voices of the Green Mountain College students singing in Welsh — from memory — and joining in with the congregation in some great hymn singing. We need to get together like this more often!

Many of you have sent in your names to volunteer as team members for the Festival of Wales 2001 & Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu, San Jose, effort. Thank you! These newly-formed teams are ready to work in a combined effort, which will enable us to present our Festival of Wales 2001 to the Ottawa National Gymanfa Ganu this August. If you want to be added to our effort, contact me for details; my information is on page 2.

The focus for this year will be to raise funds to support the Festival of Wales 2001. I hope you will do your best to assist both financially and with creative ideas on how we can raise money. We will need to send a delegation from WASNC to Ottawa in August, which will require additional financing.

You can help by attending our upcoming team meetings and by sending in donations to Helen Steers, Treasurer of WASNC (her address is on page 9).

Rwyn edrych ymlaen at flwyddyn ddiddorol! Pob hwyl!

*Iddris*

## ST. DAVID'S HOLIDAY CALLED FOR . . .

*Excerpted from BBC Wales online*

Welsh students have once again begun a call for a St. David's Day holiday beginning with a late February visit to the Welsh National Assembly. Bethan Rees Jones, the students' Head of History at Ysgol y Moelwyn, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd, is guiding the young people in their campaign.

The students want Wales' patron saint to be officially recognized and are gathering petitions to support their goal. A similar campaign attempted in 1996, and directed to the Welsh Office in London, faltered. But Rees Jones believes that the "changed political and social environment in Wales will make a difference."

"Wales' profile has increased in the last year ..." she said. "It is hardly surprising that this year, 10 students of my history

*See Holiday, page 4*

## WELSH PRESENCE FELT AT CELTIC FEST

Amidst an influx of Irish and scores of Scots, the Welsh quietly — and with distinction — exhibited their wares at the recent San Francisco Celtic Music & Arts Festival, March 11-12 at Fort Mason. The event honored "... Ireland and her Celtic sisters," and was sponsored by the San Francisco Irish Arts Foundation.

The infinitely-talented Jen Delyth booth was busy all weekend with buyers for her drawings, t-shirts and sweatshirts featuring her finely-honed Celtic artwork. Buyers were also signing up for the interactive CD Jen has recently developed and which will soon be on sale. The website and email addresses for Jen's Keltic Designs is: [www.kelticdesigns.com](http://www.kelticdesigns.com); [orders@kelticdesigns.com](mailto:orders@kelticdesigns.com); or phone her at 415/668-6968, FAX: 415/668-2321.

Jen has generously contributed her talents to many WASNC efforts through the years and is a Welshwoman of whom we should all be proud and support.

The same can be said of Averil Anderson, who with husband John, owns The Welsh Touch in Sonoma, Calif. The Andersons had an impressive display of fine woolens, Welsh foods and teas and a large display of Welsh love spoons, including miniature ones that would make wonderful party favors. Contact The Welsh Touch at [www.thewelshtouch.com](http://www.thewelshtouch.com), or call them at 707/938-3439 or FAX them at 707/996-4483.

It was wonderful to see such fine examples of Welsh goods at this overflowing Celtic marketplace.

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| Page 1   | The President's Message<br>Welsh Presence at SF Celtic Festival<br>Welsh Students campaign for St. David's Day holiday                                   |
| Page 2   | WASNC Board of Directors & how to reach us<br>WASNC Web Updated<br>Calendar of Events  |
| Page 3   | Learn Welsh in Wales! Cwrs Y Mileniwm<br>Caldicot Male Choir Concert, May 9 in Los Gatos   |
| Page 4   | Black Diamond fund-raiser set for July 16<br>Funny tips on a very serious matter: Welsh rugby<br>Welsh entertainment tidbits<br>Homecoming 2000 in Wales |
| Page 5-6 | Meet the WASNC 2000 Board of Directors   |
| Page 7   | Welsh film, "Solomon a Gaenor," nominated for Oscar; second Welsh film in five years<br>Welsh Resources  |
| Page 8   | St. David's Day concert & Te Bach recap<br>Welshwoman Clara Owen dies at age 107   |
| Page 9   | Poultney, VT Welsh Church needs your help<br>Words of Welsh Wisdom<br>Thank You from Mabli Agozzino<br>Hopkins' goes 'native'                            |
| Page 10  | Wales Fest 2001 Progress Report<br>WalesFest2001 Teams & Leaders<br>New WASNC members  |
| Page 11  | Membership form  |

# THE WASNC 2000

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Idris Evans, 925/283-0912 president@wasnc.org
Past President	John A. Murden, 650/327-1446 pastpres@wasnc.org
VP/Cultural Director	Megan Jones Davidson, 408/354-6275 culture@wasnc.org
Secretary	Brenda Jones-Belaski 650/756-7075 secretary@wasnc.org
Treasurer	Helen Steers, 510/428-2250 treasurer@wasnc.org
Membership/PR	Sue Redmore, 831/479-0331 membership@wasnc.org
Communications	David Evans, 925/254-6719 communications@wasnc.org
Pethau Editor	Karen J. Roberts, 559/584-4634 pethau@wasnc.org
Historian/Archivist	Ron Melen, 415/925-8336 history@wasnc.org
Music Director	Mark Kapner, 415/924-6102 music@wasnc.org
Bylaws	Donna Davies, 415/931-8613
Festival of Wales Chairman	Howard Thomas, 408/866-5448 chairman@walesfest2001.org

## WASNC Website Update Information:

The WASNC web site has just been updated! For the latest information about upcoming Welsh events in No. California, North America and Wales go to <http://www.wasnc.org/>.

In addition, WASNC welcomes Cylch Cymreig Sacramento, the Sacramento Welsh Circle, to its site. For information and events regarding the Sacramento area visit this new site at <http://www.wasnc.org/cylch/>. WASNC is growing and wants you as a member!! In the past 3 years, WASNC has gone from 175 members to over 250.

### Other ways to reach us:

Send inquiries or other items to WASNC c/o Dr. Idris Evans at 3199 Lucas Drive, Lafayette, CA 94549. (Email: [president@wasnc.org](mailto:president@wasnc.org))

### For Pethau Cymreig:

Karen J. Roberts, Editor, 852 E. Grangeville Blvd., No. 96, Hanford, CA 93230-2268. (Email: [pethau@wasnc.org](mailto:pethau@wasnc.org))

"Pethau Cymreig" — Welsh Things — is published every two months. Items should be received by the 18th of March, May, July, September, November, and January. If you find any errors, please let me know and it will be corrected. Articles and other items are always welcome and will be used, based on available space and time-sensitivity. Articles may be edited for style or punctuation/grammar.

**Advertising:** Pethau accepts business-card size ads at a rate of \$40 for six issues (one year).

### Cyber-WASNC:

Our webpage is located at <http://www.wasnc.org/>. Cylch Cymreig Sacramento can be contacted at <http://www.wasnc.org/cylch/>.

### Other information:

The Festival of Wales 2001 website can be found at <http://www.walesfest2001.org/>. This event is being co-sponsored by WASNC and the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association (WNGGA), beginning Aug. 28 through Sept 3, 2001 in San Jose. Please visit this site to find out more and to become involved. *Dioch!*

## Calendar of Events: \* indicates that date is not yet confirmed; but will be by next issue of Pethau.

Date	Event	Location	Coordinator
April 25	<b>2001 Team Leader Meeting</b> Organizational meeting for volunteers assisting with the Festival of Wales 2001 & 70th Annual National Gymanfa Ganu.	Sue Parry's house 408/291-0115 <a href="mailto:sue@netmagic.net">sue@netmagic.net</a>	Howard Thomas 408/866-5448 <a href="mailto:chairman@walesfest2001.org">chairman@walesfest2001.org</a>
July 16	<b>High Noon at Black Diamond</b> A catered affair at the Black Diamond Mines, near Nortonville; site of early-California Welsh settlers & a nearby Welsh cemetery.	Black Diamond mines Nortonville, Calif. <a href="http://www.ebparks.org/">http://www.ebparks.org/</a>	David & Karen Evans 925/254-6719 <a href="mailto:communications@wasnc.org">communications@wasnc.org</a>
Jul 30-Aug. 6	<b>Cwrs Y Mileniwm</b> An intensive week-long Welsh-language course sponsored by Cymdeithas Madog, this year in Wales! (Article on page 3)	Trinity College/Camarthen Wales Coleg Y Drindod, Caerfyrddin <a href="http://www.trinity-cm.ac.uk">http://www.trinity-cm.ac.uk</a>	Hefina Phillips, 770/668-0582 <a href="mailto:cwrs2k@madog.org">cwrs2k@madog.org</a> <a href="http://www.madog.org">http://www.madog.org</a>
<b>For a few pound more stay on for the following, just 10 miles away:</b>			
Aug. 5-12	<b>National Eisteddfod Llanelli</b> The bardic competitions overseen by the Gorsedd; with added modern elements, such as rock bands and a Welsh-language Lloyd-Webber play; prices vary greatly. Order soon; events are often SRO.	Llanelli, Wales <a href="http://www.eisteddfod.org.uk/">http://www.eisteddfod.org.uk/</a>	Eisteddfod Office 011 44 01554 772000
Aug. 31-Sep 3	<b>The 2000 National Gymanfa Ganu</b> The yearly gathering of the Welsh for hymns and traditional Welsh songs; also an eisteddfod, Welsh market place, concerts, tours, banquets & seminars.	Ottawa, ONT, Canada Cymdeithas Cymru Ottawa <a href="mailto:ottwelsh@istar.ca">ottwelsh@istar.ca</a> / 613/841-9297	WNGGA 507/933-7540 <a href="http://www.wngga.org/">www.wngga.org/</a>
Sept. 17*	<b>Owain Glyn Dwr Day</b> Honor Wales' last warrior prince, Owain Glyn Dwr, with a pint and a bit of discussion about Welsh independence — past & present.	Dylan's Pub, San Francisco Folsom & 19th St., 415/641-1416	John David, 415/751-0798 <a href="mailto:dianejohnndavid@aol.com">dianejohnndavid@aol.com</a>
Jan. 6*	<b>Noson Lawen &amp; Twelfth Night Celebration</b> An elegant, relaxing dinner and a free-form celebration of Twelfth Night, Welsh-style; impromptu songs, poems and reminiscing.	Fort Mason Officers' Club San Francisco, CA	Helen Steers, 510/428-2250 <a href="mailto:treasurer@wasnc.org">treasurer@wasnc.org</a>
March 4*	<b>St. David's Day Gymanfa Ganu</b> The annual St. David's celebration with hymns in Welsh and English, followed by a Welsh Te Bach ("little tea") social.	Ocean Avenue Presbyterian San Francisco, Calif. 415/587-1100	Megan Jones Davidson 408/354-6275 <a href="mailto:culture@wasnc.org">culture@wasnc.org</a>

# Register for Cwrs Cymraeg Y Mileniwm

July 30-August 6, 2000, Caerfyrddin, Cymru (Carmarthen, Wales)

## Come Home To Wales -- How To Register

Register for Cymraeg Y Mileniwm — The Millennium Welsh Course — Cymdeithas Madog's 24th annual week-long Welsh language course. It will be held July 30-Aug. 6, 2000 on the campus of Coleg Y Drindod (Trinity College), Carmarthen, Wales.

This once in a millennium week of Welsh language, learning and fun will be held in the Welsh-speaking town of Carmarthen where you can hear *yr hen iaith* (the old language) in the streets and shops. There's no more fitting place for Cymdeithas Madog's first ever Cwrs Cymraeg in Wales.

Courses are offered for all levels: from complete beginners to students looking to put that last little bit of polish on their language skills. Each day will include about five hours of formal language class, taught by some of the finest professional Welsh language instructors from Wales and North America. Just out the door, in Carmarthen, you'll have lots of opportunity to practice what you learn.

There will also be a number of excursions to nearby places of interest; a one-day trip to San Ffagan (the National Folk Museum of Wales) and the new Welsh Cynulliad (the National Assembly) in Cardiff. There will be a half day trip around the castles of the Tywi Valley and the new Botanical Gardens. There is even a rumour that we might visit a local Welsh brewery that specializes in traditional beers such as Dewi Sant.

## Cancellation Policy/Polisi Canslo

Cymdeithas Madog has a new cancellation and refund policy for 2000; so please read the following carefully: Refunds will be issued according to the following schedule:

- Prior to March 1, 2000 - 100% of deposit returned
- From March 1-April 30, 2000 -50% of deposit returned.
- *No refunds will be issued after May 1, 2000.*

## The Prices/Y Prisiau

The price for Cwrs Y Mileniwm is \$585 (US funds). This includes all course fees, learning materials, activities and excursions, three meals a day (from supper on Sunday, July 30 to breakfast on Sunday, August 6), and single-occupancy accommodation in the university residence hall. To secure your place for Cwrs Y Mileniwm, send a deposit of \$150 (US funds) to: Hefina Phillips, Trefnydd Lleol/Local Organizer, Cwrs Cymraeg Y Mileniwm, 1625 Lazy River Lane, Atlanta, Georgia, USA 30350-3523; Ffon/Phone: (770) 668-0582. E-bost/e-mail: HefinaP@aol.com.

The balance of the payment is due by May 1, 2000. All registered students will be invoiced at the end of March. Please note that all payments must be in US dollars.

## Scholarships/Ysgoloriaethau

Due to the generosity of organizations such as the National Welsh American Foundation (the NWAFA), the Welsh National Gymnaf Ganu Association (the WNGGA) and private donors, a number of scholarships will be available to help offset the cost of the cwrs. For more information on scholarships, visit the Cymdeithas Madog scholarships web page, or contact: Cymdeithas Madog Scholarships, c/o Kevin Rottet, 600 Jackson Street, Stoughton, WI 53589-1516, USA; Telephone: (608) 873-9036, E-mail: rottetk@mail.uww.edu.

## Any Questions?/ Oes Cwestiynau

Contact the Cwrs Cymraeg Y Mileniwm Committee through the Local Organizer for North America, Hefina Phillips, at: Cwrs Cymraeg Y Mileniwm, c/o Hefina Phillips, 1625 Lazy River Lane, Atlanta, Georgia, USA 30350-3523.

Ffon/Phone: (770) 668-0582, e-bost/e-mail: HefinaP@aol.com. Or visit the Cymdeithas Madog web site at <http://www.madog.org/>.

## Caldicot Choir to give concert at Los Gatos church May 9

The Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos will once again be the setting for a choral performance by the Caldicot Male Voice Choir, Tuesday May 9, 2000, beginning at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15 per person (\$10 for seniors/students), and are available by contacting Howard Thomas by phone at 408/866-5448 or by email at [chairman@walesfest2001.org](mailto:chairman@walesfest2001.org). The church is located at 16575 Shannon Road, Los Gatos (408/356-6156).

This will be the Caldicot choir's only 2000 Bay Area performance and is expected to be very well attended. The choir has a long-standing relationship with the Los Gatos church, due to a previous performance there. All other 2000 tour performances will be in Southern California.

Last here during its 1991 tour, the Caldicot Male Voice Choir performed a sold out concert at the Los Gatos church. At that time many of the singers stayed with WASNC members and members of the church and struck up lasting friendships. On this tour the choir will be making their own accommodation arrangements.

This is the third U.S. tour for the 70-voice choir, which is directed by Sian Hatton and accompanied by Meurig Jones. On

this tour Newport, Wales mezzo-soprano Jill Harris will perform several solos. She has performed with choirs throughout South Wales and sings in various musical styles, including opera, oratorio, musical theatre and folk songs.

The choir will perform hymns and Welsh folk tunes from its vast store of musical styles and selections. The Caldicot has performed throughout the UK and in Germany, the Netherlands, and Canada and in 1996 sang with the Three Tenors before a crowd of 60,000 at Wembley Stadium, in London, England.

The choir was originally formed in the early 1960s, during the building of the giant steelworks in the nearby Llanwern area. Men from all over Wales came to work the furnaces and the mills, and soon formed the Caldicot choir.

Information about the Caldicot Male Choir can be found by visiting [members@aol.com/penlon/choir](mailto:members@aol.com/penlon/choir); and they can be contacted via this site as well.

A concert such as this is a great opportunity to share the Welsh culture and to interest other Welsh and Welsh-Americans in our activities — so please tell others about it.

# WASNC Picnic & Fund-raiser at Black Diamond Mines, July 16th

This year's annual WASNC picnic will be held at Black Diamond Regional Park, site of the historic coal mining towns of Somerville and Nortonville. This event will be held as a fund-raiser for The Festival of Wales 2001 & the 70th Annual National Gymanfa Ganu, which is being sponsored by WASNC and the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association.

The towns of Nortonville and Somerville were a major source of coal in Northern California during the middle 19th Century, at a time when coal was the main power source and, of course, the Welsh were prominent in that industry due to their well-known expertise in mining. At one time, these communities fielded well known choirs to compete in the eisteddfodau of San Francisco and Oakland and supported two literary societies (one English-speaking, the other Welsh-speaking) as well as a brass band and a school funded from a percentage of the mining profits. While the coal has long since played out, the mines are still there as is the Rose Hill Cemetery, half way between the old town sites of Nortonville and Somerville. The cemetery still features monuments adorned with the names of Welshmen past.

Details are not firm yet, but a catered picnic lunch is planned at the site and walking tours of the cemetery, as well as guided tours of one of the old mines, which is now open to the public. A tentative date for the event is Sunday, July 16th, so mark your calendars now and watch the June "Pethau" and WASNC web site for details.

To make reservations or to get more information contact Dave and Karen Evans at 925/254-6719, or devans@earesearch.com, or communications@wasnc.org.

Come support this effort to raise the awareness of Wales in the United States and worldwide by bringing the Festival of Wales 2001 to San Jose. We hope to see you there!!

## Well-known Welsh in the News:

*Compiled from BBC-Wales online*

Veteran Welsh actress **Sian Phillips** and **Catherine Zeta-Jones** are the patronesses of Welsh-owned nightclubs in London and New York City, respectively. The clubs known as SWS, which means "kiss" in Welsh, also stands for "Social, Welsh and Sexy" among club-goers. Welsh-born owner **Stifyn Parry** started the London club as a means of combating hireath, (longing for home), by creating a place for expatriot Welsh to socialize with each other outside of Wales. The only requirement, other than £10 is that "you have to want to be with Welsh people." The New York club opened late last year. Da iawn!!

Cardiff native and diva **Shirley Bassey** was one of 37 Welshpersons to be honored by the Crown at the New Year. Bassey, the 61-year-old chanteuse of "Goldfinger" and "Big Spender" fame, was on the list of royal honorees and was made Dame Shirley. Others Welshpersons so honored were paralympic gold medalist, **Tanni Grey-Thompson**, 29, (Dame); comic/entertainer **Max Boyce**, 55 (MBE); opera star, tenor **Dennis O'Neill** (OBE); Wales rugby star **Neil Jenkins** (MBE); and Welsh hurdler **Colin Jackson**, 33, OBE.

Though not Welsh herself, the former wife of the late and very Welsh **Sir Richard [Jenkins] Burton** — English-born **Elizabeth Taylor** — was also granted Damehood.

The honours were bestowed by Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, at Cardiff Castle, where he was officially greeted by Shenkin, the goat and ceremonial mascot of the Royal Regiment of Wales.

Max Boyce reportedly first believed the letter announcing his MBE status was a "joke." According to S4C, as a fan of Boyce, Prince Charles expressed surprise that Boyce had not been so honored sooner.

Can Sir Tom Jones be far behind?

## SO YOU WANT TO PLAY INTERNATIONAL RUGBY? FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS

*Submitted by Michael Thomas of San Jose, who "thought you might enjoy this ... Especially if you've been following the rugby recently."*

- 1) Secure rejection by the land of your birth;
- 2) Examine video tapes of Six Nations Championship games to identify gaps in the market in your position;
- 3) Hire services of internationally-acclaimed genealogist Dr. Nick Riviera, who will make a convincing case for Welsh eligibility on the grounds that your blood is red;
- 4) Lament the fact that you never had the opportunity to meet Granny Gwendolyn, who passed away in the Abergavenny wool famine of 1926;
- 5) Train ear to tell the difference between "Men of Harlech" and Men at Work;
- 6) When in Wales avoid telling natives that there are more sheep in New Zealand for fear of causing a stampede to Cardiff Airport.

**Handy Phrases:** "Isn't Blodwyn a lovely name?"; "Why, Why, Why Delilah"; "Sixteen pints of Brains and an appalling haircut please."

**Don't Mention:** Michael Douglas, Bobby Gould, or Joe Jordan.

**Meet the Boss:** Seek audience with Graham Henry, who reversed the trend of Welsh pioneers seeking a fresh start in New Zealand at the end of the 19th century.

**Stake claim:** Supply Granny's birth certificate. Alternatively, your television license would be sufficient or maybe a Co-op receipt.

**If questioned further:** Muddy the waters by attempting to pronounce Llanelli, which should put interrogators of the scent.

**Still in trouble:** Blame it on Granny who clearly must have been a lying convict.

**Totally rumbled:** Drop tail between legs and run to obscurity, or Invercargill, whichever is the nearer.

**Moral of the Story:** Never trust anyone who says life will never be complete until he becomes Welsh.

## Homecoming 2000 — Hiraeth 2000

If you are Welsh and living away from Wales — come home.

The whole of Wales will be alive with special events, concerts, exhibitions, street parties, carnivals and choruses.

The Welsh Tourist Board is sponsoring a project called "Homecoming 2000 — Hiraeth 2000. Its goal is to encourage any Welshperson or those with a Welsh connection to come home in 2000. The Homecoming 2000 site ([www.homecomingwales2000.com](http://www.homecomingwales2000.com)) has been running since July, 1999 with great success and has featured three contests, including one which provides a chance to win a holiday in Wales.

For details contact Allison Pinney, Media Promotions Manager, at [apinney@imagnet.co.uk](mailto:apinney@imagnet.co.uk) and reference your organization name and address (<http://www.wasnc.org/> Welsh-American Society of Northern California/WASNC). Or contact Imagnet by telephone at 011 44 (0)1222 255515 Fax: (0)1222 255535.

*Holiday, from page 1:*

course have sought to take up the mantle to make 1 March — which commemorates our patron saint — a national holiday."

"This year pupils have taken a considerable pride in what their predecessors sought to achieve and believe that the efforts should be resurrected," said Rees Jones.

\* \* \* \* \*

**What about in the United States? And Canada? Why not begin a similar effort here in this country and others with a strong Welsh connection? Let us know what you think.**

# Meet The Board of Directors for 2000

## IDRIS EVANS, PRESIDENT

Idris Thomas Evans was born July 10, 1933 in Machynlleth, North Wales, where he received his early education. At university in Birmingham, Manchester, England, he obtaining a BSc/Ph.D. degree in Chemical Engineering.

He worked for British Petroleum (BP) for five years, then briefly for Luwa A.G. in Germany and Switzerland before being recruited by Chevron Oil Co, but not before he and his wife made many lifelong friends. His work with Chevron Chemical brought him to the U.S. in 1969 and spanned the next 30 years, most of which were in marketing. Among many duties as manager of North and South America, Idris was responsible for overseeing manufacturing, and technical services from Houston, Texas.

Idris is married to Lorinda June Evans and together the couple have a daughter, Jacqueline Evans Gonnerman of Lake Oswego, Ore. and a son, Jeremy Evans, of Eugene, Ore.

He is an accomplished and fluent Welsh speaker and is able to return home to Wales about twice each year; including recently, for his work on behalf of WASNC with the Welsh Development Agency (WDA) for the Festival of Wales 2001 & 70th Annual Welsh Gymnfa Ganu.

His hobbies include gardening, golf, his church and singing in the choir, and unknown to most people, he is a closet author and enjoys writing children's stories.



## MEGAN JONES DAVIDSON, V.P., CULTURE & DRUID

Megan King Jones Davidson was born in Cydweli, Wales, where she grew up speaking Welsh and attended local schools. Megan worked as "a nurse, by profession and [as] a theater director by avocation," according to a presentation about her made recently to the Welsh National Assembly. She has lived in the United States for many years, and raised five daughters.

In 1997 Megan was initiated into the Bardic Circle of the Welsh National Eisteddfod as Megan Gwendraeth Fach, thereby becoming a druid. She has been honored as an outstanding ambassador for Wales by the International Institute of the East Bay and is a Past President of WASNC who currently serves as Vice President-Cultural Director of the Society.

Megan, who returns to Wales frequently, was the first interview subject of the WASNC Oral History Program. The interview was conducted by WASNC member Maria Teresa "Mabli" Agozzino.



## HELEN STEERS, TREASURER

Helen Williams Steers was born and grew up in Denbigh, North Wales, where she attended chapel with WASNC member Eryl Aynsley. Helen attended Denbigh High School and then Llandrillo-yn-Rhos Technical College before coming to the United States in 1971 on holiday. Plans of returning to Wales changed when she met her future husband and she soon returned to be married and begin her first job, with Tulloch Construction, Inc. in Oakland, Calif. She has been with Tulloch ever since, working with the proud Scottish-American, Blair Tulloch and his son, Brian, the son and grandson of an Orkney sea captain who immigrated to America.

"They are a great family to work for," Helen says, typically shifting attention toward others.

Helen has two children: daughter Carys, a graduate of the University of California, San Diego, who just returned from working in London and who hopes to teach full-time soon; and son Andrew, who is studying hotel/hospitality management at California State University, Chico. Andrew is already a long-time, accomplished kitchen 'artist' and, according to his mother, makes "an excellent sandwich," in addition to other talents.

Helen returns to Wales "periodically," and will be going home in May. She grew up speaking Welsh, and still does "OK" though, like many, regular practice would help keep it fresh. Helen enjoys hiking, reading and gardening, and spending time with friends. She is also a knitter, when time allows, and has a keen appreciation for a wide range of artwork, many of which are displayed beautifully in her home.

Helen has served WASNC unflinchingly for several years as treasurer, and thankfully, will do so again this year, as well as heading the Finance Team for The Festival of Wales 2001.



## JOHN A. MURDEN, PAST PRESIDENT

John Murden was born Sept. 24, 1934 in Shoeburyness, Essex, England. He grew up and attended elementary school in the small coastal village of Pendine, in Carmarthenshire; best known for the sands that run for seven miles and that, in the spring and fall, have tides that go out over a half mile.

"The coastal sands at Pendine have been used for attempts at the world land speed record by Sir Malcom Campbell, J G Parry-Thomas and others since the late 1920's" John said. He attended grammar school in Whitland, nine miles inland near the Cardigan-shire border. ("The Welsh name for Whitland is Hen dy gwyn ar Daf, "The old white house on the river Taf".) One schoolmate there was the mother of past WASNC Secretary, Linda Farr. Another was the well-known Welsh composer William Mathias.

At the University of Wales, Swansea John studied engineering and received a B.Sc. degree in Mechanical and Civil Engineering. It was also at university that he met his wife, Carol Roselle, an American studying in Swansea. The Murdens were married in Swansea in 1957. They have two sons: Chris Murden, 32, living in Los Angeles, Calif. and Andrew Murden, 30, living in San Francisco, Calif.

John began his professional life with English Electric Aviation, in Lancashire, England, near Blackpool, as an aeronautical engineer. Five years later he changed jobs and took advantage of the demand for engineers in the US. The Murdens came to America on the Queen Mary! "We decided it was a journey we would only make once in a lifetime, so we might as well enjoy it," John said. John earned an M.S. degree in Industrial Management from Polytechnic University of New York. He then worked for Nabisco, became President of an international consulting firm, and for the last ten years has owned a management and business consulting firm, headquartered in Palo Alto.

John returns to Wales every few years, and describes his Welsh ability as "minimal". He sings in his church choir — thoroughly enjoys choral singing — and fly-fishes.

Lesser-known activities of WASNC's recent past president include running in many 10k runs and completing a marathon; and, crewing on the land yacht that later held the world land speed record, though sadly, not while he was onboard. "I got started in land yachting on Pendine Sands where I had my own small yacht that went about 40-plus mph."



## BRENDA JONES-BELASKI, SECRETARY

WASNC's intrepid secretary, Brenda Jones-Belaski, was born ("Dare I say it?") in Hitchin, Hertfordshire, England on September 23, 1939. "Just in time for the war."

However, she spent the first eight years of her life in Neath, Glamorganshire, the birthplace and original home of her father, and her mother was from a village called Cwmgwrach ("the Valley of the Witches") in the Vale of Neath. Brenda received her secondary education in England, majoring in English. That background eventually landed her work as a technical writer for computer systems ("for my sins"), much ahead of that industry's growth spurt.

She came to the U.S. in 1966, to San Francisco as a pioneer in the world of technical writing. When she began professional technical writing in America — about 27 years ago — and people would ask her, "What do you do?" their response was always, "Excuse me, you do WHAT?" Like so many in that high-pressure field, Brenda "burned out" and is now a lady of leisure and can indulge in one of her favorite pastimes: walking.

Brenda is married to the affable Leonard, and with him has four "wonderful" step-daughters and six "even more wonderful grandchildren." She is able to get home to Wales about every year to visit her brother in Port Talbot, Glamorganshire. She classifies herself as "just out of the raw beginners' stage" with the Welsh tongue, but says emphatically that "The ... thing most other people don't know is that I WILL, repeat WILL, speak Welsh before I kick the bucket!" Pob lwc, Brenda!



## SUE REDMORE, MEMBERSHIP & PR

Membership Director Sue Redmore was born in Porthcall, Mid-Glamorgan, South Wales. She received her secondary education at Reading University in England, receiving a BA degree, with Honors, in the History of Art & Architecture; and a BA degree in Marketing from Open University in the UK. Sue is also a Certified Business Communicator (CBC) through the U.S. Business Marketing Association.

Sue first came to the US at 20 as an arts counselor for the summer, but knew she had to return for good someday. Dazzled by an offer from a Silicon Valley company, she bravely packed her bags and moved to the Bay Area six years ago. She tries to return home yearly to see family and friends and brush up on her "rusty" Welsh. A self-described gypsy at heart, Sue has a special love for the Greek Islands — over 15 visits in 20 years.

With a seemingly characteristic flair this career woman soon began dating her American next-door neighbor, Connecticut native Bill Beauchamp, and married him 15 months after meeting him — one year from their first date — in 1997. It's the first marriage for both of these only children who are "totally inseparable!" and sans offspring. This allows them the freedom to hunt for books and her passion for "sailing on our boat, *Kuru* — (be sure to ask Sue about this name) — proudly flying the Welsh flag." She also plays piano and paints, is an avid book collector and makes soft sculptures.

"I tend to make very strange 'people' and wall hangings with parts of bodies emerging. I'm not totally off the wall, it's not as weird as it sounds," she says.

Redmore's career has taken her through Europe, Asia, the Pacific and North America. For over 15 years she has worked with high tech companies, managing marketing communications and using her specialization in channel marketing; inter-business marketing and promotions, rather than directed toward consumers. In 1999 Redmore established her own company, DragonFire Marketing & Business Communications, working as a consultant with high tech vendors in Silicon Valley and, through a partnership with a European company, providing a sales and marketing platform for US companies wanting to establish a presence in Europe.

**Previously unknown item:** Redmore's family has an earlier US connection. Her grandparents, father, and an uncle with 10 or so children came to the US in the 1920s from Port Talbot, Mid Glamorgan, South Wales. They lived in the Chicago area during the Al Capone era. When the depression hit, her grandfather and his family returned to Wales, though the others stayed in Chicago.

"So I have many relatives living around the Chicago area and in other areas in the US ... potential Festival attendees!" she said, ever the marketer.



## DAVID EVANS, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

David Evans was born 18 January, 1947 in Hollywood, Calif. Moving north, he attended the University of California, Berkeley where he studied Physics. He is the owner and president of EA Research, Inc. in San Ramon, Calif., which develops acceleration products for graphics, image processing and network-based audio and video applications.

David and wife Karen Evans have one child, a son, Mark, who lives in New Orleans and who presented the Evans's with their first grandchild, Mark Darby, this past November.

David and Karen visit Wales about once a year and have made rapid progress in speaking and understanding the Welsh language, both by attending the Cymdeithas Madog summer language course for several years, and by taking a Welsh class at Cal, under the tutelage of WASNC member, Dr. Kathryn Klar. Modestly, David describes his Welsh ability as "Gweddol," meaning fair. In 1998, David and Karen were the organizers of "Cwrs Cymraeg y Porth Aur - Pont I'r Gymraeg" - The Golden Gate Welsh Course - A Bridge to Welsh. The sold-out course was conducted at International House on the UC Berkeley campus.

During the course in Berkeley, David was elected to the board of Cymdeithas Madog, the Welsh Studies Institute in North America, Inc., which sponsors annual intensive Welsh language classes in the US, Canada and sometimes Wales. This year's course will be held at Trinity College in Carmarthen, Wales.

David is a licensed commercial pilot and loves to fly whenever possible.

A lesser-known fact about David Evans is that he plays that Welsh standard, the trombone. Perhaps a hymnal arrangement can be provided by WASNC Music Director, Mark Kapner.



## KAREN J. ROBERTS, "PETHAU" EDITOR

"Pethau" Editor Karen Roberts was born 18 January — as was Pethau board member David Evans — though in 1955, shortly after her parents moved from San Francisco to Hanford, Calif., near where her grandparents farmed. She was educated in Hanford; then briefly attended Pepperdine University in Malibu-by-the-Sea before joyously fleeing the jurisdiction to attend UCLA. It was there that she learned she was a Celt, when the preeminent Celtics professor, Patrick Ford, pronounced her "resident Celt" for the term in the class of mostly Jewish students.

"I was so lucky to attend UCLA, and especially to discover Celtic Studies," she said. "The more years go by the more I realize what a gift I was given, *seemingly* by accident."

Along with a BA degree in English Literature, she picked up the equivalent of a minor degree in Celtic Studies, beginning a lifelong journey. Her hobbies include the accumulation of all things Celtic, including over 700 books on a range of Welsh, Irish, Scottish, (Cornish and Manx) topics. She's been to Wales twice, but has still never spent enough time there and hopes to return this year, adding Scotland and a return to Ireland. Roberts struggles with the Welsh language, but persists in the very slow effort.

Karen has written, in various forms, for over 20 years, though her true love remains journalism. Other than newspapers she has worked as public information officer for a presidential campaign and KRCD, a Fresno County water district. She also did time at Paramount Studios and as an agent trainee (literary/packing) at the William Morris Agency. She is an avid reader, photographer, knitter, cook and baker and loves to ski "the steeps" and recreational ski racing — when time and money allow. Her goal is to ski all seven continents before she dies; she has already skied North and South America, New Zealand (Australia) and Europe. The Urals (Asia), Africa (Kilimanjaro?) and Antarctica are next.

Unmarried, she lives with her four-legged feline children, Cullen Huw, Aiden Thomas — who is a twin with — and Ashling Marged. They keep her humble, and happy.



## RONALD MELEN WASNC HISTORIAN/ARCHIVIST

Ronald Ryan Davies Melen was born Aug. 16, 1931 in Oakland, Calif. where he was educated before attending the College of Marin in Kentfield, Calif. Though born a Davies, his father died while Ron was young and later Ron took his stepfather's name, Melen.

Ron served in the Korean "Conflict," or war, as an aircraft mechanic in the U.S. Navy, leaving the military after five years.

Upon his return to civilian life Ron worked for Pacific Bell for 33 years, as a Central Office Technician, Switching Instructor, and Central Office Engineer.

Melen has two children; a son, Ronald R. Melen of Carneros, Sonoma, Calif. and a daughter, Jeanette L. Armstrong, living in Santa Rosa, Calif.

Now retired, Ron is seriously engaged in historical research on the early Spanish history of Marin County, specifically from the early sightings of Marin through the Mission and Land Grant era. He is also now the guardian of WASNC's history.

Melen has never been to Wales and does not know the language. In fact, he didn't know he was Welsh until 1988. Connie Thompson, of the Marin County Historical Society, told him if he was born a Davies then he "had to be Welsh."

"Otherwise how would a Welsh person end up with a Swedish name?" he said. He has since discovered that a great-great-grandfather came from Wales and settled in Ohio about 1850.

Other this historical research Ron's hobbies include playing folk and classical guitar, hiking, helping his children and being a Grandpa, though not necessarily in that order.



## MARK KAPNER, MUSIC DIRECTOR

WASNC's versatile and talented Music Director, Mark Kapner, grew up near New York City, N.Y. and holds a BA degree in American Lit. from Brown University, in Providence, R.I.

His resume is as varied as his talents: Mark played at the original Woodstock Festival with Country Joe and the Fish, toured as Neil Diamond's keyboard player, has been a "purveyor of fine arts papers" and for seven years served as a Development Officer and Music Director at Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health in Lenox, Mass. Currently he produces and directs Swing Out New Hampshire, a four day swing dance camp which each year attracts over 250 "Lindy Hoppers" from all over the US.

Mark visited Wales once, in 1997. "I was keen to find and hear Welsh male voice choirs, and I managed to hook up with the Haverford West Male Voice Choir for a weekend. When I returned [to the states] I joined WASNC so I could find out when Welsh choirs were coming to the Bay Area".

Mark first heard Welsh choir singing on a PBS special in 1977, as part of a documentary about a Welsh schoolhouse buried by the collapse of a coal tip. The rescue workers had formed a choir, and Mark remembers being moved to tears by their singing.

With his customary tongue-in-cheek humor, Mark recalls an early Welsh connection: "When I was at Brown I used to organize informal co-ed rugby matches with friends from the Rhode Island School of Design, using an old tennis shoe for a ball."



**DONNA DAVIES, BYLAWS:** Sufficient information for a profile on Donna Davies was unavailable at press time. In the next issue of Pethau that lack will be corrected. *Ed.*

## HOWARD THOMAS, CHAIRMAN, FESTIVAL OF WALES 2001

The man with the "very Welsh name" of Howard Thomas was born July 22, 1945 in Newport, Monmouthshire — then Gwent and now just South Wales — "right between VE-Day and VJ-Day." Howard recalls, "when I was growing up ... Howard Winston was the great boxing champion of my youth."

Howard's hometown of Newport is the third largest community in Wales, which like its bigger neighbors of Cardiff and Swansea, grew up in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the result of the coal, steel and shipping industries.

"A boring industrial town with the cosmopolitan background typical of a port," Howard summed up. It was the site of the last armed uprising in mainland Britain — the Chartist Riots, in November 1839 — and to this day is still a somewhat radical place, "like all of South Wales."

Howard attended Newport High School for Boys, but left school at about age 16 and was apprenticed to a Chartered Accountant on his 16th birthday. He qualified as a Certified Accountant in 1966. Within that field he worked in the UK from 1966-1968; in Brussels, Belgium from 1968-1970; followed by financial management roles in the UK for engineering companies from 1970-1978.

Howard and his wife, the lovely Welshwoman Sue, came to the U.S. in 1981 with their two sons, newlyweds Richard and Amoreena Thomas, of Mountain View and James Thomas, of Berkeley.

"Both are part-time rock musicians, together, in a band called KaoTao," Howard reports, sounding just a little bit proud of their efforts.

Howard became a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) in California in 1982 and has worked as an interim CFO for Bay Area start-up companies for the past four years.

Howard returns to Wales about once a year, but rates his Welsh proficiency as "Almost none. My maternal grandmother spoke it but didn't pass it on to any of her eight daughters — or [to] her grandchildren."

He loves to sing in his church choir; he also loves reading, history and politics. Perhaps a contributing factor is that one of Howard's ancestors founded the South Wales Baptist College in 1807, which was first located in Abergavenny and Pontypool and later in Cardiff.

"Southern Monmouthshire was a hotbed of Baptist faith and the people there decided to send him to Bristol to learn English to enable him to teach young ministers to preach in that "heathen tongue" to the people who were flooding South Wales at that time --sort of like Silicon Valley 200 years ago!

"In 1839-1840 that same ancestor, with others, wrote to the Home Secretary pleading for the lives of the four Chartist leaders. Their death penalties were commuted and they were sent to the penal colonies in Australia, from which only one (I think) returned."



## Editor's Note:

A journalistic truism, and especially of editing newsletters for volunteer groups, is that it's tough to get help. People don't want to contribute, they drag their feet, they don't think they know how to write. ... But the WASNC board and WASNC members have been exceptionally generous and helpful with this issue of Pethau: you should all be proud of them and of their commitment.

I expected nothing less.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Pethau, which is expected to be published every other month.

Please use "Pethau Cymreig" to tell others about WASNC, the Festival of Wales 2001 & 70th Annual National Gymnafa Ganu, and other non-Festival events — and please feel free to send information, articles, your own reminiscences, or whatever you feel will help us all grow more connected to Wales and to each other.

Until June — Hwyl & Slainte!

Karen

# WELSH-LANGUAGE FILM GETS OSCAR NOD FOR THE SECOND TIME IN FIVE YEARS

*Excerpted from BBC News Online*

For the second time in recent years a Welsh-language film has been nominated for a Best Foreign Film Oscar.

The S4C-produced "Solomon a Gaenor" (1999), stars Ioan Gruffudd ("Pobol y Cwm," "Horatio Hornblower" and "Titanic") and Nia Roberts in a film directed by Paul Morrison.

"I'm over the moon and thrilled for Paul Morrison who wrote and directed the film," said Ioan Gruffudd. "It was brilliantly translated into the Welsh language. It's great to again show the world what Wales has to offer." The movie's dialogue was also recorded in English and Yiddish.

The film is a classic tale of forbidden love. Set in the 1920s, the film tells of a Jewish peddler (Gruffudd) masquerading as a middle-class Protestant. He falls in love with the daughter of a miner in a south Wales mining community bedeviled by anti-Semitic sentiment. The film runs 102 minutes, and also features Sue Jones-Davies, David Horovitch, Maureen Lipman and Cyril Shaps.

Early on the film was considered a runner-up to the Spanish film "All About My Mother," directed by Pedro Almodovar.

Although "Solomon and Gaenor" did not win its category, it follows in the footsteps of the Welsh-language World War I film "Hedd Wyn," which was nominated in the same category five years ago (also not winning).

Both of the film's main stars were warmly congratulated at the Welsh National Assembly following confirmation that the film had been nominated

First Secretary Rhodri Morgan described the international recognition of an Oscar nomination as "a huge achievement" which would raise the profile of Wales, particularly among young people.

"It will also have a dramatic effect in helping us build up the media industry in Wales," Morgan added.

S4C (Sianel 4 Cymru/BBC Wales) chief executive, Huw Jones, said: "This nomination is gratifying and exciting for all involved.

"I am particularly pleased for the two young lead actors, Ioan Gruffudd and Nia Roberts.

"International recognition such as this is beneficial to Wales in all sorts of ways."

## WELSH RESOURCES:

ORGANIZATION & WEBPAGE	CONTACT/PHONE/EMAIL	ADDRESS
<b>British Food Centers:</b>	See Sheena from Cardiff / 408/374-7770	Kirkwood Plaza: 1800 W. Campbell Ave., Campbell, 95008
<b>Centre for Welsh for Adults:</b> www.caerdydd.ac.uk/uwc/cymraeg/	Jeremy Evas / Evas@Caerdydd.ac.uk	Dept. of Welsh, Cardiff Univ., Cardiff, Wales
<b>Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Gymraeg:</b> www.aber.ac.uk/~iis5tafod.html	Gareth Kiff	Pen Roc, Rhodfa'r Mor, Aberystwyth, Wales
<b>Cymdeithas Madog:</b> www.madog.org	Anne Smith, secretary/ secretary@madog.org	5240 E. Frances Rd., Mt. Morris, MI 48458
<b>Draig Goch Bookstore:</b> Dafydd@cwnet.com	David Lloyd / 916/394-9359 / dafydd@DraigGoch.com	4964 J Parkway: Sacramento, CA 95823-3420
<b>Football Assoc. of Wales:</b> www.citypages.co.uk/faw/		
<b>Hector Russell (some Welsh):</b> www.hectorrussell.citysearch.com	Paul McGinley / 415/989-5027 / HRSScotland@aol.com	76 Geary Street, San Francisco, CA 94108
<b>Homecoming 2000:</b> www.tourism.wales.gov.uk/	Robin Gwyn, Welsh Tourist Board / 011 44 02920 435806	www.homecomingwales2000.com
<b>National Eisteddfod of Wales:</b> www.eisteddfod.org.uk/	011 44 1554 772000	
<b>National Welsh-American Foundation:</b> www.wales-usa.org/	570/696-6293 / JAPNWA@aol.com	Dept. I, 24 Carverton Rd., Trucksville, Pa 18708
<b>NINNAU</b> (Welsh newspaper, Arturo Roberts, Pub.): www.ninnau.com	908/766-6736 / NINNAU@Compuserve.com	11 Post Terrace, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920-2498
<b>Plaid Cymru North American Support Group:</b>	Jeffrey Thomas / jltbalt@worldnet.att.net	78 Jumpers Cr., Baltimore, MD 21236
<b>S4C (BBC-Wales):</b> news1.thls.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/uk/wales/		
<b>Univ. of Rio Grande Madog Ctr. For Welsh Studies:</b> www.rio.edu		
<b>University of Wales:</b> www.lamp.ac.uk		
<b>Wales Information Service Directory:</b> www.llgc.org.uk/wisd/		
<b>Welsh-American Genealogical Society (WAGS):**</b>	Janice Edwards / wagsjan@sover.net www.rootsweb.com/~vtwags/ www.greenmntn.edu/Welshheritage.html - welsh@greenmntn.edu	Green Mountain College Cartref Taid, 60 Norton Ave., Poultney, VT 05764-1011
<b>Green Mountain College Welsh Heritage Program:**</b>	44 1443 845500 / tim.raby@wda.co.uk	Unit 7, St. Asaph Bus. Park, Glascoed Rd. St. Asaph, Wales LL17OLJ
<b>Welsh Development Agency:</b> www.wda.co.uk/		127 Belle Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94901
<b>Welsh Heritage Fund of Calif., Inc.:</b>	415/454-1861	5933 Longdin Road, Ferndale, WA 98248
<b>Welsh Monitor/Y Monitor Cymreig:</b>	Llwyn Cedrwydd / 360/384-5401	
<b>Welsh National Assembly:</b> www.cymru.gov.uk/	Rhodri Morgan, First Secretary for Wales	
<b>Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association:</b> www.wngga.org/	Dr. Ellis J. Jones / 507/933-7540 / ellis@gustavus.edu	800 W. College Ave., St. Peter, MN 56082-1498
<b>Welsh Newspapers online:</b> www.newsdirectory.com/news/press/eu/uk/wa/		
<b>Welsh No. Amer. Chamber of Comm.:</b> www.waleschamber.org	Dr. David R. Williams/ waleschamber@earthlink.net	Attn: Bob Greenway, POB 300381 JFK Airport Station, Jamaica, NY 11430
<b>Welsh Touch, The:</b> www.thewelshstouch.com	Averil & John Anderson / 707/938-3439 / F: 996-4483	670 Este Madera Ave., Sonoma, CA 95476
<b>Y Drych</b> (newspaper), Mary M. Mergenthal, Ed/Pub: www.minn.net/~ydrych/index.html	651/642-1653 / ydrych@minn.net	PO Box 8089, St. Paul, MN 55108

# WASNC HOSTS SPECIAL ST. DAVID'S DAY 2000 CONCERT

By Karen J. Roberts

The Welsh-American Society of Northern California (WASNC) celebrated St. David's Day March 5th, 2000 with a special performance by Cor Cymraeg y Mynydd Glas, the mixed Green Mountain Choir and Cantorian from Green Mountain College in Poultney, VT. The 50-voice choir is led by Mark L. Parsons, Director of the Choral Program for the college, and accompanied by James Cassarino.

Performing at the Ocean Avenue Presbyterian Church in San Francisco, the ethnically-diverse vocalists launched a week-long Northern California tour with a perfect Welsh-language rendition of *Mae D'Eisiau Di Bob Awr* along with several other selections in English. A definite crowd-pleaser was a song performed as the choir lined the outside aisles of the sanctuary, literally surrounding celebrants with music. Several native Welsh speakers commented on the singers' impressive demonstration *yn Cymraeg*, and how moving it was to see singers from four foreign countries -- Nepal, Japan, Macedonia and Sweden -- and 14 U.S. states helping to preserve and promote Welsh culture. The group has also recently toured Wales.

The college's and choir's strong Welsh connection is a natural extension of being in Vermont's Slate Valley which was populated early by Welsh immigrants who strongly influenced the region. That influence is still strong due to Green Mountain's Welsh/Celtic studies program and its housing a Welsh Library and the headquarters of the Welsh-American Genealogical Society (WAGS), with hundreds of family histories and other research materials.

Choir director Parsons presented WASNC President Idris Evans with a bound copy of a history of the Welsh in early Bay Area/Northern California's development, from the collection housed in Poultney. Megan Davidson was presented with mementos of Wales by a member of the choir for her assistance in bringing the choir to San Francisco.

The St. David's Day ceremony began with the opening prayer by Megan Jones Davidson, followed by readings in Welsh and English by Idris Evans, Howard Thomas and Gareth Williams. Denbigh native and frequent WASNC gymanfa conductor Eryl Aynsley then led the congregation in *Calon Lan*, *Llef* and *Pantfyedwen*. Ocean Avenue Presbyterian organist, Anthony Ray, provided accompaniment. Anthony has unfailingly provided accompaniment for WASNC gymanfau, and generously plays for many groups in San Francisco.

Eryl is a former competitor and *cerdd dant* soloist at the National Eisteddfod of Wales and Nation Urdd Eisteddfod. She is also director of the Ragazzi, the Peninsula Boy's Choir, headquartered in Palo Alto, Calif., which was recently nominated for a Grammy for its work with the San Francisco Symphony.

During a memorial observance those lost to the Welsh community during the past year were remembered; among them, Dorothy Ward, the mother of John D. Ward of Davis, Calif.

The future was also present for the St. David's Day commemoration with numerous young children attending, as well as almost-newborns, who will hopefully soak up this exposure to their Welsh roots and continue with it.

St. David's Day being the beginning of the WASNC year, the 2000 WASNC Board of Directors was also announced. They are: Dr. Idris Evans, president; John A. Murden, past president; Megan Jones Davidson, vice president and cultural director; Brenda Jones-Belaski, secretary; Helen Steers, treasurer; Sue Redmore, membership director and public relations; David Evans, communications director/in charge of website and electronic messaging; Karen Roberts, *Pethau* newsletter editor; Mark Kapner, music director; Ron Melen, WASNC historian and archivist; Donna Davies, in charge of bylaws; and Howard Thomas, Chairman of the Festival of Wales 2001.

Following the singing, a traditional Te Bach was held in the church social hall. Welsh Tea was provided courtesy of Averil and John Anderson, who own and operate the Welsh Touch in Sonoma, Calif. This post-gymanfa social period allowed several newer members to meet WASNC members, including Sue Parry of San Jose and her father, John "Jack" Parry of Fremont; and Michael and Gina Thomas, newly of San Jose, with their three darling young children.

Sacramentan David Lloyd again brought wonderful books and wares from Wales from his Draig Goch bookstore, providing invaluable materials and information about home to the Bay Area Welsh community, as well as the Cylch Cymreig Sacramento Welsh society.

The Ocean Avenue Presbyterian Church holds an important place in the Bay Area Welsh community, having served as the home of decades worth of gymanfau. Designed by famed California architect Julia Morgan — who also designed Hearst Castle in San Simeon, Calif. for newspaper publisher Randolph Hearst and Marian Davies — the church sanctuary was built about 1920. It was home to the Welsh and Welsh-language services for many decades and still serves as the home of WASNC's annual St. David's Day observance.

WASNC gathers again in July for an event at the Black Diamond mines in Summerville; an area rich with Welsh heritage, including an 19th century, mostly-Welsh graveyard.

For details call David Evans at 925/254-6719. Or visit the WASNC website at <http://www.wasnc.org/>, or <http://www.walesfest2001.org/>.

## ONE OF BRITAIN'S OLDEST WOMEN DIES

Monday, 27 March, 2000, 21:11 GMT, BBC-Wales online

One of Britain's oldest women, Clara Owen, has died at age 107 at a residential home in north Wales. Mrs. Owen, was born at Pontfaen, near Chirk. She was five years old when Queen Victoria celebrated her diamond jubilee and lived through the reigns of six English monarchs. Mrs. Owen formerly ran a boarding house at Llangollen, and was active enough to attend the International Music Eisteddfod there last summer.

## POULTNEY, VT WELSH CHURCH NEEDS ASSISTANCE OF OTHERS

*Many of us had the privilege on St. David's Day to hear the excellent choir from Green Mountain College of Poultney, Vermont, a community with Welsh roots that extend back to the mid 19th century and where the Welsh language is still alive.*

*I have just received the following letter concerning the status of the Welsh Presbyterian church in that community. I am forwarding it on to you in the hope that you might want to help to preserve one of the last Welsh language chapels left in the United States.*

*If you would like to make a contribution, please address it to **The Historic Welsh Presbyterian Church**, c/o Benita Mead, Wheeler Avenue. Poultney, Vermont 05764.*

The Historic Welsh Presbyterian Church  
Poultney, Vermont  
March, 2000

Dear Friends,

As the hills and countryside of Vermont come alive this spring, we look to Easter and the promise of new life and hope. We, the parishioners of the Poultney Welsh Presbyterian Church have great faith that our friends of the Welsh culture will help keep our historic Welsh Church open.

The Church was built 125 years ago by early Welsh immigrants so that they could worship in Welsh (the language of heaven) and to praise God with the Welsh hymns they brought from Wales.

In this church, the Poultney Welsh Male Choir was born in 1939. Thirty-five strong in Welsh voice, most of the men were slate quarry workers. In black robes and white stoles, adorned with red dragons, they became famous for concerts on the East Coast and for generosity in performing benefits for the British war relief and other charitable causes.

Previous memories of choir rehearsals on Wednesday evenings that promised crowds outside who came to enjoy the music on summer nights; of Sunday sermons in Welsh with all 250 seats taken and sometimes the balcony used for the overflow; of the aroma of coffee, tea and bara brith rising from the undercroft (St. David's Hall) to be served after the Gymanfas.

These memories make it difficult to face the fact that we are financially drained and our doors may close forever before summer. It is with God as our guide that we reach out to you for help this Easter.

Our goal is to raise at least \$100,000. We are prayerful that many of you with similar memories may wish to share in the preservation of our Welsh heritage. May God be with you.

Diolch yn fawr,  
Gladys Jean Jones Riggs  
Elder, For the Session

### WELSH WISDOM

Angen a ddysg i'r hen redeg.

*Necessity teaches the old to run.*

A fo ben, bid bont.

*He who would be a leader, let him be a bridge.*

Bychan y tal cyngor gwraig, ond gwae y gwr nas cymero.

*A wife's advice is cheap, but woe to the husband who doesn't take it.*

Y mwyaf ei fost, lleiaf ei orchest.

*The greater the boast, the lesser the accomplishment.*

## A THANK YOU TO WASNC:

Dear Fellow WASNC Members:

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the WASNC board and all WASNC members for their unconditional support of the Welsh-American Oral History Project and answer some of those questions about how it all started.

While the project may be "my baby," I would like to acknowledge a couple of people who were instrumental in overcoming the teething stages. The seed was planted early in the fall semester of 1998 when Dave Evans mentioned the Regional Oral History Office at the Bancroft Library on the University of California, Berkeley campus. The Oral History Program aims to record immigrant family history, migration and acculturation experiences, preferably but not restricted, to California.

I immediately recognized an opportunity to enhance both the Bancroft's permanent collection and the Celtic Studies Program, while fulfilling the mission of WASNC and so spent the rest of the semester rushing around campus trying to win support and coordinate equipment. By December I had drawn up a proposal and guidelines to pitch to the WASNC Board. This part could not have been accomplished without the leadership of Kathryn Klar, who wholeheartedly agreed to be faculty sponsor.

The idea was to establish an ongoing student-initiated project in WASNC's name and raise the first-ever endowment to the Celtic Studies program, in the form of an annual scholarship of \$1,000. This would allow the collection and documentation of irreplaceable materials, thus preserving Welsh language and culture in the Bay Area.

I am incredibly gratified by the faith held in me and am happy to have made my own small contribution to the Welsh community. My hope is that the project will expand and prove long-lasting, and thus provide a rich data base for future analysis. I must stress, however, that I got the better part of the deal, for I got to spend time with two beautiful women — Mary Wilson and Megan Davidson — whose recollections gave me a poignant connection with Welsh history and heritage.

Diolch i bawb,

Mabli Agozzino

### Sir Anthony Hopkins Becomes a Yank

*Excerpted from BBC-Wales online; forwarded by Gareth & Ann Williams*

Sir Anthony Hopkins, one of Wales's most famous actors, has become an American citizen. Pledging allegiance to the United States, the 62-year-old Port Talbot, Wales native became an American April 12 at the Los Angeles, Calif. Federal Building, as friends Steve Spielberg and John Travolta looked on.

Hopkins' US spokesman commented that the Welshman had been living in the states "a long time and it seems like the right thing to do."

Wales Tourist Board spokesman Robin Gwyn agreed. "It is not a matter of rejection [of Wales] but a matter of Sir Anthony embracing American citizenship."

But Port Talbot residents don't necessarily agree. Welsh Assembly member Gwenda Thomas has called for the revocation of Hopkins' Freedom of the Borough of Port Talbot, issued four years ago. Many have accused him of forgetting his Welsh roots. Port Talbot resident Glanville Mills, 67, said: "Anthony Hopkins is a local boy—it is disgusting what he has done. ... he should be ashamed of himself."

The Oscar-winning star of "Silence of the Lamb" and "Nixon" underwent an FBI investigation, an interview with immigration officials (INS) and the routine test of knowledge on American history and political processes.

He also pledged to renounce his British ties.

# Update: Festival of Wales 2001

## The 70<sup>th</sup> Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu

by Howard Thomas, Festival of Wales Executive Team Leader

Festival Executive Team members and team leaders met with Dr. Ellis J. Jones, Executive Director of the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association (WNGGA), April 8, 2000 in San Jose. During that session the Bay Area executive team and Festival team leaders presented a written progress report to Jones, and fielded questions and discussion. Dr. Jones provided gymanfa background based on his having organized the Minneapolis event and having attended many such events.

The report included: ★ Progress-to-date; ★ A list of volunteer and teams to which they're assigned; ★ A schedule of proposed events; ★ An Event Planning Matrix, (events overview and planning components; location, time, artists involved or required, responsible team, facilities/equipment needed). Other specific points noted include: ★ The contract with the San Jose Fairmont Hotel is in place; ★ A contract with the City of San Jose is in place for use of the Civic Auditorium. This hall holds 3000 people, so with a typical gymanfa attendance of 1500 expected, the Festival team has a lot of marketing work to do to attract to a wider California/West Coast audience; ★ Grand Concert, still in the initial planning stage; ★ Church Service; also still in initial planning stage; ★ Two gymanfas, which will be held in the Civic Auditorium; ★ Other major events will be the traditional Noson Lawen, Banquets, Tours, Seminars, some form of Eisteddfod. ★ We are still open to other ideas; and are making good progress in identifying and booking artists for the traditional events.

Additionally, several events new to the gymanfa are being considered, such as a Welsh art exhibition in conjunction with the adjacent San Jose Museum of Art; a Welsh film festival (possibly including the two Welsh-language Oscar-nominated films) at the nearby Camera Cinemas; a Pub-like venue for contemporary Welsh music (pop/rock/folk); coordination with "Tapestry in Talent," a downtown San Jose cultural street fair set for the same weekend and which will bring 300,000 people within walking distance of our event — including those who think Wales is spelled with an "h".

Our greatest challenge is to market this event to a new audience — the greater West Coast, a population ignorant of the Welsh people, Wales, and its culture. An additional challenge is to synthesize the "essence of Welsh-ness" and make it relevant to the modern world, as in our catchphrase, "*Welsh Valleys to Silicon Valley*". We want to show a new Wales, not the traditional miners-trudging-home-from-the-pits-singing-in-harmony ("How Green Was My Valley" c. 1940), but rather the Wales of Manic Street Preachers, animation, computer technology, and Japanese investment: of poetry, music, history, drama and sport: of passion for education ~ and for the sciences as much as the arts.

Welsh Development Agency (WDA) research has identified that essence as *hwyl* — passion. In that vein, the Festival board would like to know what Wales and being Welsh (or Welsh-American) means to *you*. Please let us know, at any of the addresses, email addresses or phone numbers listed for WASNC board or Festival team members.

Our ancestors numbered greatly among the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Why? What is it about the Welsh that gets them so fired-up about politics? Was Jefferson really Welsh-speaking as some have suggested; and if so, how did his Welshness contribute to his thinking about the emerging Republic? *Let the discussions begin!*

Team Leader meetings have been set for us to examine logistics and potential overlaps. Please see page 7 for a list and description of Festival teams and the team leaders. Then, come join us. Hwyl!

### Teams & Team Leaders needing volunteers:

*Due to a pending job relocation, Gwynne Williams has removed himself from the Team Leader position for the Marketplace Team; Sue Parry has stepped in to fill Gwynne's place and in turn has been replaced by Adrian McNab, as Concert Team Leader. Please note these changes.*

**Artists, Eryl Aynsley:** Finds/arranges artists, their participation for various events.

**Catering/Banquets, Rita Evans:** Plans menus and décor for banquets, breakfasts, luncheons.

**Church Team, Robin Rees:** Plans the Sunday morning church service.

**Computer Support Team, David Evans:** Designs and maintains email list, web sites and databases.

**Concert Team, Adrian McNab:** Plans format of a major concert and which artists will perform.

**Eisteddfod, Megan Davidson:** Determines categories, criteria and arranges for judges for this artistic/cultural competition.

**Scheduling, David Evans:** Coordinates the overall Festival format and scheduling of events.

**Finance, Helen Steers:** Oversees event & team budgets, reimbursements, revenues.

**Gymanfa, Gareth Williams:** Sets Gymanfa Ganu schedule, arranges for directors, etc.

**Market Place, Sue Parry:** Contacts/schedules Welsh vendors for four-day event.

**Marketing, Sue Redmore:** Generates Festival publicity and merchandising; works to increase awareness of Wales/the Welsh.

**Noson Lawen, Eryl Aynsley:** Organizes a more free-form evening of volunteer entertainment, involving personal stories, songs, poems, or action songs.

**Seminars, Kathryn Klar:** Determines seminars to be offered & seminar leaders.

**Site Team, Eryl Barker:** Handles logistics before & during the festival (podiums, sound systems, and other physical equipment and supply needed).

**Tours, Katherine Powell:** Determines tours and coordinates with Fairmont and San Jose Convention & Visitor's Bureau staff.

**Youth, Jayne Williams:** An organization dedicated to Welsh youth and their involvement in Welsh culture and traditions.

### **Croeso!**

*Welcome to our new WASNC members for April:*

Carolyn Berry Becker	Monterey, CA
Elizabeth Canter	Carmel, CA
Thomas Carney	Carmel, CA
Dewey D. Evans	Pebble Beach, CA
Richard Evans	Point Richmond, CA
Olwen & Ben Grespan	Los Gatos, CA
Rhian Grespan	Los Gatos, CA
Stanley Harris	Belmont, CA
Adrian & Ann MacNab	Sebastopol, CA
Paula Mellard	Soquel, CA
Lois Over	San Leandro, CA
Jack Parry	Fremont, CA
Leo Parry	Murphys, CA
Jonquil A Peterson	San Pablo, CA
Everett Powell	San Francisco, CA
Jane t Quin-Harkin	San Rafael, CA
D. M. Rayment	Groveland, CA
Michael Thomas	San Jose, CA
Heather Weston	Castro Valley, CA
Geoffrey White	Inverness, CA
Eleanor Williams	San Francisco, CA

**The Welsh-American Society of Northern California (WASNC)** is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and nourishing the national heritage and culture of the people of Wales.

## Members of WASNC

### *Why join WASNC?*

With a membership of over 300 people from all over Northern California — and affiliated groups in Sacramento, the Bay Area and Monterey — our society is growing by the day, giving you the opportunity to meet many other Welsh and Welsh-Americans in the area and celebrate the history and culture of Wales.

By joining, you not only meet new friends but also gain access to a host of other member benefits: an active program of social and cultural activities; resources such as Welsh language courses, musical events and suppliers of Welsh crafts and artifacts; a members-only area on the WASNC web page; and receipt of this newsletter, "*Pethau*," which highlights coming events and news of interest to members. All this for only \$15 per year per person! So if you haven't yet joined or renewed your membership, do so now — stay connected to your culture and informed about events and news celebrating Wales by completing and returning the form below.

For membership questions or to have membership information sent to a friend or colleague contact WASNC Membership Director Sue Redmore at DragonFire Marketing, at 831/479-0331, Fax: 831-464-8868. Or on the Internet: Web: [www.dfire.com](http://www.dfire.com) / Email: [redmore@dfire.com](mailto:redmore@dfire.com)

Further information on membership can also be located on the WASNC web site at [www.wasnc.org/](http://www.wasnc.org/).

## JOIN US!

**WASNC MEMBERSHIP:** Membership dues are \$15 per person and are due on St. David's Day (March 1) of each year. Membership extends to the next March 1st. Make checks payable to WASNC and mail to: **Helen Steers, WASNC Treasurer, 430 Olive Avenue, Piedmont, CA 94611 (510/428-2250) [treasurer@wasnc.org/](mailto:treasurer@wasnc.org/).**

Dues help to defray the cost of publishing and distributing *Pethau*, the WASNC newsletter, as well as some costs of our annual Gymanfa Ganu and other WASNC-sponsored events. All other donations are gladly accepted and tax deductible [501(c)(3)].

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Email/Website: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Year optional)

Alternate phone/message number: \_\_\_\_\_ Day ( ) Evening ( )

Are You: A Native of Wales: \_\_\_\_\_ American of Welsh Ancestry: \_\_\_\_\_

Family locality in Wales? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you participate in our email list? \_\_\_\_\_

Your Welsh Connection: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you received any WASNC mailings? \_\_\_\_\_ Attended WASNC events? \_\_\_\_\_

Welsh language ability:

Speak \_\_\_\_\_ Write \_\_\_\_\_ Fluent \_\_\_\_\_ Intermediate \_\_\_\_\_ Beginner \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in Welsh language classes? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Other interests: Planning an event \_\_\_\_\_ (List what type; either existing events or suggest one of your own)

Volunteering for Festival of Wales 2001 \_\_\_\_\_ (Page 2) Teams: \_\_\_\_\_

Oral History Scholarship Program:

Tax-deductible contribution to fund: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ General Contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Other information or resources: \_\_\_\_\_