



## New Year Newsletter - 2004 Calgary Welsh Society Cymdeithas Gymreig Calgary

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**Contributions:** e-mail to [betrol@sprint.ca](mailto:betrol@sprint.ca) - phone (403) 246-5093 - mail to Roly Thomas at 134 Country Hills Gardens NW, Calgary, AB. T3K 5G2. **Please visit our new Website:** <http://calgarywelshsociety.com/> for all enquiries & information.

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**Blwyddyn Newydd Dda** Yet another year has gone by! How time flies ... to being one year older ... and wiser, we hope!

**Forthcoming Society Events** Two items of note remain in our events calendar for a year that started with the delayed AGM of May 24 last. The first will be our annual **St.DAVID'S DAY DINNER**, planned for **Saturday March 6, 2004 - at Fort Calgary**. Our second event, the **AGM - plus a social and film night** - at the **Irish Cultural Society, Saturday, April 24**. As with past AGM's, formality will be at an absolute minimum consistent with ensuring the evening's emphasis will be social. Fuller details of both functions are given at the end of this newsletter. As previously made known, our current 'business year' will end December 31<sup>st</sup> - this year and every following year henceforth!

**Society Officers for 2004** Most of your committee are prepared to continue in their current roles - with only the smallest of changes seen necessary in individual responsibilities. Katharine Lewis prefers not to continue as Social Secretary and will hand over to Kathleen Giffin: Philip (PJ) Morris is prepared to take over Kathleen's role as Treasurer: Alun Lewis is also happy to remain as President, Maurice Benson as V-P, Dave Matthews as Secretary, Jean Kuhn as Phone Committee Coordinator and Roly Thomas as Newsletter Editor. Members prepared to supplement this executive as 'Committee Members at Large' are: Tom & Diane Williams, Dave & Liz Elson, Margaret Kuyt and Wayne Davies. It is hoped that the majority of members will support the slate of candidates now proposed by the present executive for your consideration and acceptance at the next AGM! Should further nominations be forthcoming, **please advise Secretary Dave Matthews - AT LEAST ONE WEEK BEFORE THE AGM DATE**. A 'Proposer' and a 'Secunder' will be needed for every additional nomination - for which purpose a formal **Proposal Slip** is incorporated into the last page of this newsletter!

**Society Funds** Members frequently enquire how Society funds are spent. As many may be aware, funds in hand appear to remain at a fairly constant \$2,000 level every year with an income derived (frequently with difficulty) from very modest membership fees. What may not be realized is that some members also give generous donations - either in cash or in the absorption of costs incurred in the execution of Society business. Our newsletter costs, a typical annual expenditure (for postage and printing) is generally around \$500 - while a substantial number are also e-mailed at no cost to the Society! Both these routes also cater to an extended readership in the hope that more outside interest will be generated. Since the AGM of May 2003, the total number of paid-up memberships (in all categories) is a mere 45 - so one does not need to be a rocket boffin to see that our burden is carried by a relative few! If anyone forgot to pay last year - at least pay now, in 2004!

**HOWEVER, THOSE WHO REMAIN 'DELINQUENT', REGARDLESS OF RECENT REQUESTS, WILL SOON FIND THEIR NAMES REMOVED FROM ALL SOCIETY LISTINGS - WITHOUT EXCEPTION! AMEN!**

**How about them Feathers?** Past-president Stuart Aitken noted comments made in the last newsletter and promptly added to our choice of available graphics. These now appear at the top of this page. Thanks, Stuart!

**More about Rugby** Only part of the item on the changing European rugby scene was given in the last newsletter issue. The force behind this transformation is the Heineken brewing company and a competition that it initiated (with the European Rugby Unions) involving a total of 24 teams from the 6-Nations zone. England has 6 representatives, France (6), Wales (5), Ireland (3), Scotland (2) and Italy (2) - arranged in 6 pools of 4 teams. The Welsh RU representatives are: Cardiff Blues, Celtic Warriors (Bridgend & Pontypridd clubs), Gwent Dragons (essentially Newport & Ebbw Vale), Llanelli Scarlets (for the west, mid & north Wales) and Ospreys (Neath & Swansea - who got your Ed's earlier attention). So far this season the UK teams, London Wasps, Gloucester, Edinburgh, Munster and Llanelli Scarlets have 100% records from 3 wins apiece. The Ospreys, Gwent Dragons, Cardiff Blues and Celtic Warriors will not qualify for the semi-final rounds.

Another exciting competitive development is the IRB's 'World Sevens' tournament involving both southern and northern hemisphere teams. Competition takes place in the Emirates and South Africa, Hong Kong, U.S.A., Australasia - and ends up at Twickenham. How many people remember the annual 'Twickenham Sevens' tournament? A wonderful family day out involving UK clubs for those of us who lived in the London area. It was there, in the 50's, the late Caerwyn James (of Llanelli & Cefneithin) was at his mercurial best! So, during February, watch out for the next televised competition - this time from southern California - where one of the IRB organizers is Ex-Welsh 'Sevens' international, Marc Thomas!

A few weeks ago, a competition was featured from George, South Africa - in the Emirates and S.A. region. Guess what, England trounced all comers with an exceptional display of the running game. Surprisingly, none of the participants were part of the triumphant England 'World Cup 2003' XV - but they must surely now pose a real threat to a number of those players!

**The Tom Jones** Members should get organized to see (and hear of course) the pride of '*The Ponty*' when he appears at the **Pengrowth Saddledome** on **SUNDAY, MARCH 28<sup>th</sup>** next! Tickets have already been available for a number of months at [ticketmaster](#), Tel: 777-0000. Don't believe the rumour that Tom developed his vocal talents from a certain society member (who will remain nameless) whose mother sold a baby's high chair to a certain Mrs. Woodward, a (good) few years back! A Calgary Herald picture-advertisement for this event features a 'rampant Welsh dragon' in the top left hand corner. 'Da iawn Tom bach', your P.R. people are to be complimented on their initiative; they really are on the ball!

**More on Catherine Z-J** During her recent Banff visit, the Society had hoped that Ms.Zeta-Jones would have learnt of our existence in Calgary. Despite an attempted initiative, the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel may have failed to cooperate in our little ploy. However, as a symbol of her unquestioned loyalty, 'Herald' readers may have seen a news tid-bit where a couple of Welsh visitors surprised her by shouting, 'Catherine from Mumble!' when she was 'on the slopes' one morning. Not to be outdone, she responded with, 'Bore Da!' Da iawn also; you were very sharp too, Catherine!

'Chicago', C.Z-J 'Oscar' award film, is a delight for jazz fans; for those who enjoy good swinging music, good singing (in a like idiom), dancing and acting - there should be no doubt in anyone's mind that Catherine Zeta-Jones' performance is quite outstanding - and in all the demands upon her many talents! The film is excellent entertainment value! (The Ed. just loved it!)

**Crunch time for botanic site** - so said BBC News recently. Vital talks on the future of a troubled National Botanic Gardens of Wales (located at Llanarthne, Carmarthenshire) it reported, were about to conclude. Opened by the Prince of Wales in 2000, visitor numbers have slumped despite a promising start. The venture is now solely sustained through emergency handouts! Discussions with a mystery backer have continued in the hope that a rescue package will soon be agreed. The garden's trustees were due to call in 'administrators' in December 2003 after the Welsh Assembly refused a request for some \$8 million to bail out the attraction. The gardens are presently operating at 'break-even' but cannot be allowed to make further loss! Already a total of 55 people have been made redundant at the site with the remaining personnel being on three months' redundancy notice. It is to be hoped the mystery backing will soon materialize!

**'Y Byd' - a new Welsh 'Daily'** It has been announced that Wales' first (Welsh language, that is) daily newspaper is being set up and seeks sponsorships both locally and overseas. Many high profile celebrities have already declared their support for *Y Byd* (The World). Among these enthusiasts are actor Ioan Gruffudd (aka Horatio Hornblower); Huw Edwards (BBC News); the Archbishop of Wales; Archdruid Robyn Lewis; ex-rugby international Ray Gravell; author Jan Morris; artist Sir Kyffin Williams. Members of all political parties in the new National Assembly have also given unanimous support. People living outside Wales can become involved in this historic venture either individually or through their local Welsh associations by purchasing shares in Y Byd. Single shares are priced at \$850 US with investors gaining free membership of the Clwb Cefnogwyr (Supporters' Club) with regular updates on the paper's progress over the next year. This also includes an invitation to attend the paper's launch party. Should any readers require more information, the <http://www.ybyd.com> website provides it. Further, if <http://www.ybyd.com/newyddion.shtml> is got and its links to 'Newyddion' followed, an oil painting by Sir Kyffin Williams can be viewed. Investors will have a chance of winning it!

**A New World for us too** We wonder how many members have looked in on our website? We've not heard comment so, it may be, that no news is good news? The development provides communication, information and advertising advantages to many users - not least our Society. Certainly, from your Ed's perspective, the opportunity to minimize tedious workload has arrived - creating an environment where newsletters need not be personally e-mailed to '*computerized*' Society members - or to interested people on a world-wide basis. Obviously, once known to users, a regular check of our website will always provide up-to-the-minute information plus a choice of newsletters!

**AFTER THIS ISSUE, PLEASE NOTE, NEWSLETTERS WILL BE MAILED ONLY TO MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING (WITHOUT WEBSITE ACCESS) - and - THOSE WHO PREFER THE CANADA POST OPTION!**

Please take the trouble to advise the Ed. of your personal wishes! All members on our e-mail registry will be advised in a timely way when special news items arise and/or when a NEW NEWSLETTER has been posted on the website! Communication with sister Canadian groups will be dealt with the same - **so, our many friends out there, also please note!**

**Almost at the Scott's** A headline in a recent 'Herald' said 'Saunders finishes in style'. However, she and her foursome just failed to squeeze into a semi-final spot in the Scott Tournament of Hearts, Southern Alberta, qualifying competition. With a 3 - 4 record, Bronwen's young team did very well and deserve our 'heartiest' congratulations!

**A Feast for Dylan Fans** A newsletter received from the Victoria society reminds us 2004 is the 50<sup>th</sup> commemorative year of Dylan Thomas's death and highlights a number of events that the Dylan Thomas Circle will be holding in Vancouver from October 14 - 18, next. A synopsis of five separate programmes was given for those dates (a number of them personal) in honour of the late poet. Interestingly, a re-enactment of Dylan Thomas' original 1950 noon reading will be given at UBC during one of the five days - by a name that should be familiar to Calgary members - that of Russell Roberts! Russ is the son of the late Glyn and Muriel Roberts: he received his drama training at the Bristol Old Vic. Glyn was CWS President in the 1970's. If further details of these events are of interest to anyone, please contact the Ed.!

**A First Pot Fatality** The Daily Telegraph recently reported a 36-year old fellow from Haverfordwest (Pemb.) 'snuffed it' from cannabis poisoning. An inquest revealed he had been accustomed to smoking 6 'joints' a day for 11 years: that it was the first recorded UK fatality from the weed: and that it 'corrected' the argument, 'Cannabis cannot kill!' Due to the fact the man died while taking part in an illegal activity, death by misadventure was recorded. A quote by 'an expert on addictions' from Hull University stated, 'Cannabis is not the nice hippy drug it used to be!' We wonder how the hull he'd have known it - and be able to say so with credible conviction at an inquest? The mind boggles at the very thought!

In the Ed's opinion, it could be that Haverfordwest is developing a reputation for that kind of activity - because it is also the place where he (as a 16-year-old) had his first pint of draft bitter, when at a wartime farming camp in the parish. Happily, that was an event that took place with youthful excitement (if with a little under-age apprehension), at a white walled pub near the railway station. He fondly remembers the race to the pub, the taste of those glorious first shuds - and survived!

**JUNE Welsh Choir Visit** **The Port Talbot CYMRIC Male Choir** has arranged to visit Alberta in the first two weeks of June. It plans to give a number of performances in Edmonton, Ponoka and Calgary - and in Vernon BC. The choir is one of the oldest in Wales, dating from 1911. It was a competitive group originally and regularly appeared at local eisteddfodau. Remarkably, it has had only four Musical Directors since its beginning. Over the past 30 years, the 'Cymric' has travelled extensively in the UK and overseas - performing in Germany, France, Hungary, Spain, the US as well as Canada. It has appeared on radio and TV in the UK, France and Canada - and in many music festivals including the Celtic festivals at Lorient (Brittany) and the Isle of Man. In 1991, the choir was invited to participate in a Rita MacNeil concert tour of the UK. She was particularly impressed by their version of her song, 'Working Man'! The choir has also been privileged to appear at the Royal Albert Hall in the presence of the Queen and Prince Philip - as well as at Balmoral when the royal family happened to be in residence. The 'Cymric' obviously has a long established and enviable reputation!

Over the years, the choir has dedicated its talents to aid many charitable organizations and strives to bring top class celebrities to its home area. The home strength of the choir is around 60 and has a repertoire ranging from popular Welsh hymns, folk songs and ballads to rousing male choruses from the world of opera! On the proposed June trip, 40 choir members will be participating in what will be a predominantly 'Alberta adventure'!

The visit starts on June 3<sup>rd</sup> so, readers, please keep that arrival date in mind! The choir itinerary has yet to be finalized for the Calgary part of the tour - and the Society plans to include these arrangements on its website as soon as they become available! The next Newsletter, which will immediately follow the April AGM, will also feature all concert plans and details!

**Did you know** ..... that there is a Welsh equivalent of St. Valentine's Day? It **DOES NOT** occur February 14<sup>th</sup> ... but **ON January 25<sup>th</sup>** ! Clearly, Calgary Welshmen have again missed a romantic opportunity - to carve yet another traditional love-spoon for their sweethearts. Still, there is always next year - with ample time to hone ones skills, eh?

Ottawa Pres., Glenson Jones, passed this information on to us from a recent *BBC Wales* newsletter. It stated that January 25<sup>th</sup> is **Dydd Gwyl Santes** (Santes, Welsh for a female Saint) **Ddwynwen** and that her story related to 5<sup>th</sup> century Wales. She, Dwynwen, was one of 24 daughters of a saint and king, Brychan Brycheiniog of the Kingdom of Brycheiniog (aka Breconshire). She was beautiful and virtuous and fell in love with a local prince named Maelon Dafodril (not 'Daffodil' - he didn't carry a handbag!) Maelon intended to marry her - but it was not to be! Various reasons were given, principally that Brychan had promised her to another prince or that she herself wished to live a secluded religious life. As Dwynwen distanced herself from Maelon, his bitterness toward her became increasingly unbearable and, upon seeing his desperation, she fled to the woods and prayed for divine help to end the misery. She fell asleep and dreamt she'd been administered a sweet drink which immediately saved her from Maelon's attentions and her own heartache. The same drink turned Maelon into a statue of ice! Again she prayed, and was given three wishes: first that Maelon be unfrozen; second, she should never wish to marry again; third, that God should answer all requests made by her on behalf of lovers and that they would all find happiness in the fulfillment of their love - or be cured of their passions. A saying attributed to her is, 'Nothing wins hearts like cheerfulness!' All Dwynwen's wishes were granted and she committed herself to her religion - founding a convent on Llanddwyn Island, just off the coast of Anglesey (Ynys Fon). A fresh-water spring on Llanddwyn, called Ffynnon Dwynwen (Dwynwen's spring) became a place of pilgrimage and faith healing for the sick (and for distressed animals) - a tradition that has survived to the present day! The ruins of Llanddwyn chapel, a 16<sup>th</sup> century Tudor church built on the site of a priory, can still be seen and a Latin cross, dedicated to her, also exists on the island. Her name lives on in the town Porthddwyn. A church in Cornwall is also dedicated to her - shades of when Cornwall and Wales shared the same language and heritage!

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**CINIO DYDD GWYL DEWI - St.DAVID's DAY DINNER**  
**Saturday, March 6<sup>th</sup> at Fort Calgary Historic Park**  
**750 - 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE**

This venue is a new one for us and is on the east side of the city core.

From the west - proceed eastwards on 9<sup>th</sup> Av. turning north (left) into the park.

From the east - drive west on 17<sup>th</sup> Av. - avoiding Blackfoot Tr. by taking a half right turn at the traffic lights **before** the old Molson Brewery. That road then intersects with 9<sup>th</sup> Av. Continue west and turn right into the park once over the Elbow River bridge.

**Please order tickets in advance: Members \$30 ea. / Non-members \$35 ea.**

Send payment by cheque or draft to **Kathleen Giffin**, 152 Riverbrook Rd. SE, Calgary T2C 3P3 (Tel: 720-8127) to arrive **BEFORE February 25<sup>th</sup>** - made payable to the Calgary Welsh Society

**Guest Speaker - Cledwyn Hayden-Jones**

Mr. Hayden-Jones was an Assistant Superintendent in one of the rural school districts adjacent to Calgary and is now a part-time instructor in the Faculty of Education of the U of C. He hails from Bangor (Caernarvonshire) and is Welsh speaking. One of his many interests is 'penillion' singing - with which he also plans to entertain us during the evening.

**Cash bar from 6.30 pm. Dinner at 7.00 pm. Ample free parking**

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**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2004 + Social & Film Night**  
**Saturday, April 24<sup>th</sup> at the Irish Cultural Society**  
**6452 - 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW**

This address can be approached on Bowness Rd. from both east and west directions.

Look for Bowwood Dr. or 67<sup>th</sup> St. NW. Both are turn-offs on Bowness Rd. that intersect with 35<sup>th</sup> Av. NW. Driving from the east (turn left) - and from the west (turn right). There is a free car park.

**Cash bar from 6.30 pm. AGM from 7.00 - 7.30 pm. Snack Foods after AGM.**

The evenings objectives are to finish the business component (the AGM) as quickly as possible for the social aspect of our get-together to begin. The present executive have pre-set a slate of candidates to be responsible for the Society business until December 31, 2004. Should there be any further nominations desired in any position - members are urged to send a **Nomination Slip** (see below) to Secretary **David Matthews**, 6907 Lamont Court SW, T3E 6G6 (Tel: 249-5483) to arrive **NO LATER** than **March 16<sup>th</sup>**.

**The Welsh Film (in English) has a content that could engender amusement and (maybe) a little 'hiraeth'. So, to avoid diluting your beer - put your glass up to your lips ONLY when supping!**

**To offset hall, bar service and food costs, there will be a fee of \$10.00 per head.**

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**NOMINATION SLIP - AGM 2004 - April 24, 2004**

<u>Proposed (Name)</u>	<u>Defined Office</u>	<u>Proposer (Name)</u>	<u>Seconded (Name)</u>
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Please submit to the Secretary, properly completed, by April 16<sup>th</sup> at the very latest. Thank you.

