

Croeso! — Welcome!



The Welsh Society of Western New England

***Cymdeithas Cymreig
Lloegr Newydd Gorllewino***

May 2026

WelshWNE.org

WelshWNE@gmail.com

FaceBook: WSWNE

A Message From Our President

Susan Davies Sit

As the United States approaches its 250th anniversary, the contributions of Welsh settlers can be seen not only in revolutionary action but in the intellectual and civic foundations of the nation. The North American Festival of Wales (NAFOW) will celebrate those local colonial Welsh folk. The festival will be held in New England for the first time in NAFOW's almost 100 year history, in Springfield, Massachusetts from September 2nd to 6th, 2026. You can learn all about NAFOW at festivalofwales.org.

In the early 1600s, at the beginning of the colonization of this new land, Welsh settlers came to Agawam (later named Springfield). Their names are etched on a map of farms lining the Connecticut river; names such as Edwards, Pritchards, Jones, Bedortha, and Morgan.

Stories have been written about the bravery and industriousness of Miles Morgan who emigrated from Glamorganshire. Morgan was lauded as a hero during King Philip's War in 1675 for providing shelter and successfully contacting reinforcement troops in Hadley, Massachusetts. A farmer, he was one of the leading citizens of the new town and appears in the records as a selectman, constable, surveyor, fence viewer, and overseer of highways. He is the ancestor of well-known banker J.P. Morgan. Today, a statue of Miles Morgan stands in the city's Court Square.

Another Springfield colonist was Reece Bodurtha from Caernarvonshire who arrived in Springfield by 1641. He traveled from a farm on the tip of the Llŷn peninsula, in Aberdaron. He was one of the common people, devout, liberal, industrious, modest, one whose judgment could be relied upon and one whom his neighbors could trust. As early as 1647 his name appears among several who agreed to raise a certain amount beyond that appropriated by the town for the maintenance of Rev. Mr. Moxom. He filled no great offices, but seems to have been in demand as surveyor of highways on both sides of the river, appraiser of stock, fence viewer, constable and the like.

Mary Lewis also came from Wales and married an Englishman, Hugh Parsons, in Springfield. Rumors fueled by jealousy and resentment of the Parsons family's success led to both Mary and Hugh being accused of witchcraft decades before the infamous Salem Witch trials. Mary was placed in jail in Boston and died before going to trial. Her husband Hugh was exonerated.

Continued on page 7.

St. David's Day Celebration

Members and friends gathered at the Nutmeg Restaurant in East Windsor, Connecticut on Saturday, March 7 to celebrate St. David's Day and the Welsh Society of Western New England's 25th Anniversary. It was a joyful family event filled with good food, music, laughter, and plenty of Welsh spirit.



From 11 AM to noon, guests mingled over a table of hors d'oeuvres while enjoying music by *Wild Notes*, which set the perfect mood for the day. A slideshow highlighting the past twenty-five years of WSWNE played throughout the gathering, featuring memorable events, familiar faces, and beautiful scenes from Wales. Although the society is younger than some Welsh organizations, it has remained vibrant and active, welcoming new members regularly and celebrating Welsh heritage whenever possible.

Following a warm welcome (croeso!), everyone enjoyed a wonderful luncheon. Afterward, members participated in a brief annual meeting to vote for the 2026-2027 Board. As always, the Society welcomed interest from members who might wish to serve on the Board in the future.



The post lunch celebration began with the Welsh Cake Contest. Bakers brought plates of six of their finest Welsh cakes, each carefully labeled and submitted to Beth Roberts Brown. The two judges had the delicious task of selecting the winner, and a prize was awarded for the best entry to Susan Davies Sit who was surprised and happy to win a basket of British goodies.

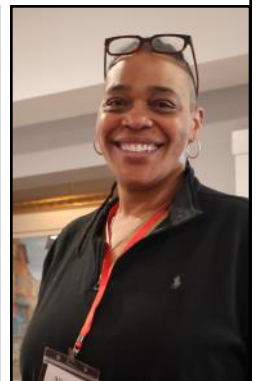
The afternoon festivities continued with our first Leek-Eating Contest. Seven people came forward to try to be the one who ate the most raw leek in one minute. Ages ranged from 6-60. Leeks were carefully washed, prepared and weighed. At the of one minute, the leeks were re-weighed. The winner was Aiden W. Sit, with his dad Jason W. Sit coming second! Aiden won a bottle of Penderyn which he had to hand over immediately to his dad, being only 17. See photo story on next page.



We continued our wonderful day with lively folk music from *Wild Notes* and a Welsh clog-dancing demonstration from member Andrea Tarr. Children enjoyed Welsh craft activities including making daffodils and coloring pages.

The day was a wonderful celebration of both St. David's Day and the Society's 25th Anniversary. It was filled with tradition, music, laughter, and the strong sense of community that makes the Welsh Society of Western New England so special.

Photos by Wayne Korhonen. Captions on next page.



St. David's Day Leek-Eating Contest



Photos on page 2:

- Margaret Korhonen and Evan Williams
- Matthew Imperato, Howard Davies, Don Sit
- Margaret Korhonen with grandson and David Owens
- Young member and her daffodil craft
- Young member and his Welsh flag
- Wild Notes*
- Andrea Carr demonstrating clog dancing
- Nichole Wofford

This page:

- Participants prepare to eat leeks: Aidan Sit, Sarah Grant Ludwig, Howard Davies, Rachel Parks & son, Sarah Daniels
- Aidan Sit, Sarah Grant Ludwig, Howard Davies
- Cara Daniels
- Jason and Aidan Sit



More Recent Events

St. David's Day Walk

By Susan Davies Sit, WSWNE President

On Sunday, March 15, the Welsh Society of Western New England celebrated its fifth annual St. David's Day Walk at Elizabeth Park in West Hartford, Connecticut. Weather was cloudy and cold. We lost spring!

During the walk, we strolled through the gardens, with Welsh flags around our shoulders, and met both old friends and new acquaintances. This year, we were honored to have Jackie Jarocki join us. She is the Regional Officer of International Recruitment and Development at Aberystwyth University's Global Marketing and Student Recruitment Department. She was in New England attending college fairs to promote study abroad opportunities for students to travel and gain knowledge in Wales. Although born here in the USA she met and married a Welshman and now lives in Aberystwyth. It was a pleasure to meet Jackie and we hope she will return each year. You may see her in the Marketplace at NAFOW 2026.

Following the walk, we enjoyed hot cider and cookies at the car and took a leisurely stroll through the greenhouses, where tulips and daffodils were in full bloom, ready for sale. A sign of spring, greatly appreciated by us in New England, as this winter has been particularly harsh, icy cold, and snowy.



Glynis Georgie, Jackie Jarocki,
Beth Brown, Susan Davies Sit, and Ed Brown.

Photos by Don Sit



Glynis, Beth, and Susan in the greenhouse.



A sign of a New England Spring in the greenhouse.

Our Newest Members Croeso — Welcome

- ◆ Brooke Donnelly, Woodside, New York. Interests: Welsh Ancestry, history, language, travel, and genealogy
- ◆ Rhonwy Ernest-Jones, West Hartford, Connecticut. Interests: North Wales, Angelsey and Lleyn Peninsula, ancestry, social events.
- ◆ Huw Evans, Topsham, Maine. Interests: need to practice speaking the Welsh language more often.
- ◆ Donna Hamilton, Niwot, Colorado. Interests: Welsh language, visiting Wales.
- ◆ Sarah Grant Ludwig and Howard Ludwig, Waterbury, Connecticut. Interests: connections with fellow Welsh folk and traditions.
- ◆ William Lytle and family, Hudson, New York. Interests: community, language, culture, hymnody, history, and churches in Wales.
- ◆ Milt Reynolds, Montgomery, Alabama. Interests: linguistics, etymology, history, conversation.
- ◆ Drew and Danielle Utman, Stamford, Connecticut. Interests: Welsh history and music.

Member Obituary

Dr. Thomas L. Bernard

By Ed Brown, WSWNE Board Member

Dr. Thomas L. Bernard, age 94, of Sycamore Knolls died at home on January 23, 2026. Born in Bonnybridge, Scotland on March 24, 1931, he was the son of Helen (Aitken) and George Bernard. He is survived by his three sisters in Wales (U.K.): Imogen Parry, Jennifer Cumberlidge and Gillian Chalmers-Evans, as well as a number of cousins, nephews and nieces. Donations can be made to the Scholarship Fund at Springfield College, or to the First Congregational Church of South Hadley. The Beers and Story Funeral Home are in charge of arrangements. Tom was the second president of WSWNE (following Peter Vickery) and served as president from March 1, 2002 --- to March 1, 2013, when Susan Davies Sit was elected at the 2013 Annual Meeting.

As president, Tom presided at all of the major WSWNE meetings. Many times he also served as presenter of some very entertaining programs, most based his broad knowledge and love of linguistics. He shared fascinating facts and lore about family and place names, always emphasizing those of Wales in relation to other U.K. countries, France and more. Another program topic was "The impact of the Welsh Language on English'. Once, he surprised the group by appearing in full pirate costume to talk about Welsh pirates, including Bartholomew "Black Bart" Roberts and Sir Henry Morgan.

Tom contributed numerous articles to the WSWNE Newsletter and Ninnau (the Welsh-American newspaper). Once he informed Ninnau readers that the names of the Paleozoic Ages (used in paleontology) are based on the names of ancient Wales (Cambria) and of two of the most prominent Welsh tribes of the Roman era, the Ordovices of North Wales and the Silures of South Wales. He concluded, "that in terms of name representation in this particular scientific field, Wales can take pride in being greatly over-represented!"

For several years, WSWNE joined our Celtic cousins at the Glasgowlands Scottish Festival in Northampton, Massachusetts where we set up a Welsh Society information booth in the form of a canopy tent among the clan tents. Tom was particularly adept at engaging in conversation with passers-by, many of whom had Welsh as well as Scottish roots ... as did Tom. Though president of a Welsh society that takes pride in its red dragon symbol, his car was easily identifiable as the one with a Scottish lion sticker.

WSWNE was very fortunate to have Tom's dedicated and enthusiastic leadership for its early, formative years. He will be greatly missed.



Online Opportunities

Welsh Conversation-on-Zoom

The Welsh Society of Western New England has merged our Welsh Conversation sessions with the **Madog Center for Welsh Studies** | *Cyfarwyddwr, Canolfan Madog ar gyfer Astudiaethau Cymreig* at the University of Rio Grande and Rio Grande Community College in Rio Grande, Ohio.

Sessions are held on Wednesdays at 7 PM ET on May 6, 13, 20, 27, June 3, 10, 17, 24, July 1, summer hiatus.

Register at <https://tinyurl.com/WelshConversation>.

Genealogy-on-Zoom

This group shares research tips, suggestions, and success stories once or twice monthly on Mondays.

May 18, June 1 and 15, July 20 11 AM to 12:30 PM ET.

There will be no genealogy meetings in August. We'll reconvene on September 14.

Sign up at WelshWNE.org/events if you have not participated before.

Welsh Voices on Zoom

Sunday, June 7 at 2:00 PM ET

*Co-sponsored by the Great Plains Welsh Heritage Centre,
Welsh Society of Western New England, and the Madog Center for Welsh Studies*

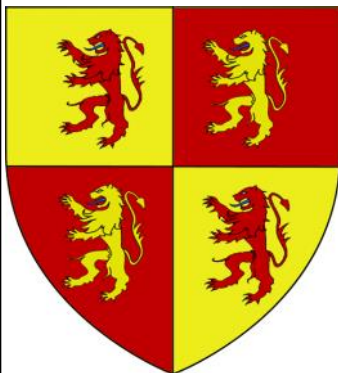
The Welsh and the Washington Monument

Presented by Robert Humphries, Part-Time Director, Great Plains Welsh Heritage Centre, Wymore, Nebraska

Beginning in 1851, Welsh immigrants in Utica and New York City spearheaded an effort to donate a commemorative "gift stone" to the Washington Monument in the nation's capital. This lecture tells the story of this campaign and its related controversies as reported in the pages of *Y Drych*, and how the vision was ultimately fulfilled decades later with the placement of a Welsh commemorative stone inside the monument.

Robert Humphries, a native of Newport, Wales and a second-language Welsh speaker, holds an MA in Celtic Studies from the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David.

To receive the Zoom link. Please email director@greatplainswelsh.org.



Owain Glyndwr

Sunday, September 20 at 2:00 PM ET

Save the date for a Zoom presentation that will celebrate the life of the last Welsh-born Prince of Wales.

More details in the August issue of *Croeso*.



From history-uk.com

See pages 14 and 15 for more learning opportunities.

North American Festival of Wales (NAFOW)

President's Message continued from Page 1.

In Pennsylvania's early Welsh Tract, leaders like David Lloyd from Montgomeryshire and Rowland Ellis from Meirionnydd helped shape colonial governance, promoting legal fairness and representative institutions rooted in Quaker ideals. Welsh influence also extended into education and religion. Morgan Edwards who came from Carmarthenshire helped found Rhode Island College, now Brown University, advancing higher education in the colonies, while Evan Evans (Montgomeryshire) served Welsh-speaking communities in Pennsylvania, fostering literacy and social cohesion.

You can attend seminars about these and other Welsh colonists at the North American Festival of Wales in September. The schedule can be found here: <https://festivalofwales.org/schedule.html>

Welsh settlers collectively shaped early America through technical expertise, industrial skills, agricultural knowledge, and civic leadership. From ironworkers, later exemplified by David Thomas of Cadoxton, Wales, who became known as the Father of the American Anthracite-Fired Iron Industry, to slate and coal miners, and skilled artisans, as well as pioneering farmers, clergy, and educators, the Welsh helped build thriving settlements, advance literacy and religious life, and establish governance structures, laying the foundations of a prosperous, functioning society that would ultimately become the United States of America.

For those of Welsh heritage, this legacy is a point of quiet pride—and for others, a surprising reminder of how deeply Welsh voices helped shape America's story.

(Adapted from *Hidden Dragons in America's Founding at 250* by Karyn Davies)

More NAFOW Details

- ◆ **Registration** is now open! Visit www.NAFOW.org for complete details.
- ◆ There will be a **Visual Arts** category as part of the **Eisteddfod** at the North American Festival of Wales. Your entry can be a painting, sketch, sculpture, ceramic, textile, or other type of visual art based on the theme **Heritage**. All entries will be displayed and adjudication is by popular vote using a secret ballot. So put your craft cap on and get busy! Register here by August 29th: wnaa.wufoo.com/forms/x1721nsw1ijuocu/
- ◆ Do you have **books to donate** on a Welsh topic? Bring them to NAFOW, preferably before noon on Friday September 4th. Attendees can browse all the donated books; any funds collected will benefit NAFOW.
- ◆ An annual highlight of the festival is the **Silent Auction**. If you have a like new Welsh item (or maybe an antique) and want to find a good home for it, consider donating it to the NAFOW silent auction. Popular auction items are books, household décor, framed art, Welsh woolens, and more. Be sure to read the donation form carefully and fill out a separate form for each item you wish to donate. See <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfsBaR13Y4RPcOZLdcVtdsrDo-lqIbJ6DrDFhdBgoRwqzfWTQ/viewform?pli=1>
If you bid on an item at NAFOW, be sure to check back from time to time. Enthusiasm for some items grows, and the competition can get fierce! Watch for the date and time bidding ends and be sure to check back at the appointed time to collect your winnings! The Welsh North American Association benefits greatly from the proceeds of the silent auction.

Additional NAFOW details on pages 8 and 9.



NORTH AMERICAN FESTIVAL OF WALES

GŴYL CYMRU GOGLEDD AMERICA

Springfield, MA

September 5, 2026



Vocal competitions

Join in the *Eisteddfod* by competing in:

-Hymn singing

(cash prizes)

-Solo Voice Semi-Professional

(a chance to win a trip to compete in Wales)

www.festivalofwales.org/eisteddfod



NAFOW 2026: Anglesey Roots Networking Session

The Welsh Society of Western New England's genealogy group is sponsoring two opportunities for people with Anglesey roots to network during NAFOW. Please see <https://festivalofwales.org/seminars.html#s17> for more information about these sessions which will be held on Friday and Saturday at 4:30 PM ET.

Anglesey is our heritage and making connections is the goal. Please join us at these networking sessions to meet kindred souls and "lost" cousins with connections to Anglesey. If possible, come prepared with family surname(s) and where they're from in Anglesey. We will hand out a guide with a map to aid your Anglesey research. This guide lists towns in six regions of Anglesey. We will divide attendees into seven FAN Clubs (Friends, Associates and Neighbors): West (Llifon), Mid-south (Malltraeth), Menai (Strait), Northwest (Talybolion), North (Twrcelyn) and East (Tyndaethwy) and one for those who don't know their Anglesey origin. Members of each club will then "speed date" so that they can meet their fellow Monwys.

Although we won't focus on DNA, bring your DNA or GEDmatch results and Ancestry.com username if you have them. You may make some connections this way. Also, bring your family tree and/or family history. If you wish, be prepared to share your contact information with other researchers - fill out some index cards ahead of time with your name and contact information to share with other researchers. A kind-hearted Help Team will be available.

Come for the meet-up. Stay for the fun and save a smile for the Family Reunion photo!





NORTH AMERICAN FESTIVAL OF WALES



September 2–6, 2026 | Springfield, Massachusetts

Poetry Contest Announcement

Calling all poets!

Submit your original poem — written in Welsh or English
for the North American Festival of Wales
(NAFOW).

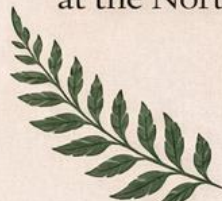
Winning poem will be read by the author at
the NAFOW Opening Ceremony
Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Adjudicator: Mererid Hopwood


Welsh poet, author and current Archdruid of
the National Eisteddfod of Wales

- Poets must be WSWNE member
- Entries accepted in Welsh or English
- Submission deadline: August 1, 2026
- Email entries to: WelshWNE@gmail.com

Join us in celebrating Welsh culture, language, and creativity
at the North American Festival of Wales in Springfield, MA.



Croeso i bawb — All are welcome!



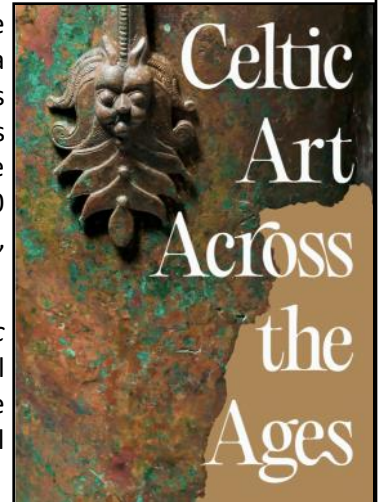
Celtic Art Across the Ages

Text adapted from <https://harvardartmuseums.org/exhibitions/6342/celtic-art-across-the-ages>

The Special Exhibitions Gallery, University Research Gallery, Harvard Art Museums is hosting an exhibit of Celtic art until August 2, 2026. The gallery is open Tuesday to Sunday, 10 AM to 5 PM ET. Discover the many forms of Celtic creativity and their artistic legacies in this sweeping story that spans ancient to modern times.

When you think of the word “Celtic,” what do you picture? Perhaps intricate knotwork designs, legendary warriors, or mystical spirituality? Maybe even a certain NBA team? *Celtic Art Across the Ages* will introduce visitors to the worlds of the various peoples who were historically labeled “Celts” through the objects they created, the interactions they had across the European continent, and the myths that shaped their legacy, then as now. The exhibition stretches from 800 BC through today, showcasing the craftsmanship, innovation, cultural connections, and multilayered reception that characterized Celtic art in Europe and beyond.

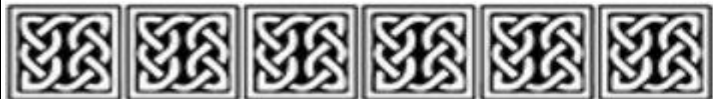
The first major exhibition on this topic to take place in the United States, *Celtic Art Across the Ages* offers an unprecedented opportunity to explore masterful metalwork, including exquisitely decorated weaponry and jewelry, and horse and chariot trappings of the first millennium BC and early medieval times, all brought to light through archaeological discoveries of the last 200 years.



See how imagery transformed under Roman rule and trace the revival of Celtic art and identities in the modern era. From shape-shifting ancient ornaments to the more well-known Celtic iconography of medieval Ireland and Scotland, the objects in this exhibition reveal rich and complex artistic traditions that defy stereotypes of what constitutes Celtic art.



Included in the exhibit is *The Bard*, an 1817 landscape painting by the British artist John Martin. Inspired by the 1757 poem, *The Bard* by Thomas Gray, it depicts a scene during the Conquest of Wales by Edward I. A Welsh bard shouts defiance at the army of Edward from a rock over the River Conwy before throwing himself to his death. Conwy Castle (which was completed later by Edward) can be seen in the distance. This painting is usually at the Yale Museum of British Art in New Haven, Connecticut.



Save the Date!

We’re making plans for a meet up in Boston on July 17 to see this free exhibit of Celtic art and listen to a special reading of Welsh Medieval Poetry. Carpool if you can; we’ll meet for lunch at noon and walk to the exhibit together.

Write to WelshWNE@gmail.com if you would like to join us.

2026
**PEACE
AND
GOODWILL
MESSAGE**

19.05.2026



Urdd

MINORITY LANGUAGES

Peace speaks every language

*'Why bother',
'Who cares',
'What's the point.'*

Why bother?

Because this is the language of memory,
the language of my youth, woven into our being,
giving meaning to the land beneath our feet.
A language that is past, present and future.

Who cares?

We do.

For it is the language of community, of belonging, of pride,
of laughing until we cry.
Of rant and reason and splendid nonsense,
the language that says, 'you are not alone'.

What's the point?

The point is a language
that colours the mind and kindles the soul,
that imagines far and wide – and kinder still.
A language that breaks down barriers
and opens worlds of possibilities.

Yes.

There is a point to a language
with hope at its heart.



Salem, a Symbol of Welsh Identity

By Begu Arian, friend of WSWNE

Across the decades, Sidney Curnow Vosper's watercolour *Salem* has become an iconic symbol of Welsh identity and the Nonconformist tradition in Wales. This work, painted in 1908, depicts a congregation in Capel Salem in Llanbedr near Harlech with the central character, Sian Owen, dressed in traditional Welsh costume holding a hymn book on her way to the family pew.

The painting was bought by the industrialist William Hesketh Lever who used the image to advertise his product, Sunlight Soap. As a result, *Salem* evolved into an iconic image across Britain. Part of the painting's popularity was that not many other Welsh images were to be had. In 1937, thousands of prints were sold to raise money for the Urdd, and the image was included in a calendar in 1950s. Many Welsh people took advantage of this by cutting out the image and displaying it in their homes.

There are layers of meaning in the painting. The clock, a few minutes before ten, indicates Sian arrived at the chapel late, during the customary silence before the morning service begins. Her comparatively ostentatious shawl is in contrast to the sombre dress of the other people present. It has been suggested the painting is a comment on the sin of vanity; did she arrive later on purpose to ensure the maximum audience to her entrance?

Also, many believed that they could see an image of the devil in the folds of Sian Owen's shawl, which did much to add to the work's intrigue. (The postulated image can be seen in the section of shawl round her left arm. The paisley pattern forms a horn, the folds his eye and nose and the shawl's trim his beard) Vosper always denied any such detail had been intentionally painted onto the shawl.

During his lifetime, the artist was inspired to create works based on Welsh and Breton culture, but without doubt this is by far his most famous work today.

You can see the original painting in the Lady Lever Art Gallery at Port Sunlight in Merseyside.

Read more about the painting at

www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/artifact/salem and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salem_\(painting\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salem_(painting))



News From Wales

US Licensing for Welsh Distillery

St Davids Distillery is preparing to launch in the United States in the coming months and is seeking support to help accelerate its growth in the market. The Welsh distillery has secured a 60,000-bottle trial with BuzzBox Premium Cocktails who will manufacture, bottle, and distribute St Davids Distillery's launch product, **St Davids Seaweed Gin**.

A key part of the distillery's U.S. strategy is to build strong connections with the Welsh Government, the global Welsh diaspora, and Welsh Americans. To support this effort, the distillery is encouraging community partners to help share news of the upcoming launch and its members' club, **Clwb Hiraeth**.

Clwb Hiraeth members receive a range of benefits, including:

- An annual limited-edition gin release
- Exclusive member discounts
- Automatic entry into quarterly prize draws throughout the year
- A grand annual prize: *The Ultimate St Davids Experience* for two people, offering a unique and memorable visit connected to the brand

Further details about the club and membership opportunities can be found

here: <https://stdavidsdistillery.wales/products/st-davids-distillery-hiraeth-club-membership>



Hedgelaying Competition

Adapted with permission from Welsh Country Magazine



Traditional countryside management skills were on show once again at Denbighshire Countryside Service's annual hedgelaying competition. Forty participants took on the challenge which included a staff category with entries from Keep Wales Tidy, Flintshire Countryside Service, North Wales Wildlife Trust, Wirral Countryside Volunteers, Smithy Farm and Bodfari Environmental and teams from Denbighshire's various countryside areas. Together they laid over 150 yards of hedgerow.

Denbighshire's Countryside Service regularly lays hedges with the support of volunteers, helping them learn the skills to rejuvenate the hedgerows

by partially cutting and laying the stems at an angle to encourage regrowth and fill gaps in the hedge. This countryside management skill was once widely used by farmers and landowners as part of their winter boundary managing efforts. Mechanical hedgerow maintenance then took over, but studies have shown how much more effective this older method is for the much-needed regeneration of hedgerows. As the hedges become fresher and younger in appearance, this technique allows the hedgerow base to thicken, providing a denser habitat for biodiversity to thrive.

Read more at www.welshcountry.co.uk/seasonal-competition-serves-up-traditional-countryside-craft/



Expanding the Great Plains Heritage Centre

By the Great Plains Welsh Heritage Project

Thanks to our many generous donors, we recently completed the first phase of our 2,200-square-foot museum expansion: the foundation and footings for the new exhibit room. With this step completed, we must now raise the remaining \$100K to build the room and finish the interior. The addition will enable us to properly display all the artifacts that have been entrusted to us. We are hoping to have the exterior completed by summer and then we can begin creating new exhibits showcasing the many heirlooms we now have in storage. We would appreciate any contributions to this endeavor. Please send to the following address and include in the Memo Line - "EXPANSION": Great Plains Welsh Heritage Project, P.O. Box 253, Wymore, NE 68466.

Diolch yn fawr iawn!

Your support will allow us to continue to further educate, preserve, and celebrate our Welsh Heritage for the next generation. Learn more at <https://greatplainswelsh.org/museumexpansion.html>.



Members of Great Plains Welsh Heritage Project beginning the "big dig"

Some Links to Explore

- ◆ A personal story about learning Welsh: www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2026/mar/12/where-duolingo-falls-down-how-i-learned-to-speak-welsh-with-my-mother
- ◆ Some rugby terms in Welsh: <https://welearnwelsh.com/blog/rugby-in-welsh>
- ◆ Please enjoy and share this presentation about the Welsh Women's Peace Petition at the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth last October https://youtu.be/aFgeb_bThPw
- ◆ Brits R Us in Northampton, MA is a British food store with lots of Welsh items, BritsRus.com. If you mention you are a member of our Welsh Society - they will give you a 10% discount!
- ◆ Here is an amazing account of historic remains recently found under Pembroke Castle: www.cbsnews.com/news/prehistoric-cave-hippo-bones-pembroke-castle-once-in-a-lifetime-discovery/
- ◆ Seaweed Festival: www.halenmon.com/blogs/blog/halen-mons-first-ever-seaweed-festival
- ◆ Sign up for Welsh Word of the Day emails at <https://welearnwelsh.com/>
- ◆ You can also sign up for a weekly email about travel in Wales at <https://wetravelwales.com/>



Learn Welsh With Us!

Registration is now open for Cymdeithas Madog's summer residential course, Cwrs Cymraeg Bryn Dderw. It will be held at the University of Rio Grande/Rio Grande Community College in southern Ohio from July 19 through July 26, 2026. Our annual week-long residential Welsh course includes five hours of daily language instruction ranging from absolute beginners to very advanced. Afternoon and evening activities include workshops on language and culture, a tour of the Welsh Scenic Byway, Welsh folk dancing (twmpath), film

night, Welsh quiz, and games night. Our Noson Lawen and Eisteddfod will be highlights of the week!

The deadline for registration is **July 1**. Go to <https://madog.org/event/cwrs-bryn-dderw-2026/> to register and find more information, including biographies of the tutors, scholarship information (application deadline June 1), information about free airport shuttles, and a link to the website of the University of Rio Grande/Rio Grande Community College.



Participants in Cwrs Cymraeg 2025 in Poughkeepsie, New York.

Another Learning Opportunity

Exciting news from our friends at the Great Plains Welsh Heritage Center!

Ysgol Haf 2026

Register now for this Welsh history course starting online June 6.

For the first time ever, the Great Plains Welsh Heritage Center will be offering a Summer School program to help fulfill its mission of educating Welsh North Americans about their heritage. Led by board member Huw Webber, the course will focus on Welsh migration, starting with conditions in Wales at the beginning of the 19th century. The course will assess the impact of the Industrial Revolution on Wales and explain why some Welsh people crossed the Atlantic. It will also explain patterns of migration and examine primary source documents, including items from our archive, to examine people's motivations and contributions to American Welsh history.

This course does not require any reading outside class and there are optional assignments and support for those who are thinking about returning to education. Each session will begin with a brief introductory lecture followed by discussions of source materials. The non-credit course will start on June 6 and run for eight weeks, with a break for July 4. There is no fee for the course, but a donation of \$99 to the Great Plains Welsh Heritage Centre is suggested. Find out more at <https://greatplainswelsh.org/events.html>.

Two Sticks and String

By Janet Thomas, New Brunswick Welsh Society

Along with being fiercely independent and outspoken, Welsh women were known for their knitting prowess. Visitors to Wales in the 17th and 18th centuries often reported, with amazement, at the skill and productivity of Welsh knitters. It seemed that Welsh women always had knitting in their hands, and in fact, it wasn't uncommon to see them knitting as they walked. It was said that a Welsh woman could knit a pair of stockings as she walked to and from the market. A yarn hook was used when knitting while walking. One end of the hook was tucked into the waistband of the skirt or apron, while the other held the ball of yarn, thus freeing up the hands for knitting.



A yarn hook.

Of course, Welsh women knitted sweaters, hats, gloves, mitts, socks, and stockings to meet the needs of their families, but they were famous for their stockings. There was a great demand for woolen stockings, made in a variety of colors and degrees of fineness. Stockings sold for a good price; fine stockings were very profitable. Welsh women would sell their stockings at markets, to merchants or to the 'stocking man', a fellow who would collect from them weekly to sell in the larger towns in England. It was an important source of income for families. In 1799 it was estimated that 192,000 pairs of stockings were produced.

Children, especially girls, learned to knit at a very young age. And although knitting was usually women's work, it wasn't uncommon for men to knit as well, when time allowed. In addition to knitting while waiting for supper to cook or walking to chapel, Welsh women would often gather for a knitting assembly (a Cymmorth Gwau) where they would knit and socialize, sharing candles and warmth, and, of course, local stories. Sometimes neighbors would hold a Noson Weu, a Knitting Evening, where everyone came together to knit, sing, and tell old tales.



Stockings on display at the National Wool Museum in Carmarthenshire.

Read more about Welsh knitting at <https://museum.wales/blog/2287/A-Christmas-Stocking-Full-of-Welsh-History-about-Socks/>

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Interesting Tidbits

Compiled by *Croeso* Editor, Diane Dunham Jeffer

Welsh Roots of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir

Yes, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir (now The Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square) has strong Welsh roots! Welsh converts sang together on their journey to Utah, and their music became a vital part of pioneer life, with their skills enhancing early church music. John Parry, a Welsh minister and musician, was asked by Brigham Young to form a choir for church conferences after he and his fellow Welsh converts arrived in the Salt Lake Valley. Parry organized a group of 85 Welsh singers for the first General Conference in 1849. This Welsh-led group became the foundation for the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, with another Welshman, Evan Stephens, later helping to build its international reputation.



Gŵyl Ifan

Gwyl Ifan, St John's Day, is celebrated on June 24th, the traditional feast day of Saint John the Baptist. Historically, this was a time to celebrate the beginning of the harvest season with bonfires set and St. John's Wort hung in doorways to protect the crops from bad spirits. Today, celebrations include plenty of music, dancing, and clogging, bringing Welsh communities together.

Read about last year's event at St. Fagan's National Museum of History in Cardiff at www.tomhannigan.co.uk/blog/gwyl-ifan-the-height-of-summer-in-st-fagans.

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As a member, you will receive invitations to our events and a copy of *Croeso* via postal mail three times each year plus a special email-only edition each May. Members also receive discounted pricing for our annual events such as the St. David's Day, Owain Glyndŵr, and Christmas celebrations.

We hope you'll join us!

Croeso! — Welcome!

Trefriw

Photo by Susan Davies Sit

