

Newyddion o Gymdeithas Dewi Sant

St. David's Society News



NOVEMBER 2015

Volume 37, Issue 5

Christmas Season Tea

December 12, 2:00–4:00 p.m.

Celebrate the Christmas Season with Welsh friends at University Lutheran Church of Hope, 601 13th Ave. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414 (Dinkeytown). This is church we've used for the Christmas event for several years.

Expect music for listening, plenty of singing, poetry, and more!

Please bring something sweet or savory to share for the treat table. There will be opportunity to make Welsh cakes (and to eat them of course!).

This year the entire program and treats will be in the lower level.

The church is wheelchair accessible and there's plenty of free parking in a large lot just north of the church. Enter by the door closest to that lot.

Entering from the parking lot (or bus), guests will see an elevator and stairway on the right. Go down one floor, turn left, and continue to the kitchen/meeting area.

* The MTC #3 runs north-south on 15th Ave.

Get off at 6th or 7th St., walk 2 blocks west. Remember to enter by "back door," off parking lot.

* Buses #2 and #7 run eastbound along University Ave. and westbound along 4th St. Get off at 13th Ave. and walk 2–3 blocks north. Remember to enter by "back door," off parking lot.

* If driving, leave extra time for possible road construction in the campus area.

A word about the dateline numbers above:

They tell the reader (or the archivist) that this publication has been published for 37 years and that this is the fifth issue in 2015. Longtime member Dorothy May Jones, professionally known as Jones Printing, started this newsletter. She had a printing press in her basement.

The editor knew you were wondering.

Looking ahead to possible 2016 St. David's schedule

January 2016 — A meeting centered around John Dingley's book for young readers — *The Timeless Cavern*.

January 10, 2 p.m. — Sgwrs Cymraeg [Welsh language conversation] — Call (651) 644-1650 or write llawryf@yahoo.com for meeting location. **ALL LEVELS WELCOME!**

January forward — Pub-gathering-and-more night will meet at Dubliner University Ave. and Vandalia in St. Paul. Dates/times tba.

February 14, 2 p.m. — Sgwrs Cymraeg [Welsh language conversation] — Call (651) 644-1650 or write llawryf@yahoo.com for meeting location. **ALL LEVELS WELCOME!**

Saturday, March 5 — Celebration of St. David's Day (March 1). Location, time and nature of celebration tba.



Holly in Hay-on-Wye, Wales, Thanksgiving, 2010. By Ilene Alexander.

Minnesotans featured at Columbus NAFOW

St. David's members in action at NAFOW: Dr. AdaMae Lewis, Ames, Iowa, received the NAWF 2015 Heritage Medallion;

Kay Gavin helped people get on the buses transporting them to the theatre and helped with registration.

David Evan Thomas adjudicated National Eisteddfod music competitions;

Kay Thomas played a major role in overseeing arrangements at the lovely Old Southern Theatre, where the Gymanfa Ganu was held.

Karen Wojahn adjudicated the hymn singing competition AND accompanied late night singing each night.

Other members attending: Ellis Jones, Betty Kinsey, Gail Manning, David Richards & their son Hayden, and Mary Mergenthal.

Plan now to travel to Calgary, Alberta, September 1-4, 2016. Stay two more days for the Banff Excursion.

Contact Mary Mergenthal, 651-644-1650, mary.mergenthal@gmail.com, if you'd like a brochure mailed to you.

Or check www.nafow.org for details.



Photo above and below by Karen Wojahn.



Karen Wojahn from Windom, Minn., won the NAFOW raffle for this stunning lovespoon with an international flair—not just two carvers, but they live in different countries! Dave Western lives in Victoria, B.C., Canada, and Laura (Jenkins) Gorun lives in Worthington, Ohio. After Dave carved his parts, he had to trust the carving to Canadian post and U.S. mail so Laura could do her sections. They had a couple of days together at NAFOW to carve finishing touches. As if Laura didn't have enough to do then, she was also chairperson of the 2015 NAFOW.



A 40th anniversary cocktail hour was held to note this accomplishment of the newspaper Ninnau and recognize long-time editor, Arturo Roberts (now retired) and his wife Olga. For the celebration, Dr. Ellis Jones, of St. Peter, Minn., knit the Robertses an afghan with the colors of the U.S., Canada, and Wales.



Photo by Beth Landmesser.

Society member, Dr. AdaMae Lewis from Ames, Iowa, is shown right after National Welsh American Foundation president, Dr. Stacy Evans, presented her with the NNAF 2015 Heritage Medallion at the NNAF Gala Banquet on Friday evening in Columbus. In her acceptance speech, AdaMae praised several practices of the St. David's Society of Minnesota.

Other Society members who have been honored with this award are Ellis Jones and Mary Morris Mergenthal.

Ontario Welsh Festival Ottawa, April 22–24

Paul Birt will speak on Patagonia and Mary Muckle will present a hands-on seminar on the harp. Special guests: the world-renowned **Three Welsh Tenors** in concert Saturday evening, plus involved in other ways (read singing in the pub most likely). Prize-winning mixed choir from Cardiff, **Côrddydd**. Sunday morning and afternoon hymn singing sessions.

Saturday. concert & Sunday Gymanfa Ganu sessions at Dominion Chalmers United Church, just 10 min. walk from The Lord Elgin Hotel (headquarters for the event). A bus will be available for that trip.

Festival rates are \$147 Canadian per night. Call now to secure your room: 1-800-267-4298; 613-235-3333.

For more information please e-mail publicity@ontariowelshfestival.ca or phone Alison Lawson at 613-725-2704.



2016 NAFOW will be held in Calgary, Alberta, Sept. 1–4

The 2016 North American Festival of Wales, featuring the 85th National Gymanfa Ganu, will be hosted by the Calgary Welsh Society and will be held September 1–4. Festival Hotel is The Westin Calgary, with a group rate of C\$125. Reservations go to 1-800-WESTIN1. It is not too early to make a hotel reservation!

Pricing for the Festival itself: Day-passes and evening events are priced a la carte so that you may attend the events that interest you. Day-Passes are good for any activities from 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Be sure to take note of and keep the enclosed brochure. Note the prices there are in U.S. dollars.

Featured performers include Côr Meibion Colwyn directed by Tudur Eames, with soloist Edith Pritchard and Iona, a pan-Celtic band from North America.

Note details in the brochure about the Banff Excursion over the two days following NAFOW. Spend two nights in the Canadian Rockies, staying at the Mount Royal Hotel in Banff. Pricing and details are in the enclosed brochure.

**Prefer to receive
the newsletter online?**

Notify us at stdavidsofmn@gmail.com

**We will notify you when the next issue
is available on the Society's web page.**

**Help the Society save printing & mailing costs.
Plus you'll see photos in color!**

Well-Read Dragons enjoyed lots of laughs in October

Though funerals sound like a serious subject, there was little somber or sad in *The Thoughts and Happenings of Wilfred Price, Purveyor of Superior Funerals* by Wendy Jones.



Art by Dan Proud

Jones has a follow-up book (not on our list, but also fun). It's called *The World is a Wedding* and includes a delightful, albeit fictional, view of small village Narberth in 1925.

What's next?

Next meeting will be Sat., Dec. 5, 11:30 a.m., at Davanni's in Arden Hills, 3673 Lexington Ave. N., 55126. If you're new to the group or to this area, Davanni's is just past the large CUB store south of I-694.

For that day, readers will share a single poem or a selection of them by a Welsh author. This might be a poet whose writing is always or mostly poetry; or it might be an author we've enjoyed before, who also tries her/his hand at poetry.

For possibilities go to:
[www.http://z.umn.edu/WelshPoets](http://z.umn.edu/WelshPoets).

You're welcome to attend even if you have not been able to prepare a poem. You're assured a pleasant noontime of good food, good listening and good conversation. All who do attend are asked to purchase lunch at Davanni's so we can continue to use their party room free of charge.

Looking ahead:

Sat., Feb. 6: *I Saw a Man* by Owen Sheers. Guaranteed to be excellent. We've loved his earlier books. Available in many local libraries.

Sat., April 2: *The Dig* by Cynan Jones. A searing novel. "Pure, pared-down rural realism, crackling with compressed energy, from a writer of uncommon gifts."

Sat., June 4: *Contact! A Book of Encounters* by Jan Morris. Delightful bits from Morris' diaries accumulate on decades of war and travel writing. Travel the world and back with this hilarious, poignant writing. Available in many local libraries.

Sat., June 4: *Wales on the Western Front* by John Richards. This anthology provides an impression of what it meant to be a soldier on the Western front in WWI and, above all, what it meant to be a Welsh soldier.

For your reading pleasure

The History of the Welsh in Minnesota, Foreston and Lime Springs, Iowa, As Told by the Old Settlers (1895) is available in new translation by former member of our Society, Martha A. Davies, now of Lincoln, Neb. Publisher and distributor of the book is Great Plains Welsh Heritage Project.

Some have wondered if this is the same as the earlier English language portions available decades ago.

Definitely not! At the urging of Lord Dafydd Wigley, Martha has unearthed whole sections of the original Welsh book, never before translated.

It's a great read, and a wonderful gift for relatives.

- Available online at
www.greatplainswelshheritageproject.org.
- or send check for \$29.95 payable to GPWHP,
P.O. Box 253, Wymore NE 68466-0253

Free postage either way, to all destinations.

In addition, books will be available close to home at our Christmas Tea.

- Reserve yours for pick-up there, by sending check for \$29.95 payable to GPWHP to:

Mary Morris Mergenthal,
2393 Bourne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108.

Sorry, no credit cards at this location, but...Minnesota purchasers get a bonus copy of another of Martha's translations *Early History of the Welsh in the Proscairon District of Wisconsin, The Source of the Name and Interesting Reminiscences (1894)* by Daniel Willams.

For your listening pleasure

Purchase a CD of the **83rd National Gymanfa Ganu** held here in 2014 at Westminster Presbyterian Church. The spirited four-part harmony hymn singing will stir you on bleak winter days. Note that these will not be reproduced once the current stock is depleted.

Even if you have one, a duplicate copy could be a wise investment. Consider putting one in your safe deposit box as a gift of your Welsh heritage to your heirs. (Ed. note: I'm not kidding.)

- Available at our Christmas Tea, Dec. 12, checks or cash only.
- or send check for \$15.00 payable to the St. David's Society of Minnesota to
Mary Morris Mergenthal,
2393 Bourne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108.

Sorry, no credit cards, but free postage.

Defunct mining community was named for Swansea, Wales

Go to: http://tucson.com/news/local/article_1e4bfdc1-7d7b-52b9-b76c-dc286638605e.html for an interesting story about community and a photo of the ruins. The town's population once reached 750. Although a silver-lead ore deposit was discovered in 1886, it proved limited in production. Some ore was shipped to Swansea, Wales, for refinement. However, high transportation costs hindered development of the site until the arrival of the railroad.

From September 21, Arizona Daily Star.

Thanks to Jack Morris for pointing this out.

It's in our genes

Invading Romans, Anglo-Saxons and Normans may have shaped the history, culture and language of the British Isles, but they left surprisingly few genetic traces behind.

DNA samples from more than 2,000 people from rural parts of the United Kingdom reveal 17 subtly different groups that reflect the history of the islands, researchers report in the March 19 Nature.

Among the surprises: Traditionally Celtic-speaking groups in Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Cornwall, on the southwest tip of England, are genetically distinct from each other. Researchers had previously assumed that Celts were a uniform group that spread throughout the islands.

Welsh people appear to be descendants of the first British settlers after the Ice Age, the analysis found. The Welsh remained genetically isolated from the rest of Britain, the researchers found no trace of Anglo-Saxon heritage in their DNA.

The study also reveals that after Roman rule, invading Anglo-Saxons didn't wipe out and replace the Britons. Instead, they mixed and intermarried with them.

By Tina Hesman Saey, from Science News, April 18, 2015.

Thanks to Nancy Powell for pointing this out.

Membership News

New Address:

Kay Gavin

2555 Hamline Ave. N., #105

Roseville, MN 55113

phones & e-mail same: (651) 484-1778 - H

(612) 840-7627 - C

kaywgavin@hotmail.com

Dragon News

News of Society members & friends



Get well cards have been sent to Don Anderson, Melvyn Jones and Judith Evans Warner. Please let Sunshine Chair, Betty Kinsey, 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.



BETTY KINSEY didn't ask to be acknowledged here, you can be sure, but the editor wants readers to know about Betty's good year at the State Fair. She has exhibited postcards in the Creative Activities Building for many years. She was pleased to receive two ribbons this year, a blue ribbon for her display of leather postcards (*you read that correctly, they're made of leather!*) and the other for her display of greeting cards in postcard form, all drawn by one artist.



DAVID CONRADI-JONES has a most interesting history of the Welsh in Spring Green, Wis. He'd be willing to share that material and a photo of the church with any who contact him: dae29cj@gmail.com, 651.639.1688 or 4035 Victoria St. N., #306, Shoreview, MN 55126.

Facebook Users

Please "like" our page so you can get Society updates. Our events will be posted on the Society's Facebook page and you will get detailed information via Facebook as well as through our newsletter.

www.facebook.com/stdavidsofmn

Welsh musical guests, come April

On Wed., April 20, 7:30 p.m., a familiar musical wonder from North Wales will be in St. Paul. **Baritone Bryn Terfel**, will perform at the Ordway Concert Hall Music Theatre, accompanied by pianist Natalia Katjukova, as part of the Schubert Club Series.

On Sat., April 30, 7:30 p.m., at St. Mary's Chapel, St. Paul Seminary, 2260 Summit Ave., St. Paul, **Paul Mealor's newly orchestrated "Stabat Mater"**—scored for choir, soprano solo and string orchestra—will be performed for the first time in the greater U.S., after once in New York.

Paul Mealor, from St. Asaph, North Wales, is described in the New York Times as "one of the most important composers to have emerged in Welsh choral music since William Matthias... a real and original talent...music of deep spiritual searching that always asks questions, offers answers and fills the listener with hope."

Next Deadline: January 11

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

OR E-MAIL TO: mary.mergenthal@gmail.com

From our friends at Great Plains Welsh Heritage Society, headquartered in Wymore, Nebraska

Hello friends,

Out of the blue recently we had a phone call from a man in Dawn, Mo., inquiring about translating an old Welsh book. Some years ago his uncle had bought an old home in rural Dawn. Before demolishing the home, he went through the attic and found an old record book which he saved for many years.

A few people in the community recognized the writing as Welsh and found the names of some old family members.

The old book was passed down to James, the man who phoned us. Now that he is retired, he has time to investigate the old Welsh book. He checked with the library in Chillicothe, Mo., and they referred him to the Welsh of Kansas City who referred him to us.

James did a little translation online and figured out that the first page was headed Congregational Church, but later in the book there are other records including several accounts about a land dispute.

James will send us copies of some of the pages so we can tell him more. We know that the Welsh Baptists were strong in Dawn, Mo. I'll check my file of Y Drych articles from Dawn and see if a Congregational Church is mentioned.

LET'S ALL keep our eyes open for other Welsh record books and letters and REMAIN A STRONG NETWORK OF WELSH-AMERICAN SOCIETIES so the word gets around whenever old Welsh books and artifacts are discovered.

*Martha Davies, Secretary & Translator
Great Plains Welsh Heritage Project*

Please...when attending St. David's Society events, eschew cologne, aftershave, 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.

**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.**

OFFICERS & REPRESENTATIVES

President Judith Evans Warner, 763.522.1612, '17
judithewarner@aol.com

Vice-President Ilene Alexander, 612.237.6121, '17
ilene.dawn@gmail.com

Secretary — **position open** —

Treasurer Sara (Sally) Evans, 678.485.7306, '17
stpaulsally@gmail.com

Directors

Suzanne Ackermann, 651.429.0636, '17
suzyack110@gmail.com

Janice Barbee, 763.544.9396, '17
janicegwb@yahoo.com

Wendy Worner - (651) 436-7420, '16
wworner@earthlink.net

Archivist — Ilene Alexander

Cards & Remembrances — Betty Kinsey, 612.871.7587

Investments — Ron Adams

Membership — **position open** —

Newsletter Editor — Mary Mergenthal, 651.644.1650

Officers of St. David's Foundation —

Don Anderson (pres.), 612.789.8923;

Mae Anderson, Betty Kinsey

**Please check your mailing label.
Memberships were due July 1.**



St David's Society of Minnesota

St. David, the Patron Saint of Wales

www.facebook.com/stdavidsofmn

stdavidsofmn@gmail.com

St. David's Society members celebrate & cultivate all things Welsh—
in literature, history, music, dance, art, or ideas, traditional & contemporary.

Membership Application or Member Renewal Form

PLEASE PRINT

Name (for family memberships, please include all names)

Address (city, state, zip)

Phone (primary phone number, please)

E-mail address

Please save postage—notify me via e-mal when the newsletter is available and I will view it on-line.

Membership Categories and 2015-'16 Rates:

- Single/Annual (July 1–June 30) \$15 (in 2016–'17 the fee will be raised to \$25)
- Partner/Family Annual (July 1–June 30) \$22 (in 2016–'17 the fee will be raised to \$40)
- Lifetime Membership (one-time payment) \$175 (in 2016–'17 the fee will be raised to \$225)

Please make checks payable to **ST. DAVID'S SOCIETY OF MN.**

Mail your membership form and check to:

**Sally Evans, Treasurer
79 Western Ave. N. #307
St. Paul, MN 55102**

Remember to find us on FaceBook to learn about the latest events:

www.facebook.com/stdavidsofmn

St. David's Society of Minnesota
4200 45th Ave. N., #302
Robbinsdale, MN 55422

Visit us on the web & Facebook:

www.stdavidsofmn.org



www.facebook.com/stdavidsofmn

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Return Service Requested

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Pub conversation — Sun., Nov. 15, 3:00–5:00 p.m., Merlins Rest, Lake St. & 36th Ave., Minneapolis.
Please send your RSVP to: stdavidsofmn@gmail.com **ALL WELCOME!**

Well-Read Dragons [Society book club] — Sat., Dec. 6, 11:30 a.m., Davanni's in Arden Hills,
3673 N. Lexington, south of I-694 and CUB. Please plan to eat lunch there, please. This month, reader's
choice: poetry. Choose a single poem or group of poems, by one poet or group of poets, to share.
For ideas, please go to [www.http://z.umn.edu/WelshPoets](http://z.umn.edu/WelshPoets)
Come to listen & visit, even if you didn't find a poem. **ALL WELCOME!**

Christmas event — Sat., Dec. 12, 2:00–4:00 p.m., Christmas Season Tea, University Lutheran
Church of Hope. *See page 1.* **ALL WELCOME!**

Sgwrs Cymraeg [Welsh language conversation] — Sun., Dec. 13, 2 p.m.,
Please call (651) 644-1650 or write llawryf@yahoo.com for location. **ALL LEVELS WELCOME!**

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