



Spring Newsletter Issue – 2005
Calgary Welsh Society
Cymdeithas Gymreig Calgary



**GRAND
SLAM
2005**

**HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS TO THE INTERNATIONAL
RUGBY XV IN THE EUROPEAN SIX NATIONS COMPETITION.
***** IN EVERY MATCH THEY CLEARLY EXCELLED *******

**GRAND
SLAM
2005**

The glory days of Welsh rugby have returned! So many of us were impressed with this young team at the last Rugby World Cup - by the manner they surprised both the English and New Zealand squads with a superior quality of rugby. In the fall of 2004 they fell to fitter South African and New Zealand teams - but only by the slimmest of margins! The team quickly matured - displayed talent in all positions, were defensively sound and superbly fit – and always exciting to watch!

Comments & Contributions to: Roly Thomas at betrol@sprint.ca - or Tel: (403) 246-5093 - or mail to 134 Country Hills Gardens NW, Calgary, AB. T3K 5G2. Visit our Website www.calgarywelshsociety.com for information and memberships.

Announcements We regret to inform readers about the untimely passing of two Society members - **Liz Pierce** and **Bob Willis!**

Elizabeth Pierce Liz, the devoted wife of Past-President Norman Pierce, died March 30th following a valiant battle with cancer. She will always be remembered as an enthusiastic and long time member of the Society - especially as the generous hostess of many of our 'Seniors Tea Parties' held at *The Olde Curiosity Shoppe & Tea Room* in Glenmore Landing. Liz had many interests that included being a founder owner of *The Olde Curiosity Shoppe* and treasurer of the Calgary Highland Games Association. She was also a talented 'quilter' and a keen golfer. Liz will be missed by all who new her! We send our sincere condolences to Norman and his family at this very sad time!

Bob Willis Bob was a noted filmmaker who had been a member of the Society for several years. He passed away on March 2nd following a severe heart attack. With encouragement from his wife Jean, who had relatives in Tonypanyd, they both visited Wales in the mid-90s when Bob created another of his classic film travelogues - one that he entitled '*Wales - In Spirit & Song*'! Bob and Jean also had a long time interest in Welsh Corgis! On his retirement, Bob donated his extensive film library to the Glenbow Archives. Bob and his unique film making talents will be missed! We convey our sympathies to Jean and her family on their grievous loss!

Dydd Gwyl Dewi 2005 Our traditional St. David's celebration was held on the evening of Saturday, February 26, when some 58 celebrants paid homage. Alun Lewis performed the Presidential duties in his usual masterful fashion while member Susan Drayson, our evening's guest of honour, gave an appropriate presentation based on research undertaken for her Master's thesis at the University of Calgary. Susan's relationship with our Society obviously contributed to the hard work of tracing the *Transmission of Welsh Traditional Dance, Music and Song in North America*. We are grateful to Susan for her efforts - and, even if belatedly, we take this opportunity to congratulate her upon her academic success!

Unfortunately, the chosen date for this function clashed with a couple of other commitments affecting membership turn out. On the evening, the main hall of the Irish Cultural Centre proved a good venue and their caterers did an excellent job of satisfying a majority of tastes. Throughout our function, Canmore harpist Jan Pearce provided appropriate background music - and it would not be out of place to mention that Kathleen Giffin's hard work, in arranging everything so well, is very much appreciated!

April 16th. AGM At this recent meeting, the following members were painlessly elected to office - or volunteered their services to the Society! Again, the chore was completed in record time with the participation of some 31 members. The following were appointed to serve as the Society's executive committee for the business year ending December 31, 2005

President: Dr. Wayne Davies	- Past-Pres: Alun Lewis	- Vice-Pres: Maurice Benson	- Secretary: David Matthews
289-3478	247-2267	258-2588	249-5483
Social Sec. - Kathleen Giffin;	Treasurer - Philip J. Morris;	Member Coord.- Roly Thomas;	Phone Coord. - Jean Kuhn
720-8127	398-8331	246-5093	567-0507
Committee Members at Large: Dave and Elizabeth Elson, Veronica Everton-Williams.			
The Calgary Welsh Society appreciates the dedication of all these members to the furtherance of its objectives!			

April 16th. Social Evening Secretary Dave Matthews once more demonstrated his vast intellectual talents in compiling a Welsh Quiz that obviously fulfilled an apparent masochistic appetite - to confound the rest of us humble folk! Except for a table of four distinguished members, the majority were again compelled to display a profound lack of cultural knowledge! However we do recognise (and offer our congratulations to) the group of (very lucky guessers) led by Wayne Davies!

Spring Newsletter Issue – 2005

Calgary Welsh Society

Matters Arising from AGM Two items of interest were brought to the attention of those present. They are summarised below:

Adopt a Slate - At the last Christmas Dinner it will be recalled a collection was made towards the purchase of a commemorative 'Slate' to be located at the front of the new **Wales Millennium Centre for the Performing Arts** in Cardiff. Our commitment now creates a permanent link between the Calgary Welsh Society and this unique state of the art international cultural centre. The CWS 'slate' is identified as '**No. 449**' - with its actual location listed in the main concourse of the centre together with its reference code - and a diagram showing its precise location. When next in Cardiff, check it out!

The design of the new centre was inspired by the environment in Wales and by its cultural and social traditions. Due to its vast slate industry, the landscape of North Wales has been transformed for all time by millions of tons of quarry spoil. This is still evident in that region of the Principality - evoking the toil of quarry workers - men, women and children - going back to the nineteenth century. In 2003, traditional stonemasons and craftsmen from the county of Gwynedd laid the slate in the front wall of the centre - using a range of traditional materials to display a variety of colours and grains that are unmistakably Welsh!

Our 2006 Centennial - At the March committee meeting some brainstorming was undertaken to examine how such a memorable occasion in our history could also have appropriate impact upon the greater Calgary community. Eight considerations emerged from this session - and committee members were allocated responsibilities to follow through on them. Alun Lewis will oversee progress so that a timely programme of events can be evolved! These challenging initiatives were:

- 1) **A gala St. David's Day Dinner.** A dinner and dance format with a well-known (Welsh) invited guest speaker and with high quality entertainment. A downtown venue is to be explored: the event to also be open to the public through ticket sales - for (possibly) some 200 - 300 patrons.
- 2) **A CWS Rugby Challenge Cup.** The Society to provide a challenge cup for a Calgary rugby union league in 2006 as a legacy of our centennial year.
- 3) **Re-activate the Calgary Welsh Trophy.** This was an initiative taken by the Society in June of 1979 when a team from Porthcawl visited Calgary, playing (and winning) a number of games against local sides affiliated to the Calgary Rugby Union. The object of the exercise was to see open competition between local and visiting Welsh club sides - a concept formally endorsed by the Welsh R.U. at that time. However, contact with the local rugby community was not maintained - and neither was any indication, regarding further Welsh tours, forthcoming from across the pond. Contact has been made with Porthcawl for the return of the cup for its original intended purpose! Hopefully a Welsh club side will visit Calgary in 2006 to perpetuate this senior club rugby competition!
- 4) **Welsh Choir Visit.** A concert by the **Gwent Male Voice Choir** has already been finalized for **Friday, August 18, 2006.** Again, the **Grace Presbyterian Church** will be the venue. Further detail will follow in due course!
- 5) **A Theatre Production.** We would like a Calgary theatre company to present a well-known Welsh production - such as '*Under Milkwood*'. This Dylan Thomas work was featured by Theatre Calgary some years ago!
- 6) **A Stampede Week event.** Under the auspices of the Wales Tourist Board or Wales Development Association, the possibility of having some suitable representation at the 2006 Calgary Stampede will be pursued.
- 7) **Heritage Park and/ }** Booths on Canada Day (at Heritage Park) and the Pavilion (Spruce Meadows 'National' competition) **or Spruce Meadows }** will be investigated.
- 8) **Welsh Film.** The public showing of a well-known Welsh film at a local Calgary cinema (e.g., the Kensington Plaza).

If a member has a bright idea - OR ANY INFLUENCE - to see any or all of these ideas reach fruition - Contact ALUN!

The Mount Snowdon Summit A worldwide appeal has been initiated by the Snowdonia National Park Authority to raise the remaining \$5 million (Can) funds necessary to start the construction phase on the new Summit Building atop Snowdon (Yr Wyddfa) - the highest peak in England and Wales! The total project cost is quoted to be in the region of \$22. This appeal was very recently launched, in association with the Snowdonia Society, at the Snowdon Mountain Railway Station. The summit annually attracts over 350,000 visitors and is one of the UK's most popular natural attractions. The new building is described as a high profile project that has already attracted a healthy \$17 million from a host of public, private and government agencies. The new project received formal planning permission in January 2004. Robin Llywelyn, managing director of the Italianate village, Portmeirion Limited, (the grandson of the original summit building architect, Clough Williams-Ellis) said that the design for the new structure fulfilled the original concept as 'A window on the world' - now interpreted in a contemporary style to reflect Wales's new found confidence in modern design! Clough Williams-Ellis thought architects should, 'Cherish the past, adorn the present and construct for the future!' The new design is said to embody this ideology!

Spring Newsletter Issue – 2005 Calgary Welsh Society

August 19th. Choral Concert Concert details for the visiting **CAMBRIAN MALE VOICE CHOIR** have now been finalized. This Rhondda Valley choir, from the township of Tonypany, has existed since the early 1900's. It is making its second visit to Western Canada within the span of just a few years. The '*Cambrian*' name recalls an era when the Rhondda mining valleys were at the very heart of the vast Welsh steam-coal deposits when the famous *Cambrian Colliery* was also the principal local employer - where almost every chorister once worked. Circumstances have changed significantly since then - for today, not one choir member is employed in that onetime traditional and intimidating South Wales mining industry!

The GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - located at 1009 - 15th Avenue SW - will again be the concert venue!
TICKETS @ \$15 each - may be purchased at the door that evening - **OR BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT** - through either, **Dave Matthews, 6907 Lamont Court SW, Calgary T3E 6G6 / Alun Lewis, 252 Varsity Estates Link NW, Calgary T3B 4C9**
Tel: 249-5483 Tel: 247-2267 or alunlewis@yahoo.com
PRE-PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS EARLY and TELL YOUR FRIENDS, COLLEAGUES & NEIGHBOURS!
Note the doors will be open at 6.00 pm – and the concert will commence at 7.00 pm!

The evening's guest artist is - Mezzo-Soprano LAURA STYLER - a new member of our Society!

With respect to the pre-sale 'Special Arrangement' - we encourage patrons to place ticket orders by phone (or E-mail) and to send their cheques or money orders (payable to the Calgary Welsh Society) to **DAVE OR ALUN!** Tickets will be promptly mailed - but should there be inadequate time to ensure timely receipt - **they will be held at the door for collection upon your arrival!**

Our aim is to avoid a late crush of purchasers at the door - speed up seating - and ensure a prompt concert start!

It Did Happen – Finally Will it be the wedding of the year ... or was it? Will it be remembered ... or won't it? Regardless, it is evident most people are relieved that it is all over at long last! Pity though - no more unsolicited E-mail cartoons or jokes flooding the Internet, fax and phone lines - either here or back there! Canada's globe trotting governor general and her ever present author husband (who, incidentally, may not have had time to write too many books during the last while) must be glad the event did come to pass - 'cos lugging that park bench around (as Canada's well conceived wedding gift to the couple) must have been one big pain - heavy, an awkward shape - and far from easy to manipulate into a London (or Windsor) cab! Did anyone hear if it happened to be a 3-seater - for either party could have 'that special friend' who might just like to share it with them - for tradition has it that 'three' is not necessarily a crowd in royal circles, eh?

A good bit of associated Welsh flavoured wedding gossip was that the Windsor Castle reception featured a real fruitcake (of the baked variety your Ed. hastens to add) - made by home-baker Etta Richardson of Llansteffan. HRH became an instant convert when he tasted one at the Richardson stall at Carmarthen market! 'Fruitcakes by appointment?' - a new monarchic twist indeed!

Meet Iona and Andy This couple, one of Wales best known singing duos, are bringing a party of Welsh tourists to Calgary in Mid-May. This year they celebrate 25 years of being together as entertainers - and as marriage partners. Their pleasure nowadays is to escort parties of fans around the world: this year being the turn of the Canadian Rockies to be their special interest! Iona and Andy are Welsh folk singers who also indulge in the '*Country and Western*' genre - and actually had the distinction of appearing at the '*Grand Ole Opry*' in 2003 - with their good friend Gail Davies! The duo has produced 5 CDs (on the Sain label) and wrote an autobiography last Christmas entitled, '*Llwybrau Breuddwydion - Chwarter Canrif O Gan*' ('Dream walks - A quarter Century of Song') - published by Gomer Press! Their party has expressed a wish to meet with Calgary Welsh folk - and the Society has responded by arranging to meet them at Ceili's Irish Pub on the evening of May 14th. If the facility has a sound system and is able to find a couple of guitars - Iona and Andy would be pleased to entertain us as well! We can thank Tom Williams' sister in Harlech for starting the ball rolling with Iona & Andy - by informing them there was a Welsh Society in Calgary. They then wrote to Tom and Dianne - and voila

Members are invited to

CEILI'S IRISH PUB on SATURDAY, MAY 14th at 7.00 pm.
(Downstairs Room)
803 - 8th. AVENUE SW (Close to NEXEN building)

-- to meet IONA & ANDY and their visiting Welsh tourists –

Cash bar – food menu – street parking – adjacent parking lot

PLEASE COME AND JOIN US

Spring Newsletter Issue – 2005

Calgary Welsh Society

Have you read..... any good books lately - is a popular question! Your Ed. did just that when he enjoyed, '*Come Out, Wherever You Are*', a book by Welsh author Herbert Williams. It was first published in 1976 by Quartet Books Ltd. and reissued by Gomer Press in 2004. It describes 'The Great Escape' - in Wales - when some 67 German POWs tunnelled out from a camp in the town of Bridgend - in the very early morning of March 11, 1945! This true wartime incident made good reading - especially if you happen to be from that part of the world. It is vividly remembered by your Ed. (a stripling of a lad at the time) who recalls the day also happened to be a Sunday. When the 'Warning' announcement was made on that evening's '*Six o'clock News*', it was dark outside, a moonless night - and he was alone in the house while his parents had gone to Alltwen Chapel for their weekly dose of the Rev. Rees's 'fire and brimstone' medication! In those war time days, the Sunday night variety programmes on BBC were also good medicine - a form of treatment our lad preferred in the comfort of his own home rather than what the trouser-shining chapel pews offered! Of course, an imaginative mind is always capable of hearing strange sounds on a dark night, especially under those excitingly abnormal circumstances - and they did occur! What was that noise - did someone try the door? Turning down the volume on the radio, he listened again, picked up the heavy 'poker' from the hearth and quietly crept to the front door. He suddenly opened it - with the family's prize 'poker' brandished menacingly to the fore - but there wasn't a sound - all was quiet on the front door 'front' in the west! There were no 'Achtungs' or a 'Heil anything' - just nothing! The imagined threat was quickly over and our alert (if thwarted) Bryncoch 'hero' returned to his radio and fireside!

The Vale of Glamorgan township of Bridgend (otherwise known as Pen-y-bont-ar-Ogwr) seemed a most unlikely place for a POW camp - because, in the early years of WW2, a large munitions factory had been built there! This still remained as a large trading estate after the war. Crazy, maybe, at that time - but perhaps not as ill conceived (or as unkind) as the part of town where they chose to house the county mental institution - the area known as 'Parc Gwyllt' (in English, 'Wild Park') would you believe!

The book publisher's address is: Gomer Press, Llandysul, Ceredigion, Wales SA44 4JL Website is: www.gomer.co.uk .

Kiwanis Festival 2005 Congratulations to Emily Lewis - No.2 daughter of Alun and Katharine - who recently won, as a vocal soloist, in the '19 years and under' Canadian Art Song competition! Both Emily and younger sister Carys were scheduled to compete in a number of events at this year's festival. It is so nice to have talent in the Society!

STOP PRESS You will have observed from the earlier item describing our Cambrian MV Choir August concert that a very new member of the Society will be also be appearing as a guest soloist that evening. Laura Styler, arrived in Calgary literally weeks before our AGM, and we were pleased that she and partner Steve Jones were able to join us that evening. Laura, a Mezzo-Soprano, was born in Church Village (just outside Pontypridd, Wayne) and took a BA (Hons.) music degree and a postgraduate diploma at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. She specializes in Opera - but also enjoys a lighter choice that includes traditional Welsh songs and Ivor Novello musicals! Laura's early academic background included being taught 'A Level' music at Bryncelynog Senior School - by none other than Fred Nicholas, conductor of the visiting Cambrian choir. We look forward to them combining their talents for our enjoyment on that August 19th concert date. What a small world we live in!

Promoting the Summer Concert A 'flyer' is attached to this NewsLetter with details of the August 19th. Cambrian MV choral concert. It would be appreciated if Society members would use it for advertising the event over as wide a field as possible - getting it posted in local supermarkets, shopping malls, library and/or other any other popular place of note that would give maximum exposure to the concert and ticket purchase information! Those receiving the NewsLetter by E-mail will be able to print off as many copies as they may need in this initiative. Let us know if more copies are needed!

Purchase Benefits You will notice below we now have TWO NEW businesses offering discounted product prices to Society members (on production of valid 2005 membership cards). The first is that of Ted Jones, owner of *Tea Trader*, who with wife Colleen, are new Society members. Ted will also extend the same discount terms (10% for purchases over \$25) - including any *Tea Trader* mail order business as well! He also mentioned, at Christmas time, his store also offers books and CDs to help promote the work of authors and musicians who also are customers! Last Christmas, the promotion was a book of short stories by author Robert Nisbet (originally from Haverfordwest) who writes about life close to Ted's own family origins. Some of the Nisbet books are still available at the store. Ted believes Society members would certainly enjoy the book - which he would be prepared to sell at the significantly reduced price of \$10 - from an original \$18 value!

The second participant is our Social Secretary Kathleen Giffin - who has now become the 'Mistress of Mystique'! She is also pleased to offer 10% discounts to Society members who patronize her establishment for all their hair care and associated needs!

GOOD TASTE of BRITAIN (1985) Ltd. at Eau Claire Market and Market Mall	WHO'S WHO in the ZOO at Int. Airport: Eau Claire & South Centre	TEA TRADER at Inglewood 1922-9th Ave. SE Over 100 blends	MYSTIQUE HAIR STUDIO at 4006- 16th St. SW in Altadore
---	--	--	---

Please take the fullest advantage of these discount price offers by visiting these interesting businesses!

Spring Newsletter Issue – 2005
Calgary Welsh Society