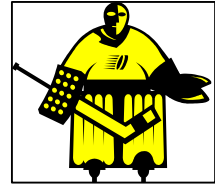


Winter Newsletter - 2003/04
Calgary Welsh Society
Cymdeithas Gymreig Calgary



Contributions: e-mail to betrol@sprint.ca - phone (403) 246-5093 - mail to Roly Thomas, 134 Country Hills Gardens NW, Calgary, AB. T3K 5G2. **Website:** <http://www.calgarywelshsociety.com/> **PO Box:** Suite 527, 7620 Elbow Dr. SW, T2V 1K2

Y Cinio Nadolig Held Sunday December 14th, this annual event was a great success attended by 65 members and friends.
The Xmas Dinner Thanks are due to our entertainers - guest **Frank Talbot** and his unique talent for amusing and thought-provoking monologues; to members **Diane Williams** and **Emily Lewis** for their charming voices and good choice of songs; to member **Iwan Saunders** who provided the piano accompaniment during the entire evening; guest **Fiona Carnie** for her violin accompaniment to one of Emily's songs (and who also led the Celtic Dancing interlude) - and to our Choir Director **Susan Drayson** who led the carol singing session that concluded the evening. Not least, the facilities provided by the **Coast Plaza Hotel**; their food and service were first class! Well done, also, to 'organizer' **Katharine Lewis**!

Start 'em Young Philip & Barbara Morris are to be congratulated on the birth of second daughter Megan. At just 10 weeks of age she and big sister Rebecca (3 years) enjoyed our Christmas function. The Morris family continue to break their own records - consistently having the youngest Society members in attendance at our functions! Again they are so very fortunate to have such a beautiful new addition to their family!

Saunders' Canmore Win Plaudits also go to Bronwen (daughter of Iwan) who qualified convincingly on December 13th for the 'Southerns' ladies curling competition set for Huntigton Hills in the New Year. Bronwen's foursome soundly defeated their opponents in an all-Calgary A-event final at the Women's Last Chance Canmore bonspiel. The win enabled Bronwen to enjoy our Society's Christmas event - without having the customary Skip's broom stuck in her hands all night! We wish Bronwen and her young team the very best of good luck at the 'Southerns'!

Rugby World Cup - 2003 What a fantastic feast of first class rugby! We all knew that England were expected to win - and they did, but only just - and in overtime too! But, before that, the Welsh XV exceeded all expectations in Pool 'D' where they trounced Canada, beat Italy and Tonga and then gave the All Blacks something of a fright in being able to score a few sparkling tries against them - even leading by a couple of points after half-time. However, the New Zealanders prevailed and won, 53 - 37! Nevertheless, the 'Boys in Red' reached the 'last 8' - and the quarter-finals!

Wales met England in the next game and showed that they were the better team on the day. But, the effort was spoilt when too many penalties were conceded - on a day when Jonny Wilkinson (MBE) wore his 'kicking boots'! Wales scored three tries against England's single - and were close with a couple more! Alas, it was not to be; Wales lost 28 - 17 in the end.

The 2004 European 'Six Nations' competition is Wales' for the taking - if the players can 'keep cool heads' and their exuberance under control! Wilkinson certainly justified his 'Honours List' award by capitalizing on the 'Many Blasted Errors' of his opponents! Believe it or not, England then conceded 'almost one too many' penalties against the Aussies!

More Rugby News Those of us who follow sport are very aware that professionalism now dominates the entire spectrum of sporting competition. In the southern hemisphere, the 'Super Twelve' is a high quality rugby union competition between Australian, New Zealand and South African 'club' teams - but made up of higher echelon players. The very same is happening in Europe within the 'Six Nations' zone - in its effort to improve the quality of the European game so as to challenge the dominance that southern hemisphere countries have tended to enjoy in past years.

In the Principality there has been much argument, blood letting and gnashing of teeth devoted to how Welsh rugby could be enhanced to a greater degree than would be possible under the old club settings - like those of Newport, Cardiff and Llanelli to mention only a few! As a youngster your Ed was weaned in the Neath tradition - a team known as the 'All Blacks' because of the black strip they proudly wore emblazoned with a white Maltese Cross insignia. In his college days, the Swansea team gained favour and were known as the 'All Whites' - sporting a uniform 'as white as the driven snow'!

Now, and this is the rub, the established Neath and Swansea clubs are combining their talents in order to subscribe to the new 'super team' philosophy. One wonders, if the new strip will be half white or half black - and which half will be what, top or bottom? Wars have been fought over less! Even worse, the new team goes under the name 'The Ospreys' - which in the Concise Oxford is described as 'a large bird preying on fish of inland waters' or 'an egret-plume on a woman's hat or bonnet'. What on earth is the sport coming to? To remain in keeping with their origins, what would have been wrong with names like, 'Black Swans' (fairly obvious) or 'White Nidums' (less obvious - but Nidum was the Roman name from which Neath was derived) or 'The Blites' - derived cryptically from BLack & whITES! A little bit of imagination can go a long way? But what's happening to Wayne's 'Ponty' or to his (despised) Kerdiff or to the Sospans (Llanelli)? We wait in awe, eh!

Speaking of Imagination What about the images seen at the head of the previous page? The nearest that could be found for the 'Prince of Wales feathers' is what you see on the left - and there were no Red Dragons to be seen anywhere. On the right, appropriately representing the country of our adoption, what could be more fitting than a hockey figure? If readers choose to be ultra conservative this progressive imagery can be removed as easily as Mulroney was!

Miracle at Welsh Society Meeting Member Wayne Davies believes that there was such an event at our last dinner meeting and submitted the following literal treatise in his attempt to rationalize the occurrence: "A new Christmas tradition may have been started at the last Welsh Society meeting. Thom, one of the members, found that his 'suffix' had been violated; he had lost his 'AS' but gained a 'SON'. Since he is long past his prime, this makes it even more remarkable which, the Calgary Welsh Society claims, could be a reversal of the Christmas virgin birth story a new, gender neutral version suitable for our post modern, permissive age unless there was a past history with the sheep and shepherds on the Pontardawe mountainside that has still to be revealed. But where were the wise men?" [Ed's note: Thanks Wayne, only a true academic could think this deeply on it! However, observant members may get to the bottom of the story! (*No pun intended!*) For the record, unlike the mountains around 'your Ponty', there were no sheep on the mountains around mine - but I can vaguely recall there were 3 local butchers who did sell mutton dressed up as Welsh lamb!]

Catherine Zeta-Jones Visits Banff It is not too often that we Western-Canadian Welsh have the opportunity to see such a versatile (and proudly Welsh) Oscar-winning actress visit our part of the world. Catherine Zeta-Jones and super-star husband Michael Douglas, together with a list of other celebrities, will snowshoe and ski at a gala event planned for Sunshine Village and the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel - from January 8 to 11, 2004. Robert F. Kennedy Jr. will be hosting this fund-raiser for his *Waterkeeper Alliance* environmental group. Inevitably, Calgary will be the arrival point for many of the expected personalities attending the event - and to whom the city will undoubtedly offer its unique 'formal' western welcome! In particular, the Calgary Welsh Society takes pleasure in acknowledging this visit by Mr. and Mrs. Douglas and trust it will be the first of many! As we would say in the Principality, "**Croeso cynnes i chi'ch dau!**"

It is a fact that the West Glamorgan area has produced so many talented actors and actresses - Sir Anthony Hopkins (from Taibach, Port Talbot - barely 5 Kms across Swansea Bay and in sight of C.Z-J's home and Mumbles Pier): Rachel Roberts (also from the Swansea area): another Rachel Roberts (from Alltwn - who appeared with Paul Robeson in an early Welsh mining classic, either '*How Green was my Valley*' or '*The Corn is Green*' - and produced (maybe) by Adam of '*Garden of Eden*' fame): Sian Phillips (also of Alltwn): Ray (Jones) Milland (of Neath) - and not the least of them, Richard (Jenkins) Burton (from Cwmavon, just up valley from Taibach). Readers may recall the highly entertaining *Mark of Zorro* remake that featured our beautiful visitor with the 'swashbuckling' Anthony Hopkins and the multi-talented Antonio Banderas (singer and actor) who, for those reasons, could pass as a South-Walian any day of the week! Remembering our history, many Spaniards survived Drake's Armada victory, came ashore on the South Wales coast and integrated with valley 'natives', Ole!

The Biter Bit Police in north Wales set up speed traps to catch 'uncooperative' motorists - and, in so doing, netted a dozen of their own officers. A North Wales Police spokesperson indicated that the speed cameras of their 'Arrive Alive' campaign recorded 102 police vehicles exceeding the speed limit over the previous year. Fortunately, all were in response to emergencies - except for twelve of them. The Chief Constable was obviously embarrassed by this adverse publicity despite the fact that the blemish represented only a tiny fraction of the 50,000 speeders 'nabbed' in the region during that year. Generally however, there was some comfort taken in the knowledge that the recorded police transgressions did show that cameras did not discriminate between police and other vehicles. All the speeding officers were fined! Gotcha!

The CWS Website is Up & Running The attention of members is drawn to this achievement and to the work done for us by Chantal Labranche, a colleague of President Alun Lewis'. You should be able to reach it by simply summoning www.calgarywelshsociety.com or, if you should get difficulty, by the address at the heading of this newsletter. A wealth of information is provided - and a couple of recent Newsletters may be selected for viewing!

**THAT SEASON IS UPON US SO, FOR THE PRESENT, ALL THAT REMAINS IS FOR US TO
BID YOU THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON - NADOLIG LLAWEN, BLWYDDYN
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From; President, Alun Lewis, his executive committee, your editor and our volunteers!

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