

Newyddion o Gymdeithas Dewi Sant

St. David's Society News



JANUARY 2017

Volume 39, Issue 1

St. David's Day celebration

Saturday, March 4, 11:30 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

Ramada Plaza Hotel
Itasca Ballroom
1330 Industrial Blvd. NE
Minneapolis, MN 55413

11:30 a.m. – Register

12:00 p.m. – Welcome and Announcements

12:15–1:00 p.m. – Meal service

1:15 p.m. – Program

3:00 p.m. – Festivities end

Registration form is on yellow insert.

Registrations must reach us by Fri., Feb. 24.

If you are reading issue online, be sure to print your registration form...a separate document, also at our web page:
www.stdavidsofmn.org.

Menu details

- Grilled Flank Steak, charred tomato relish, baby red potatoes
- Parmesan-Crusted Walleye, lemon beurre, and Minnesota wild rice
- Seasonal Stuffed Ravioli (vegetarian)

Baby Arugula Salad
& Lemon Berry Shortcake with each entrée.

Children's Meal (age 10 and under) — Chicken Fingers

The Ramada Plaza Hotel is just south of Hwy. 35W. The Itasca Ballroom is the same one we used last year. It has direct access from the parking lot on the Industrial Blvd. side of the hotel. Parking will be reserved near that side door. Much less walking if guests enter via that door than if they come through main hotel lobby door.

Learn about Meredydd Evans and his work to collect Welsh traditional music at the St. David's luncheon, and sing some, too

The St. David's Society of Minnesota will celebrate the work of Meredydd Evans at the Annual Banquet in March. We will remember Evans, who died in 2015, at the age of 95, and learn about his work as a collector, editor, historian and notable performer of folk music.

Evans was also politically active, and led the revival of the Welsh language through the Cymdeithas movement, a campaign for the Welsh language and communities in Wales, and for the worldwide struggle for minority rights and freedoms.

We'll hear some of the songs Meredydd Evans popularized, and special guest Kai Featherstone, a musician and native of Wales, will lead us in a chorus or two. We'll also highlight the work of Evans's wife, Phyllis Kinney, in researching traditional Welsh music.



Phyllis Kinney and Meredydd Evans in his library in 2005.

Photo by Mary Morris Mergenthal.

Top 10 Unusual Things About St. David

From BBC News

1. He was born during a thunderstorm, and the rock where his mother was lying was split in two at the moment of his birth.
2. St. Patrick may have been born in the same spot.
3. He was from an aristocratic family, and King Arthur may have been his great-uncle on his mother's side.
4. He was baptized by St. Elvis.
5. He was over 100 years old when he died, on 1 March around AD 590. Life expectancy for men around that time was probably around 35.
6. Once during his travels, he was preaching to a large crowd at Llanddewi Brefi, many of whom complained that they couldn't see him. He spread a handkerchief on the ground and stood on it, and the ground beneath rose up to give him an instant podium.
7. St. David is said to have cured several people of blindness, including his teacher.
8. He was a vegetarian and teetotaler, and believed in hard physical work for himself and his monks. This made him so unpopular that there was a plot at one of the monasteries to feed him poisoned bread. When warned about this, St. David blessed the bread and ate it—and lived to tell the tale!
9. More churches were dedicated to him than to any other Welsh saint, leading to him being adopted as Wales' patron saint.
10. His shrine in St. David's Cathedral was considered very holy. If you were a pilgrim, four visits to his shrine were equal to two to Rome or one to Jerusalem.

"Welsh Rabbit"

The gallant Welsh of all degrees
Have one delightful habit;
They cover toast with melted cheese
And call the thing a rabbit.

And though no hair upon it grows,
And though it has no horny toes,
No twinkling tail behind it,
As reputable rabbits should —
Yet take a piece and very good
I'm bound to say you'll find it.

The poet Robert Graves knew this in his childhood and triumphantly recalled it for us, piece by piece . . . in 1973.

From "Tail Feathers From Mother Goose: The Opie Rhyme Book"

"Dark Horse"

Holly Windle notes a terrific movie about a Welsh village that raises a horse for racing. It's a documentary with a compelling plot and great, true life characters (with fine Welsh accents and wry senses of humor).

http://www.imdb.com/title/tt4137902/?ref_=nv_sr_2

Cheerful holiday spirit prevailed at Christmas Tea

On Sat., Dec. 10, a happy group of Society members and friends gathered at University Lutheran Church of Hope to sing, enjoy, eat goodies and tea, and visit for awhile. Plus, some availed themselves of shopping at the gift table. Thanks for the program are due to Board members David Evan Thomas and Janice Barbee. All enjoyed music and stories of all sorts.

Under David's direction, The St. David's Society Choir (Janice and Don Barbee, Trilby Busch, Mary Mergenthal, Richard Rames, Karen Titrud, and David) sang enjoyable, previously unheard, carols.

Particularly enjoyable was the fact that the arrangement by Oliver Edwards (1902–1979) came from music that member Karen Wojahn had given David (music originally from her father's collection...her father being member Ellis Jones).

The whole group sang some carols and a series of special readings was enjoyed by all: Trilby read "Emlyn's First Christmas in Homestead," an excerpt from her book *Darkness Visible: A Novel of the 1892 Homestead Strike*.

Holly Windle read excerpts from *This Was My World* by Margaret Mackworth, Viscountess Rhondda.

Her interest in Lady Rhondda was piqued in the account of the sinking of the RMS Lusitania presented at last year's St. David's luncheon.

A number of others, including a guest whose son accompanying him was from Alaska, described experiences they had had in Wales at different times and in a variety of places.

Member Jean Greenwood closed this section of the program by reading her thoughtful poem, "Carol of the Night."

The program with the choir leading the singing of "Duro Inni Heddwch" (Dona Nobis Pacem).

Then all retired to the Fireside Room to enjoy treats and conversation while member Esmé Evans played seasonal music on the harp.

Thanks are due to Judith Evans Warner and other Board members for organizing the treat table and to Ilene Alexander for foregoing the enjoyable program to stand ready to welcome all guests at the door.

Please...when attending St. David's Society events, do not wear cologne, aftershave, etc., to be respectful of members with fragrance allergies and to allow their attendance/enjoyment.

Enjoying tea time at the Christmas Tea

All photos on this page and the next by Judith Evans Warner.



Ruth Jones enjoys the seasonal harp melodies played by Esmé Evans, in rear.



Carolyn Rees Anderson and daughter, Krissy, enjoyed the afternoon.



Marla Gladen peruses the sales table. Surely everyone needs more fancy tea cups!



David Gladen looks over the tea table with anticipation.

More views of Christmas Tea party



Kay Gavin and Mae Howells Anderson enjoyed seeing one another again.



Bob Minish, decked out for the occasion, visits with Doris Strong.



Trilby Busch, David Evan Thomas, Holly Windle and Richard Rames.

Dragon News

Cards sending best wishes and wishes for full recovery were sent to: Esmé Evans Doris Strong
Mike McClellan Judith Evans Warner

Cards sending condolences from the Society were sent to:
Nancy Powell
Audrey McClellan

Our thanks to Betty Kinsey for her long service in sending these cards—always lovely and usually made by her.

If you know of a member who is ill, grieving, or celebrating, please call Betty at (612) 871-7587, or Mary Mergenthal at (651) 644-1650.

Well-Read Dragons look next at two very different titles

On Saturday, Feb. 4, the book group will “meet” a man who has been called “the greatest Welshman of our time.”

Presenting Saunders Lewis, ed. by Alun R. Jones and Gwyn Thomas, includes a celebratory poem by R.S. Thomas another modern-day writer the group “met.”

Twentieth-century Wales would have been very different without Saunders Lewis. He was a Welsh poet, dramatist, historian, literary critic, and political activist. He was a prominent Welsh nationalist and a founder of Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru, later known as Plaid Cymru. [“Vote Wales” in literal translation.]

The book includes personal views of Lewis and his work by representatives of three generations; as well as many examples of his writing: eight essays (seven of which were originally written in English); 18 poems; and three plays (two of which are in verse).

Lewis died in 1985 at age 91.

Discussion is sure to be thoughtful that day. Likely many in the group will be wishing they were able to read his original work in Welsh.

Then, for a complete change of pace, the group will look at a modern farce—on **April Fool’s Day!** *The Land of My Neighbors* by Barry Pilton is a comedic take-off on the first words of the Welsh national anthem, “Land of my Fathers.”

Discussion that day is, of course, bound to be full of good fun.

Both of these books are available at Twin City libraries and on MnLINK, which helps one search all Minnesota libraries. Both are also available at AbeBooks and Amazon.

The group meets at Davanni’s

3673 Lexington Ave. N.

Arden Hills, 55126,

not far south of 694 and just south of Cub food store.

All are welcome to visit or join this energetic, enthusiastic group, even if the book of that month has not been read beforehand. Please address questions to David Conradi-Jones, dae29cj@gmail.com or kacy65cj@gmail.com.

Obituaries

Vern Drilling

In the early hours on Thanksgiving Day, 2016, Vern Drilling died. He was 79. Perhaps God remembered that Vern's mother, who was such an influence in his life, had also died Thanksgiving Day and felt it appropriate.

Anyone who knew Vern knew that he grew up in Iowa and always remained a loyal Iowan in spite of living most of his adult life in Minnesota. He had a good childhood even though his family was very poor. Upon graduating from high school he sought resources that would allow him to attend college only to be told that poor kids like him didn't go to college. Fortunately he didn't give up and he would ultimately go on to earn his PhD from the University of Minnesota.

He was a writer and his book *Closing Doors, Opening Worlds* influenced many lives. His travel for work and for personal curiosity took him to 59 countries. It also fit very well with his interest in history and languages.

From his early years, music played an important part in his life. One of his greatest joys was playing the piano in assisted living homes and memory loss facilities. He always looked forward to singing with various choirs and music groups and took special pleasure in singing with the Welsh.

Diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's are very frightening and it is a sad reality of our society that we distance ourselves from those who suffer from these afflictions. Vern was fortunate to have people around him and he always had a smile for everyone.

Vern and his smile will be greatly missed.

— Nancy Powell

A memorial service for Vern will be held in the spring.

Michael McClellan

Michael Church McClellan, Sr., 79, died November 25, 2016, of cancer.

Mike was very active in the Twin Cities Celtic community, a member/board member of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, St. Andrew's Society, St. David's Society, Twin Cities Scottish Club, St. Piran's Society, Scottish American Center, and the Manx Society of Minnesota. He was an accomplished Welsh, Scottish, Cornish and Manx dancer. He was well-known for his "Becoming a Swordfighter" program, presented at many Scottish and Cub Scout venues.

He loved rock music and those who knew him will think of him whenever they hear the Grateful Dead.

He was a proud graduate of Thomas Lowry grade school, University High, and the University of Minnesota (SLA and Library School). He worked at Hastings State Hospital; as a Minneapolis police officer, 1961–1965; head librarian, Hopkins Public Library; and Honeywell corporate research librarian. He served in the U.S. Army Reserve Medical Corps.

He is survived by his wife Audrey, sons Michael and John, daughters-in-law Anita and Carla, grandson Aaran. He is also survived by his twin brother Tom and family. Mike was predeceased by his parents, Mac and Merneva, brother Steve, sisters-in-law Emelie and Joan, parents-in-law Inda and Edgar Phillips, and brother-in-law Jack.

The family expresses its thanks to the staff and volunteers of Methodist Hospital Frauenshuh Cancer Center and to Our Lady of Peace Hospice for their tender loving care.

Mike was a true gentleman, kind, sweet and funny, loved by family and friends alike. He will be forever missed.

A Celebration of Life service was held Dec. 10, 2016, at First Unitarian Society in Minneapolis. Memorial donations suggested to the American Cancer Society, Planned Parenthood, or Our Lady of Peace Home, 2076 St. Anthony Ave., St. Paul, 55104.

Heather Owen

Heather Mavis Owen, 91, of Lakeville, Minn., died November 3, 2016. She was a former longtime member of the Society. She was preceded in death by her husband the Rev. David Owen, to whom she was married for 59 years.

Heather's life was full of adventure and accomplishment. A native of England, she weathered the Battle of Britain in London as a girl and teenager. She attended the London College of Music, where she became an excellent classical pianist and vocalist—gifts that made her a lifelong teacher of piano. Her numberless University and private students included several of her own grandchildren, and she was still teaching piano this year.

After marrying David and giving birth to her two sons in Great Britain, the couple moved to the United States, where Heather taught music at the University of Wisconsin-Madison; gave birth to two more sons; and taught at North Central University in Minneapolis.

She and David travelled extensively, teaching and ministering in the U.K., Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, and North America. Heather was the embodiment of a "lady." She was often seen in a dress and pearls, and carried herself with a sort of refined disposition that exuded a naturally selfless confidence.

Heather loved learning and discovery, and was still contemplating theological mysteries until her last day on this earth. Many an afternoon were spent around her dining room table over authentic English tea and Scottish shortbread or scones, while discussing everything from the latest book she had read to the most complex theology.

She had a witty sense of humor and took great delight in inventing and retelling jokes, and puns, and was always a joy to sit and talk with. She was a woman of many talents. She published several books of poetry, was a sought-after speaker, teacher, vocalist, and musician. She had a great ear for harmony and could make her baby grand piano sing. In a word, Heather was lovely.

Heather dearly loved her husband and adored her four boys and extended family. She was steadfast in her pursuit to know the loving character of God more deeply, and her spirit reflected a stillness and assuredness rooted in that faith. Her exemplary life leaves a legacy of wisdom and ultimate hope in "the restoration of all things." Heather, in all of her grace and beauty, will be deeply missed.

Heather is survived by her four sons, Kendal (Sally), Colin (Marge), Bill (Sherry), Dave (Diana), 12 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren, one great-great grandchild, sister Hazel Wiltshire of London, U.K., and countless friends all over the world.

Her funeral service was held Nov. 9, 2016, at Hosanna! Church in Lakeville, Minn.



Yr Wyddfa, commonly known as Snowdon in English, is the highest mountain in Wales, at an elevation of 3,560 feet above sea level, and the highest point in the British Isles south of the Scottish Highlands.

Anglesey Blue

First in New Series of Compelling Crime Novels

OAKLAND, CALIF., Sept. 30, 2016 – *Anglesey Blue* is the first in a new series of crime novels featuring sharp-witted, but troubled detective, DI Tudor Manx, a cigar smoking, hard-drinking policeman with a dark past and an uncertain future.

Anglesey Blue was written by Dylan H. Jones, originally from the Isle of Anglesey in northwest Wales, who now lives in Oakland, California. Jones is a successful, award-winning media executive and copywriter. However, eager to paint onto a larger canvas, Jones tapped into his storytelling expertise to create the compelling and complex character DI Tudor Manx in his debut book, *Anglesey Blue*, which was inspired by his love of crime fiction, the dark landscape of Wales and his life experience both on and off the island.

Anglesey Blue is set on the picturesque Welsh Island of Anglesey. The usually peaceful haven is shaken to its core when a brutally mutilated body is found crucified on the bow of a fishing boat. Is it a message or a premonition of more murders to come?

Detective Inspector Tudor Manx is assigned to the case — his first murder investigation since being transferred from London to the North Wales Constabulary. Not averse to bruising a few egos, Manx's gruff impatience grates with the local community and his superiors.

Facing pressure to solve the case quickly and wrestling with the demons of his past, Manx's world is turned upside down by a startling revelation in the closing hours of the investigation: one that forces him to choose between his family and his duty as a police officer.

**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 encouraged to remember the St. David's Society or Foundation in your will.

For information, please contact Ron Adams, (952) 237-0506.

Membership Application or Member Renewal form St. David's Society of Minnesota

www.stdavidsofmn.org www.facebook.com/stdavidsofmn

PLEASE PRINT

Name (for family memberships, please include all names)

Address (city, state, zip)

Primary phone number _____

E-Mail Address _____

_____ Please save the postage—notify me via e-mail when the newsletter is available and I will view it online.

May we "Friend" you on our FaceBook Page? (We send event invitations via FaceBook and other social media sites.)

Membership Categories and 2017-'18 rates:

_____ Single / Annual (July 1-30) \$25

_____ Partner / Family Annual (July 1-30) \$40

_____ Lifetime Membership (one-time payment): \$225

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

Mail your membership form and check to:

Judith Evans Warner, President
St. David's Society of Minnesota
5049 Brooklyn Blvd.
Brooklyn Center, MN 55429

Send questions to: judithewarner@aol.com

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5049 Brooklyn Blvd.
Brooklyn Center, MN 55429

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www.facebook.com/stdavidsofmn

Return Service Requested

FIRST CLASS MAIL

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Well-Read Dragons [Society book club] — Sat. Feb. 4, 11:30 a.m.,
Party Room at Davanni's in Arden Hills, 3673 N. Lexington, south of 694 and Cub.
Please plan to eat lunch there. Our purchases assure use of the party room.
Presenting Saunders Lewis, ed. by Alun R. Jones & Gwyn Thomas. **ALL WELCOME!**

Sgwrs Cymraeg [Welsh language conversation] — Sun. Feb. 12, 2 p.m.,
at home of Mary Mergenthal, 2393 Bourne Ave., St. Paul 55108. **ALL WELCOME!**

Pub afternoon [casual conversation in a friendly location] — Sun. Feb. 19, 3–6 p.m.,
at Merlins Rest Pub, 3601 E. Lake St., Mpls. Come when you're able. **ALL WELCOME!**

Celebration of St. David's Day — Sat. March 4, 11:30 a.m.–3:00 p.m.,
Ramada Plaza Hotel, 1330 Industrial Blvd. NE, Minneapolis 55413.
Registrations due Fri., Feb. 24. See p. 1 & 2 for details & yellow registration insert.
Registration doc. is also on our web page. **ALL WELCOME!**

EVENTS ELSEWHERE:

Cwrs y Seintiau [The Saints Course] — July 16–23, Siena College, Albany, N.Y. www.madog.org
North American Festival of Wales — Aug. 31–Sept. 3, Rochester, N.Y. IHQ@thewnaa.org