

*Newyddion o Gymdeithas Dewi Sant*

# St. David's Society News

FRIDAY EVENING, MARCH 2

## Welsh role in famous Homestead (Pa.) strike

Plans are underway for the St. David's 2012 celebration, starting with a book event on Friday evening, March 2, and continuing through our traditional mid-day banquet on Saturday, March 3. Both events will take place at the Ramada Plaza Hotel in Minneapolis. (Details follow.)

Friday evening's kickoff event will be a presentation by long-time member, historian and writer Trilby Busch. She will present her soon-to-be-published historical novel, *Darkness Visible: A Novel of the 1892 Homestead Strike*. Her presentation will be moderated by her daughter Ceridwen Christensen.

This imaginative work recreates a defining moment in American labor history. Workers from the Homestead (Pittsburgh area) Works, Carnegie Steel Company, striking for reasonable living wages, were violently attacked by Pinkerton "guards" hired by the company, turning what had been a peaceful strike into a horrific bloodbath and changing the lives of Homestead's

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families forever. Many of the strikers were immigrants, among whom were large numbers of Welsh, Germans, and eastern Europeans.

This real situation in American history came to a head on July 6, 1892, and we are able to experience it through the experiences of Trilby's characters.

Trilby became interested in this period of our history early in her life when her father told her the story of the death of his grandfather—her great-grandfather—in the violence that marked the aftermath of that event. At some point, she "just knew" that she had to write this book, which is the result of some ten years of historical research and writing.

***Homestead to page 2***

SATURDAY, MARCH 3

## St. David's Society is beginning its second century. Come to the March 3 luncheon to celebrate!

The St. David's Day banquet will be held on Saturday, March 3, at the Ramada Plaza Hotel again, but in a different room. The Itasca Room is cozier and even has a fireplace! It is near the front entrance of the hotel, but on the right side of the hotel as you face the entrance. There is an outside door quite near the Itasca Room and there is plenty of parking adjacent to that door.

**Ramada Plaza Hotel**  
1330 Industrial Blvd. (via I-35W)  
Minneapolis, MN 55413  
(612) 331-1900

We hope that you will bring guests and other visitors.

We will gather starting at 11:30 a.m. to start the bidding on silent auction items (more on that later in this newsletter), take time to greet and visit with friends and acquaintances. The two books that contain the translated and indexed Y Drych articles that society

member, Martha Davies donated will be on display and available for reading as well.

The luncheon will begin about 12:15. The plated meal will include:

Cockie Leekie Soup and Spring Salad Greens  
Cornish Beef Pastie, Garden Vegetable  
and Broiled Tomato  
Meringues de Madame la Duchess  
(Meringue with Chantilly cream and fruit topping)

The beverages include coffee, hot tea, iced tea, or milk  
*Please note on your registration if you have special dietary needs and we will accommodate you.*

The program will consist of music, including a set of songs by the Welsh-born composer, Ivor Novello. He was born David Davies, changed to his stage name and

***Luncheon to page 2***

## ***Luncheon from page 2***

became famous in the musical circuit around the time of World War I. In addition, we will see some amusing selections from the Internet about Wales and the Welsh language; anticipate the presentation of the Outstanding Service Award and other fun surprises.

**Please complete the registration form (found in this newsletter) and mail with payment (checks made payable to St. David's Society of MN) by Friday, February 24.**

**Registrations are sent to: Pam Rose, 8514 13th Ave S., Bloomington, MN 55425**

If you need a ride in order to attend, please make a note on your registration form.

If you have any questions, contact Pam Rose at (952) 854-4743 or pamresearch@hotmail.com

## **Stay overnight**

The hotel is offering the discounted rate of \$89 per night (save \$30) to Society members who wish to stay

on Friday and/or Saturday night. Please book by Thurs., 2/23, to secure the discounted rate (and mention St. David's Society). Reservations should be made directly with the Ramada Plaza, 1 (877) 774-4315 or (612) 331-1900.

## **Silent auction**

Do you have silent auction items you would like to donate?

We are looking for items to be included in the silent auction on Sat., March 3:

- special items with a Welsh connection;
- services that only you can provide (tax preparation, other professional services);
- tickets for special events (plays, concerts);
- baskets with a particular theme.

Please contact Karen Kidwell, (952) 236-0955, or Janice Barbee, (763) 544-9396, no later than Sat, Feb. 18, to have your item included in the silent auction. Get creative and help the Society earn some money.

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## ***Homestead from page 1***

The Welsh connection is central to the story. The chief protagonist is Welsh university student Emlyn Phillips, who has forsaken the bleak coalfields of South Wales to make a fresh start in the Homestead mill. As Emlyn struggles to find a niche in the New World, he must wrestle with the demons which drove him from the old.

For more information, check the book's web site at [darknessvisiblenovel.com](http://darknessvisiblenovel.com).

Trilby will be available for questions and answers after her presentation. She hopes to have advance copies of her book available for purchase.

There will be no charge for this presentation but there will be an

opportunity to make a donation toward the rental of the space.

**This event will take place at 7:00 p.m. in the Itasca Room at the Ramada Plaza Hotel, Industrial Blvd. just south of I-35W.**



***Trilby Busch***

## **Dragon News**

### **News of Society Members & Friends**



**SUNSHINE REPORT:** Betty Kinsey, the Society Sunshine chairwoman, reports sending get well cards to Mary Mergenthal (car accident); Joe Corbin (fall); Karen Wojahn (illness); and Lois Willand (hip replacement).

**A birthday card was sent to Floyd Lewellen for his 102<sup>nd</sup> birthday.**

Please let Betty know when you know of a member who is ill or has suffered a loss, or is rejoicing over a birth, marriage or something else. You can reach her at (612) 871-7587.

### **Membership News**

**Deceased:**

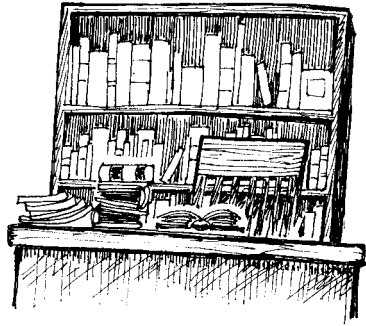
**Helen Beggs**

**E-mail change:**

**Robert L. Mathews, 19robb37@gmail.com**

## News of the Well-Read Dragons

By David Conradi-Jones



At our last meeting, we lunched and then discussed our most recent book, *Sixpence*

*House: Lost in a Town of Books*, by Paul Collins. The author, with his family, sold their home and moved to Wales with the intent to be permanent residents and buy a house of their dreams. They wanted an old house with character. They settled in Hay-on-Wye, where the story is set, a little village of 1,500 citizens. The village, known as the "Town of Books," claims to have forty or so bookstores, new and used.

In their search of houses, they found only one of interest to them, but sales arrangements were too complicated. In the meantime, they lived in an apartment with their 2-year-old son. The author, Paul, found work in a book store called Booth's, the biggest book store in the village. His job was to arrange the American section of the store by authors. Prior to his arrival, the books had been arranged by color. It is reported that every book store had their own method of arrangement. Many of the books were called "remainder" books, as they were books that had dropped off the best selling lists, had never made the best selling lists, or were books that were just plain bad and never sold in the first place. In doing his work, the author came across odd little books by unknown authors, in which he found items to his interest. He has a sweeping knowledge of literature, history, science, people and places, so he often came across many little-remembered facts and anecdotes that are footnotes to past events.

Paul's second goal was to complete a book he was writing. In the end, he finished and published his book, but failed to find the house of their dreams. They packed up their furnishings, including all the books acquired during their stay, and returned to the United States.

Our next club meeting will be Sat., Feb. 4, at Davanni's Pizza, 1905 West Perimeter Dr., Roseville. We will meet at 11:30 am for lunch, and then discuss the book, *Written In Blood, Crime Fiction with a Twist* by various women from Wales. We are having a good attendance, but if more wish to attend they are certainly welcome.

Please call David Conradi-Jones at (651) 639-1688 with questions about the book or the meeting.

Visit us on the web:  
[www.stdavidsofmn.org](http://www.stdavidsofmn.org)



*St. David's Cathedral in the city of St. David's in Pembrokeshire, Wales.*

### Sing Welsh hymns on St. David's Day

Once again, Augsburg College in downtown Minneapolis will be featuring the singing of Welsh hymns at morning chapel, this year on St. David's Day itself. Thursday morning, March 1, at 11:20 a.m., join students and faculty at Hoversten Chapel, in Foss Center, 22nd and Riverside Ave., 55454. On-street parking is available (though at a premium), but singers can also park at the Fairview Hospital ramp across Riverside.

Singing will be directed by Mary Mergenthal, with organ accompaniment by Peter Hendrickson.

As a nod to Welsh miners who took their noon meal into the pits, Cornish pasties will be served after the singing.

Come to sing and to enjoy fellowship and lunch.

Please...when attending St. David's Society events, eschew cologne, after-shave, etc. To be respectful of members with fragrance allergies and to allow their attendance/enjoyment.

**PLEASE HELP US MAKE ALL SOCIETY EVENTS FRAGRANCE-FREE.**

Diolch yn fawr.

## IN MEMORIAM: Helen Beggs

Helen Virginia Beggs, 86, of Deephaven, Minn., died November 10, 2011. She was born April 17, 1925, in Minneapolis.

She is survived by sisters, Mary (Robert) Howells and Gwen Hauser; nieces and nephews, Ron Howells, Carol Howells, Laura (Glen) Leavitt, Marshall (Shelia) Hines and Jennifer (Stephen) Rauls; 11 great-nieces and nephews.

Her funeral service was held November 21, 2011, at the Congregational Church of Excelsior, with interment at Oak Hill Cemetery, Excelsior.

Many who spoke at the service remembered Helen as an “independent-minded woman” with an adventurous nature. Much was made of Helen’s insistent on proper grammar. Even her Hospice nurses were corrected. As her niece declared, “In further discussion at the reception, you will learn how Helen went farther than many of us.”

Helen was a longtime member of the St. David’s Society of Minnesota and The Wordo’s, a group of people who searched newspapers and magazines for examples of mistaken grammar and typographical errors.

She began her interest in editing at the Minnesota Daily when she was a student at the U of M. She was a long-time staff member of the Association of Credit and Collection Professionals. She joined the ACA International in 1951 as editor of Collector magazine. She later served as director of education and public relations, general manager and, finally, corporate secretary, a position she held for 10 years. She was awarded the James K. Erickson Continuous Service Award in 1991 and ACA Honorary Membership in 1992. Having worked at ACA longer than any other staff member at the time, Helen became known as “the memory of ACA.” She retired from ACA on April 30, 1992.

## Events elsewhere

**Cwrs Cymraeg 2012**, “Cwrs Halen y Ddaer,” a week-long Welsh language course, July 22–29, at University of Utah in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Contact Cwrs Cymraeg 2012 registrar, Wayne Morrissey, by e-mail at registrar@madog.org with questions about the course. Cymdeithas Madog, the sponsoring organization, will be providing more details about tuition, the venue, course scheduling and accommodations during coming months. Check [www.madog.org](http://www.madog.org) periodically for updated information.

*“Cwrs Halen y Ddaer” means Course of the Salty Earth.*

## IN MEMORIAM: Robert Provost

Provost, who was 86 when he died in September, was part of the flood of GIs who moved to the suburbs after World War II. The Keewatin native flew more than 40 missions as a Navy pilot, avoided capture when he was shot down and received the Distinguished Flying Cross. Provost was a University of Minnesota boxer, helped develop the U's Williams Scholarship Fund and was an insurance professional.

*From StarTribune December, 14, 2011*

Robert Peter Provost, of Golden Valley, Minn., died September 16, 2011.

Bob was predeceased by his wife of 58 years, Mary (Maple); a brother, Walter; and two brothers-in-law. He is survived by four siblings and a brother-in-law. His children survive him: Margaret (active in our Society); Peter (Karen) and Paul (Donna); along with six grandchildren.

Bob was born in Keewatin, Minn., October 23, 1924, and raised in Mason, Wis. He graduated from Drummond High School in 1942. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy and became a decorated naval aviator during WW II.

He served in the US Naval reserve until 1969, retiring as Lt. Cmdr. Bob was a 1949 graduate of the University of Minnesota; he lettered in boxing and was a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity.

He worked for the U of M Athletic Department and later became the president of The Minnesota Insurance Information Center. He was a Rotarian and affiliated with the Golden Valley Historical Society. He enjoyed cooking, Gopher athletics, pheasant hunting and his neighbors.

A celebration of his life was held at the University Campus Club, with interment Fort Snelling National Cemetery.

## St. Dwynwen’s Day is January 25

Dwynwen is the Welsh equivalent of St. Valentine—the patron saint of lovers. She was the daughter of the great Welsh King Brychan Brecheiniog. She was in love with Prince Maelon, but her father had promised her to another. She prayed to be relieved of the pains of love, and an angel came to her in the night, offering a potion that would cause her to forget. She shared it with Maelon, but it had a tragic effect on him—he turned into ice!

Dwynwen prayed again, and was granted three wishes: To restore Maelon to life, to be given the power to discern true love, and that she be allowed to devote her life to God, establishing an Abbey on remote Llandwyn Island off the coast of Wales. Lovers who cast bread crumbs into the sacred well on the island could tell whether their love was true by whether the fish in the well rose to take the food. The ruins of the Abbey, and the sacred well can still be seen on Llandwyn today.

## Wales in the news

The January 9 & 16 issue of Newsweek included a feature called "31 Ways to Bet Smarter in 2012."

Item #8: "Are Los Angeles, Wales, and Jalpur places you've always wanted to visit? Well, they all have major annual book festivals, so buy a ticket at the right time and learn a thing or two from the big-shot authors like Tom Stoppard and Jennifer Egan as you travel.

*In Wales, the festival is at Hay-on-Wye May 31-June 10.*

## OFFICERS & REPRESENTATIVES

**President** Pam Rose, (952) 854-4743, '13  
**Vice-President** Bill Kimes, (763) 862-3130, '13  
**Secretary** Susan Hunter Weir, (612) 874-9233, '13  
**Treasurer** Ron Adams, (952) 237-0506, ('12)

### Directors

Janice Barbee, (763) 544-9396 ('12)  
Karen Conradi-Jones, (651) 639-1688, '13  
Judy Herbert, '13  
Karen Kidwell, (952) 236-0955, ('13)  
Investments — Ron Adams

Archivist — Mae Howells Anderson  
Cards & Remembrances — Betty Kinsey  
Past-President — Judith Evans Warner  
Membership Chairperson — Kay Gavin, (651) 484-1778  
Newsletter Editor — Mary Mergenthal  
General Sales — Marveen Minish  
Web Master — Judy Herbert

Officers of St. David's Foundation —  
Don Anderson (pres.), Mae Anderson, Betty Kinsey

## Welsh reference noted

On Sunday, Nov. 27, 2011, a Welsh language reference occurred in Parade Magazine.

"How many languages does Alex Trebek speak?... Five, including English. 'I can get by in Spanish, Italian, Russian, and Swahili,' says the Jeopardy! host, age 71. "But don't expect much in Hawaiian and Welsh."

*Martha Davies*

## Next Deadline: March 15

MAIL COPY TO: Mary Mergenthal  
2393 Bourne Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55108-1618

OR E-MAIL TO: [mary.mergenthal@comcast.net](mailto:mary.mergenthal@comcast.net)

Please consider a tax-deductible  
contribution to the  
St. David's Society  
or  
the St. David's Foundation.

Gifts can remember  
or honor a Welsh friend or relative.

You are also encouraged to remember the  
St. David's Society or Foundation in your will.  
For information, please contact  
Don Anderson, (612) 789-8923, or  
Ron Adams, (952) 237-0506.

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## St. David's Society of Minnesota MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

If family membership, include all names to be listed.

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Membership category: Single Annual (\$15) \_\_\_\_\_; Couple/Family Annual (\$22) \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting Annual (\$50) \_\_\_\_\_; Life (\$175) \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Make check payable to St. David's Society of Minnesota, note "membership")

Mail to: Kay Gavin  
2737 N. Aglen Ave.  
Roseville, MN 55113

or contact Kay at: [kaywgavin@hotmail.com](mailto:kaywgavin@hotmail.com)

Membership year is July 1-June 30.  
You may pay for multiple years in advance.

*Diolch yn fawr.*

St. David's Society of Minnesota  
2737 N. Aglen Ave.  
Roseville, MN 55113

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**USE YELLOW INSERT TO REGISTER NOW**

**St. David's Day celebration — March 2 & 3, Ramada Plaza Hotel**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 2, 7 p.m.** — “Darkness Visible” —  
presented by St. David's Society member Trilby Busch.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 3 — ST. DAVID'S LUNCHEON —**  
GOOD FOOD...GOOD FELLOWSHIP...GOOD LAUGHS

**DON'T MISS IT!**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 29, Spring Gymanfa Ganu, location tba.**

**If you need a large-print version of the newsletter,  
please call Mary Mergenthal, (651) 644-1650.**