



New Year NewsLetter Issue – 2005 Calgary Welsh Society



Cymdeithas Gymreig Calgary

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BLWYDDYN NEWYDD DDA I BOB UN! A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE!

Member Resolution for 2005 THE NEW YEAR signifies MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS BECOME DUE! Many will have already responded suitably even before reading this new masterpiece of Wenglish prose! NEW MEMBERSHIP CARDS are ENCLOSED for paid up members! Other folk are reminded membership does have its privileges; NewsLetters, lower ticket costs at formal functions and price reductions at participating city stores!

The Christmas Dinner 2004 This annual event was well attended by fifty members and friends. Again, Fort Calgary did us proud in providing a quality buffet dinner, the wise choice of Social Sec. Kathleen Giffin! In the absence of President Alun Lewis, V-P Maurice Benson performed the MC honours with style - even if with something of a 'leftish' tendency! The evening was pleasurable and memorable; Dianne Williams entertained us with a selection of delightful carols, treasurer Philip Morris gave a reading from Dylan Thomas's *A Child's Christmas in Wales* and Wayne Davies provided an appreciation of writer/comedian John Morgan - of *Royal Canadian Air Farce* fame - perhaps the best known of contemporary Welsh-Canadians. His untimely death happened in November 2004! (See special inclusion, Page 2)

Wayne's presentation also drew attention to two items of importance that greatly enhanced the cultural reputation of the Principality! Firstly, the international success of young (one time) school teacher Katherine Jenkins who recently signed the biggest deal in classical recording history - becoming the fastest-selling female opera singer since Maria Callas: and secondly, the recent official opening of the Wales Millennium Centre. The persuasive Dr. Davies got us all to put our hands into our pockets to get the Society name suitably inscribed on a personalized 'Adopt a Slate' plaque at this splendid Cardiff waterfront entertainment complex. The sum of \$136 was quickly raised for our 'customized slate' - with Dave Matthews and Malcolm Page kindly offering to ensure the required \$180 purchase price would be met. Thank you so much - both and all!

The new Wales Centre & Terfel Was it to be Terfel's swan song - the question posed in a recent *Times of London* article and faithfully reproduced in the *Calgary Herald* (November 20th last) - because Terfel, torn between a love of opera and homeland, could have been plotting a stage exit - so it may have appeared! However, because of his enormous success as an opera star around the world the plan actually related to his wishing to combine these two loves and live in Wales to a greater extent! With the Welsh National Opera (the WNO) soon to be in its custom built opera house at the Wales Millennium Centre, Terfel had the opportunity to appear in the first season at its new home! In 2005 he will perform with them in Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*. While realizing it may not be the best paying engagement in his world - opera is not something he now has to think about in financial terms. However, if his career was only in opera, he probably would think differently - but when many other things are on going 'you can choose a bit,' so Terfel confides! Hence his satisfaction in being able to be with the Welsh National Opera in its very first Wales Millennium Centre season!

More about this renowned baritone, Terfel! He was born Bryn Terfel Jones in 1965 to Hefin Jones a North Wales sheep farmer and his wife Nesta, a music therapist. He had a childhood of soccer, fishing and building tree houses with an older brother. While an outdoors lad he never relished a farmer's life - or repairing dry stonewalls on the hillsides - in all weathers as his father did! He wasn't a chorister either nor did he join a band in school - but domestic mood music was always evident in his young life and he received singing lessons almost before he could read! Following Grade 12, Terfel was awarded a scholarship to London's *Guildhall School of Music*, which meant leaving everything he knew - including sweetheart Lesley, now his wife! He had never been to London before and English was not even his first language any more than it is nowadays for his three children. His 10-year old speaks Welsh (and perfect English), the 5-year old is only 'good' in English - but 3-year old Deio Sion has no English at all in his young life! Terfel's was a gigantic leap from a simple rural environment to a large metropolis! His distinguished teacher, Arthur Reckless, made him memorize three or four songs a week and on a night off he would go to see Placido Domingo in *Otello* (which would also happen to be Terfel's first operatic role!) He half jokes that the only houses he now wants to play in are Covent Garden and Cardiff - and suggests that his career would be perfect if that could be permanently arranged! He intends to take a sabbatical in 2008 - making that a year to think about things!

What about Katherine Jenkins Mezzo-soprano Katherine Jenkins of Castell Nedd (Neath, South Wales that is) has, at the young age of 23, taken the operatic world by storm! An undisclosed 7-figure (UK pounds)

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contract in 2004 became the largest classical recording deal in UK history! But it was hardly an overnight success for this young lady; by the age of seven her early interest in pop had given way to a love of classical music when she started having piano lessons and joined a local choir. In the decade that followed she represented Wales in the *Choirgirl Of The Year* competition (thrice) - and twice won the BBC Radio 2 *Choirgirl Of The Year* contest. Between 1990 and 1996 she was a member of the Royal School of Church Music Cathedral Singers and achieved the *St. Cecilia Award*, its highest accolade. She was also a member of the National Youth Choir of Wales. Katherine was awarded the *Pelenna Valley Male Voice Choir Scholarship* for the most promising young singer - and, at 17, won a scholarship to study at the *Royal Academy of Music* in London - where she graduated with honours!

In October 2003 she sang at a mass honouring the Pope's silver jubilee, at London's Westminster Cathedral - and went on to perform at the Sydney Opera House (not the Cape Breton NS one) as a special guest of Max Boyce, another Vale of Neath product! Since then she has become the official mascot of the Welsh International Rugby Union team and, before the 2003 World Cup in Australia, recorded the team's official song - a version of *Bread Of Heaven* - backed by a 100 strong male voice choir! She earlier sang the national anthem at Cardiff Millennium Stadium prior to a Wales/England match-up! At that event she said she was so nervous but, as she walked along the tunnel leading on to the field, 70,000 people were singing Tom Jones' *Delilah*, something that made her feel not the least bit nervous! After *Hen Wlad fy'n Nhadau* and walking off the field she admitted that she 'turned to jelly' half way back into the tunnel. Alas, Wales did not win - despite her influence!

Katherine Jenkins' chart topping debut album *Premiere* is a mixture of old standards including *Ave Maria*, *The Lord is My Shepherd* plus a smattering of traditional Welsh songs and new interpretations of classics by Handel, Bach, Erik Satie and others. It was released in April 2004 - and her second album, aptly titled *Second Nature*, followed in October.

While a true prodigy, Katherine described the death of her father, Selwyn (when she was just 15), as the catalyst for her pursuit of success. She worked as a music teacher briefly before signing-up with Universal Classics - the label of Pavarotti, Bocelli, Terfel and Renee Fleming! As Wayne Davies aptly remarked at the dinner, '... and she's really beautiful as well!'

A young English fan made a comment to bbc.co.uk about this Welsh gal - that after listening to *Second Nature* over and over again - he just had to buy *Premiere*! Thanks to someone giving him a promotional copy of *Second Nature*, he became such a fan- and before which he was not even into the classical stuff. He sure was now - and believed Katherine was the reigning *Princess of Classical Music* - adding, 'even if she could not sing she could easily win a *Miss Wales* beauty contest!'

Remembering John Morgan Through the efforts of Dave Matthews the Society has a unique memory of John Morgan. In March, Dave wrote to him asking if he (and *Mike ... from Canmore*) had any plans to visit this part of the world. It was suggested, if that were at all possible, then members of the CWS would love to meet him! As we now know, John Morgan died in Toronto on November 15th 2004. On about the same day, Dave received this letter - handwritten and dated Nov. 2nd - but not mailed until Nov. 10th! From it, many will realize John Morgan was a class act, in more ways than one! With this background it becomes a moving letter - and is reproduced below to show John's rare qualities!

Bala, Ont.
Nov 2, '04

Dear Mr Matthews,

My apologies for not having replied before, but your letter chased me around for a while and when it did catch up with me I was up to my ass in alligators.

Now that the summer is over and the alligators have departed - as soon will I - it's time to answer neglected mail.

It was nice of you to offer to entertain Mike, but he has retired and is now trying to live off the meagre avails from putting his dog Norm out to stud.

I have called it quits on writing and performing, spending my summers in Bala (yes, named after the original) in the Muskoka Lakes, then heading off to Aberdare in Wales (where I have a house and car) each November.

I entertain relatives over Xmas, and suffer the usual query of my contemporaries: 'Have you got a proper job yet John, or is it just the writing?' After Xmas I jump in the car and buzz off to warmer climes, returning to Canada in April when the cycle starts again. Hell, but someone's got to do it.

Thank you for your letter, and my apologies for not being able to visit.

My best regards to you & the Society,
(Signed) John Morgan

Son Christopher and daughter Sarah survive John Morgan. His wife Ena predeceased him!

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Welsh RU XV - Pre-Xmas Fixtures

These special international fixtures produced sparkling rugby and a promise of even greater things by an improved Wales team in the 2005 Six-Nations competition.

All four games were played at Cardiff Millennium Stadium during November 2004 - with the scores panning out as follows:

South Africa 38 – Wales 36 : Romania 07 – Wales 66 : New Zealand 26 – Wales 25 : Japan 0 – Wales 98.

All were outstanding results - despite losses against two very strong and talented teams from the southern hemisphere! The first Wales Six-Nations fixture of the season is against **ENGLAND at Millennium Stadium on February 05, 2005**. With Katherine Jenkins present to sing the national anthem, **WILL THE WALES XV WIN this time... OF COURSE IT WILL!**

Welsh Curlers beat Norway

A Welsh curling team almost reached the top flight in European curling circles - in achieving three notable wins including one over Olympic title-holders Norway, in Sofia (Bulgaria) at the 2004 European Championship competition. The team finished joint 7th in the round robin section but lost the tiebreak games against Switzerland and Russia to finish 9th overall. In so doing, it was demoted to the B League for the 2005 season. Regardless, the team looks forward to planning a return to the premier league at the next European tournament scheduled to be held in Garnisch-Partenkirchen (Germany) next year!

The 5-man Welsh team practises at the Deeside Ice Rink in Queensferry, Flintshire. This is also the home of the Welsh Curling Association and the only location in Wales where 'rocks are tossed'! Some six teams are currently engaged in a Welsh league that uses the Deeside facility. Welshman Hugh Meikle introduced the game of curling into Wales about 30 years ago. He first became interested when living in Canada. Now his two sons are members of the Welsh team: son Adrian the present 'skip' who, as a consulting engineer, also works half his week in Denmark. He made the crucial shot to gain a 8-7 win over Norway and followed that with a convincing 9-2 victory over France! Other members of this team are Jamie Meikle, Andrew Tanner, John Sharpe and Chris Wells, a local doctor. Most of the team's competitions are in Scotland - so the members are obliged to travel 'up there' on Friday evenings and 'back down again' - ready for work - on Mondays!

Hugh Meikle's sister is secretary of the WCA - making it quite a family affair - bringing us nicely to our next story

Our Curling 'Hot Shots'

Calgary recently witnessed yet another family affair - when the foursome 'skipped' by Bronwen Saunders again made it to the Southern Alberta play-downs. But, that was only half the story; at the North Hill Curling Club, Bronwen's young rink had to come from way behind to beat the one 'skipped' by her mother, Linda Wagner! As the *Calgary Herald* aptly reported, 'Mother of all rallies propels Saunders rink' - where daughter Bronwen had to recover from being 6-1 down to finally clinch the match with a remarkable 8-6 win! Both Linda and Bronwen now have another year to wait before again attempting to qualify for the prestigious 'Tournament of Hearts'. Regardless, they did well this year - so Iwan, you have to take both these ladies of yours out for a well-deserved celebration!

The Magna Carta and Us

A number of years ago your Ed. got a copy of a translation (from the original Latin) of this very historic document when attending a public lecture on the subject at the U of C. A number of copies of the *Magna Carta of King John*, the agreement reached at Runnymede in AD 1215, were made in the Royal Chancery at Westminster. One of these was entrusted to Hugh of Wells, Bishop of Lincoln, to take to that city. There were six copies, each separately sent to a cathedral city in England for the benefit of the population at large and for safekeeping!

The document starts, 'John, by the grace of God, king of England, lord of Ireland, duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, count of Anjou, to the bishops, abbots, earls, barons, justiciars, foresters, sheriffs, stewards, servants and all his officials and faithful subjects, greetings.' In the text that follows, one agreement reads: 'If we have dispossessed or removed Welshmen from lands or rights or other things without the legal judgement of their equals, in England or in Wales, they shall have them returned to them at once; & if a dispute arises on the matter it shall be decided in the March by a judgement of their equals; for English holdings in England according to the law of England, for Welsh holdings according to the law of Wales, for holdings in the March according to the law of the March. Welshmen shall do the same to us & ours. Further, from all those things from which any Welshman has been dispossessed or removed without the lawful judgement of his equals by king Henry our father, or king Richard our brother, & which we have in our possession (or are held by others with our legal guarantee) we shall have respite for the usual time allowed to Crusaders; excepting those things about which a legal action has been begun or an official enquiry made, at our command, before we took the cross. But as soon as we return, or if perchance we do not go on our pilgrimage, we will at once grant full justice in accordance with the laws of the Welsh & the aforesaid regions. We will give up at once the son of Llywelyn & and all the hostages from Wales & the charters delivered to us as security for peace. We will act towards Alexander, king of the Scots, concerning the return of his sisters & hostages, privileges and rights, in the same manner in which we will act towards our other barons of England, unless it ought to be otherwise according to the charters which we have from William his father, formerly king of Scots; & this shall be according to the judgement of his equals in our court. All these aforesaid customs & rights which we have granted in our kingdom as far as it pertains to us towards our men, shall be observed by all of our kingdom, both clergy & laity, as far as they are affected, towards their own men.' Fascinating stuff! How many of us Celts were aware of 'mentions' in the English Magna Carta, eh?

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Cymdeithas Madog - The Madog Society The Madog Society recently announced details of its 'Cwrs Cymraeg' (Welsh Course) which, in 2005, is to be held at the University of Rio Grande, Rio Grande, Ohio, July 17 - 24. It is a weeklong residential course that emphasises the spoken language and provides instruction at seven levels of language competence. Course staff will be from Wales and North America. A deposit of \$100 US reserves a place and will be fully refundable until April 30, 2005. Anyone interested in attending should contact Sam Little, Course Registrar at 5021 SE Cora Street, Portland, Oregon, 97206. E-mail address: registrar@madog.org. Course fees (all in \$US) are: Adult Resident \$610; Adult Commuter \$440; Student Discount \$50; Tag-along \$370. For scholarship information: contact Andrew Welsh, Scholarship Coordinator, 727 Water St., Indiana, PA 15701-1812. E-mail: scholarships@madog.org

Chaplin family roots in Swansea A recent *Western Mail* article by writer Paul Carey described how the celebrity daughter of the most famous actor in early cinema history had spoken of her discovery that she had ancestral roots in Swansea. At the time, Geraldine Chaplin, daughter of Charlie Chaplin, was working on a feature film adaptation of Heidi being shot in Carmarthenshire. It was a surprise to her to discover that her father's side of the family came from Wales. During her time in Swansea, Llanelli and Carmarthen, she found out from an elderly relative that many of the Chaplin 'tribe' (as she described the family) originated from that part of the world. Miss Chaplin had expected to shoot the film in Germany, Austria and Switzerland but the path brought her to Wales after the production team chose to split filming between Slovakia and Carmarthenshire instead of going to the Alps. It was thought Cardiff could have been a location for planned Frankfurt scenes - but they proceeded further west to the Swansea area and did much of the filming at Stradey Castle (overlooking the rugby park) and on the Gwili steam railway in Carmarthenshire. It was only then that Geraldine Chaplin found out from a 90-year-old relative in Florida that her family originally came from Swansea and that one of the local graveyards had many Chaplins buried in it - a place she was determined to visit before returning to her home in Spain! Of her experiences in the Swansea area, she mentioned it to be fantastic walking country; once walking all the way to Mumbles Head! She also mentioned the language was 'great' and that she had been watching Welsh TV soaps with English sub-titles! One of the film's producers said that Stradey Castle turned out to have a genuine Germanic quality and even featured paintings with Alpine scenes. It was obviously a great location - with lucky coincidences all around!

Sir Charles Spencer Chaplin (1889 - 1977) was actually born in Walworth (London) to Charles and Hannah Harriette Hill, both music hall entertainers. Young Charlie first took to the stage at the age of five and actually appeared in Ebbw Vale and Tonypany at the age of 12, in 1901. Following a career mostly in the USA he fell foul of Edgar Hoover after WW2 and eventually settled in Switzerland. He maintained his British nationality throughout his life!

Our 2006 Centennial Hot on the heels of our province celebrating its Centennial this year, the Calgary Welsh Society will, just as proudly, follow suit with its version - one year later! Plans are in hand to make it a memorable society event in a manner that will have appropriate impact on our adopted city. It is very probable that our society is the oldest registered ethnic group in Calgary (and even Alberta maybe) - honours that have yet to be challenged! Already, details are being finalized for the visit of a Welsh touring-choir planning to complete a western Canada tour here in August 2006. Coincident with our wishes to make a good local impression, the Gwent Male Voice Choir made a timely approach to us in 2004. Discussion followed and suggestions were made and considered to assist their tour arrangements - and ensure that Albertans (with any interest in Wales or in things Welsh) could enjoy the visit! Concert engagements are planned for Edmonton, Ponoka and Calgary - as well as for the choir's participation in the well-established Ponoka Gymanfa Ganu. The Gwent choir will be embarking on a 17-day tour - starting in Vancouver (and the island) and then travelling eastwards!

Members with ideas how the CWS events programme could be enhanced, to emphasize our unique cultural heritage, are asked to contact committee members - and the special '2005 Executive Sub-committee' that will be set up (after the next AGM) to coordinate our Centennial activities! A committee meeting scheduled for March 11 next will kick-off this initiative and will be devoted entirely to brainstorming ideas and potential key quality events for the whole year of 2006!

The CWS NewsLetter will keep members up to date with Centennial plans as they are formalized - this year and next!

Our 2005 AGM As in past years the formal annual meeting will aim to dispense with the necessary business formalities in the minimum time necessary! Accordingly, the present executive has prepared a slate of candidates (See next page) for your consideration - and hopefully, your acceptance - at an **Annual General Meeting** - to be held

**SATURDAY APRIL 16, 2005 - at the IRISH CULTURAL CENTRE,
6452 - 35th AVENUE SW (Bowness) - STARTING AT 6.30 pm.
Snack foods provided - Cash Bar available - \$10 (each) food and entertainment cost!**

A nominating slip is also enclosed if you wish to exercise that privilege. Complete and send to the Secretary by April 2nd.

It is intended this will be a fun evening when your talents and knowledge, or your wit and wisdom, will be put to the test in a Welsh Quiz. A prize will be awarded to the winning team! An entertaining Welsh film (in subject not language) will follow.

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Advice from an Expert *Elizabeth Elson* has been the mastermind behind the **WELSH CAKE** production line for many of our society functions. She won the coveted Lewis Welsh Cake Baker Award in a competition held at a committee get-together a little while back! The secrets of her success are revealed below

Measure Out: 2 CUPS All Purpose Flour 2/3rds CUP of Sugar _ [half] TEAspoon of Salt
3 TEAspoons Baking Powder _ [half] CUP Margarine _ [half] TEAspoon Nutmeg
_ [quarter] CUP of Currants (Optional) Beat 2 Eggs with 2 TABLEspoons of Milk

Now Listen Carefully: First, sift the flour, baking powder, nutmeg and salt - all together. Second, rub in the margarine until it all looks like breadcrumbs. Third, add the sugar and currants. Fourth, beat the 2 eggs in milk and add to the mixture until it binds together to form a ball. Finally, roll out on a floured surface - to a quarter inch thickness - then cut into 2-inch diameter rounds with a cookie cutter!

..... and

with even greater Care: Grease a griddle or electric hot plate or thick fry pan - and cook the cakes over a gentle heat for about a minute or two on each side until a light brown in colour. Cool and sprinkle with sugar. (Note: Elizabeth tends to undercook her Welsh Cakes to prevent them drying-out!)

Finally: Elizabeth says, 'Enjoy with a nice cup of tea!' (The recipe makes 2 doz. + or – one or two!)

And Talking of Tea Following a recent *Calgary Herald* news item, members may now be aware of a specialty retail tea business, **Tea Traders**, located in the **Inglewood** subdivision on 9th Avenue SE. Owner, Ted Jones, mentioned that his grandfather operated such a business - back in Pontyberem, between Carmarthen and Ammanford. The Carmarthenshire village, it appears, was not only renowned for coal, beer and good rugby - but the 'good old cuppa' as well!

Barry Butlins Buried The Butlins Holiday Camp at Barry Island renowned for its 'Hi di Hi' with a south Wales accent is being demolished after some forty plus years of use. Still, many Canadians don't realize that Billy Butlin (now Sir Billy) was a Canadian who saw a future in the holiday camp business in the UK! Immediately after WW2, he managed to acquire a number of unused military bases and converted them into family style holiday resorts that the war weary Brits took to like ducks to water! The concept became very popular as a two-week escape from the grind, that could be enjoyed with the kids - where there were facilities provided to baby-sit them - and where entertainment catered to all tastes! A second Welsh Butlins was located at Pwllheli - but that's a different accent and a different story!

The Barry camp regularly entertained 7,000 holidaymakers each week and the enthusiasm that was generated by the 'happy campers of old' even continues to this day amongst the many 'red coat' and 'blue coat' staffers who worked there. A reunion for former Barry Butlin's employees is planned next November at Trecco Bay, Porthcawl - a popular beach trailer park over very many years! Butlin apparently got his holiday camp idea after staying at a B&B at Barry Island. He developed four or more sites around the British Isles - and was, in reality, the founder of the theme park trend of today!

Cardiff to Canada - Cheap Wales is to offer Britain's lowest priced transatlantic flights early this year - and it is going to it using a Canadian airline! **Zoom Airlines** is planning to sell one-way tickets for under \$215, including all taxes, between Cardiff and Toronto. This Canadian company is hoping to revolutionize North American travel in the same way that **easyJet** and **Ryanair** slashed the cost of flying to European destinations. The proposal is being considered as one of the most important events in the development of Cardiff's airport. The weekly service is scheduled to commence in May using Boeing 767-300 aircraft with each flight expected to carry around 270 passengers.

The service will offer unprecedented flexibility in one-way fares and will run initially for 6 months and probably longer. Since charter flights to Canada have operated in the past, Cardiff airport is preparing for **Zoom's** offer to attract many more customers. Passengers who pay 50% more can get additional legroom, a dedicated check-in, a superior selection of food and drink and a larger luggage allowance. **Zoom's** mission is to become Canada's most popular and trusted leisure airline! Has it heard of Calgary, Alberta yet, we wonder - Cardiff to Calgary and Calgary to Hawaii (direct) could really be popular deals!

Purchase Benefits for Members Over the last couple of years two well-known Calgary stores have favoured our members with discounted prices at their city outlets. Members are reminded that patronage of these stores (featuring British foods and a variety of goods) will qualify them for generous 10% discounts (on sales of \$25 or more) **provided a 2005 Membership Card is produced at time of purchase!** Payments may be made by cash, credit or debit card.

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GOOD TASTE of BRITAIN (1985) Ltd. Eau Claire Market and Market Mall	WHO'S WHO IN THE ZOO Int. Airport: Eau Claire: South Centre
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PLEASE JOIN US FOR ST. David's Day on FEBRUARY 26th and make a note of the NEXT AGM on APRIL 16th !

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