

CYMDEITHAS GYMREIG

CALGARY



SEPTEMBER – 2008

NEWSLETTER ISSUE

Society Executive for 2008

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PAST ACTIVITIES The *July 27 BBQ/Picnic* at the Bonavista lakeside picnic area was attended by some 45 members despite an ominous thundercloud that hovered above before the 3.00 pm 'kick-off' deadline. It was our good fortune the weather did again cooperate while surrounding areas experienced heavy rain (and hail in some parts of the city) as folk were about to set out for the Bonavista community location! As the saying goes, 'Faint heart ne'er won fair maiden' - so those *who failed to fulfill their obligations* really lost out! Our grateful thanks to Trish, Pam, Keith, Ross and Norman for their efforts before, during and after the proceedings!

The *August 22nd Noson Lawen* turned out to be an evening of song and merriment. Forty Society members joined with 48 visitors from a number of mid-Wales farming communities at the *HOTEL ARTS*, in downtown Calgary. Songs in Welsh and English were given by soloists **Megan Duckett** and **Dianne Williams** while **Cledwyn** and **Julie Haydn-Jones** also combined their talents with a further selection of songs and readings! All efforts were well received! The bass voice of the visitors' group leader, **Wilf Fryday**, opened their contribution along with tenor **Tudor Vaughan** who, with granddaughter **Ellen** and grandson **Llion**, gave a melodious rendition of *Calon Lan*. The talented Vaughan family have performed at the *Llangollen International Eisteddfod*. Granddaughter **Ellen** also sang *Edelweiss* and the Welsh version of *Sweet Anne-Marie*. Grandfather **Tudor** had the distinction of appearing as one of the *Two twins* in the popular film, *The Englishman who went up a hill and came down a mountain*. The surprise star of the evening, however, was the '*Whistling Grandma*', **Eurwen Vaughan**, who whistled her way unaccompanied through *Men of Harlech*. A highly entertaining evening resulted from the get-together along with a great deal of socialising and good conversation - in both official languages, that is (of course), Welsh and English! The visiting party planned to move on to Banff and Lake Louise with, finally, a train journey through the Rockies to complete their western Canadian tour in Vancouver! A special mention should be made regarding **Susan (Drayson) Petker's** short-notice assumption of keyboard accompaniment responsibilities for the artists! Well done, all!

*** FIRST FUTURE EVENT DON'T FORGET THE (FREE) SENIORS' TEA - NEXT SUNDAY AFTERNOON, SEPTEMBER 21 at 3.00 pm - in the DOVE'S NEST RESTAURANT at GLENMORE LANDING Shopping Centre in south-west Calgary.**

**** SECOND FUTURE EVENT THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER at FORT CALGARY on SUNDAY DECEMBER 14.** Members will be advised of all details in due course!

WELSH GOLD The first *Great Britain Gold Medal* of the recent *Beijing Olympics* was won by Welsh gal, **Nicole Cooke**, a 25 year-old cyclist from *Wick* in the *Vale of Glamorgan*. She beat the field in a gruelling 270 km road race held in pouring rain! Her attempt to gain a second *Gold* in the women's time trial race ended unsuccessfully when she finished 15th. Team-mate **Emma Pooley** almost did win it however - only missing out by

24 seconds! Nicole became the first Welsh **Olympic Champion** since **Richard Meade** was crowned equestrian king in 1972. A second **Gold** was won by oarsman **Tom James** of *Wrexham*, member of the **coxless fours** GB rowing team - then a **THIRD**, by Cardiff born cyclist **Geraint Thomas**, member of yet another foursome who won a **Gold** in world record time! Not to be outdone, Barry born 23-year-old distance swimmer **David Davies** could not be caught until the final 50 metres in the 10,000 metre open water swim. He was beaten into the **Silver** and was utterly exhausted at the finish. He was 7th in a pool competition on the previous day - where, in Athens, he succeeded in getting a **Bronze!**

With all the excitement of current events, how many of us know about a past Olympic hero dubbed **Wales' greatest sportsman** who won 4 '**Golds**' in 5 separate Olympics between 1908 and 1928? The man in question is the Cardiff swimmer and water-polo player who had the untypical Welsh name of **Paulo Radmilovic!** Born in 1886, in the now demolished *Glastonbury Arms* pub that stood in dockland's *Bute Street*, his father being the publican who had emigrated from Dubrovnic, Croatia, and married a woman of Irish stock! A commemorative plaque bearing this *Olympian's* name was recently unveiled at the **International Swimming Pool, Cardiff Bay Sports Village!** Paulo Radmilovic died in 1968 - since when, mystery has surrounded the whereabouts of his medals! Efforts are being made to trace them and, so far, no evidence found to suggest they may have been sold!

WELSH RUGBY 2008 In both senior and junior ranks, Welsh rugby reputations have never been higher. The senior team's March *Grand Slam* success at the **6-Nations** tournament was followed by their junior counterparts (the under 20s) who finished **Fourth** in the world behind *England, New Zealand* and *South Africa!* The world junior competition, **IRB WALES 2008**, took place in June with excellent TV coverage! The two remaining *British Isles* teams of *Ireland* and *Scotland* finished 9th and 10th respectively from a total of 16 competing nations!

Worthy of particular note was the success of **Wales XV** wing-man **Shane Williams** (of *Glanamman, Ammanford*, a member of both *Neath* and *Ospreys* rugby clubs) who was convincingly acclaimed by his peers as the **RBS Player of the 6-Nations Championship.** In the last game of that series (against France) Shane took the record of tries scored by a Welsh international player to a total of 43 - exceeding the previous record by two! A further 2 *typical Williams scores* were added to the tally on the *June South Africa tour.* While Wales lost both games played they were not outclassed and *Shane* returned home with the added accolade, '**The best winger in world rugby!**'

In November of this year, on the 8th, 14th, 22nd and 29th, international rugby will return to **Millennium Stadium** when successively, *South Africa, Canada, New Zealand* and *Australia* will compete against the home team! In the next *6-Nations* series *Wales'* first game will be in *Edinburgh, Scotland* - on **SUNDAY Feb. 8th 2009.** (God willing, eh?)

Closer to home, congratulations to **Rhys Hewison** on being selected to the *Under-16 Alberta Rugby squad* that has been training hard in Red Deer during the summer months. Rhys, who favours the 'flanker' position, also plays for the *Calgary Irish Juniors* and the *Father Scollen/Bishop McNally Lazars.* The *Irish 'Juniors'*, undefeated during the year, became *City and Provincial Champions* - while the '*Lazars*' ended up second in the *Boys High School 3rd Division* rankings! Brother *Dai Hewison*, a student at Lethbridge University, also had the distinction of coaching the *Irish 'Juniors'*! So, well done both young Hewisons!

RHOOSE WHO Rumour is afoot that Cardiff's 60-year-old airport at *Rhose, Vale of Glamorgan*, may soon have a grander title - in association with which the names of *Catharine Zeta-Jones, Gareth Edwards, Dame Shirley Bassey, Richard Burton* (and maybe that of *Dai Llossin*, the well known *Western Mail* cartoon character of yesteryear) are under consideration! This initiative is in keeping with a popular trend - as in Toronto's *Pearson Airport*, Montreal's *Trudeau*, Liverpool's *John Lennon* (or *Pontypridd's Tom & Wayne Airstrip*) - so as to bring an enhanced recognition to the airport's location and for the 'greater enlightenment' of international visitors to Wales! The only 'true local' in that group is *Dame Shirley*, born in the Cardiff *Splott* area **AND NOT** in the more graphic or romantic *Tiger Bay!*

PLEASED PASTY PATRONS For hundreds of years, scholars have striven to get the *Cornish* language officially recognised! Once spoken by most of Cornwall's population there had been a steady decline in its use since the mid-1500s! Despite being closely linked to the Welsh and Breton tongues, controversy reigned across many centuries on how the language should be written. Recently, following years of purely academic chattering the involved factions finally agreed upon a standard format to clear a path for official acceptance - with necessary funding and support from the *European Union*. The '*New Written Word*' will be used in education, on brochures and pamphlets, and on street signage in the county! Under the auspices of the *Cornish Language Partnership* a team of linguists led by Norwegian, *Trond Trosterud*, managed to arrive at an acceptable '*Cornish recipe*'! A local spokesperson who had spoken *Cornish* since childhood, said there had been many scholarly conflicts and strong views to overcome before reaching a consensus! Today, there are some 300 fluent Cornish speakers!

COLEG GLYNDWR The *North East Wales Institute*, a college in Wrexham, has been granted university status to become the 10th Welsh campus! The name of the new institution, *Glyndwr University*, was to be formally revealed by *First Minister Rhodri Morgan* - but, the senior Welsh Senate member was beaten to the punch before the appointed day! The principal of the *Institute*, probably overcome with pride and excitement, unwittingly 'dropped the precious ball' at an earlier meeting in London to 'unceremoniously' reveal the *Glyndwr* name! The famed 15th Century Welsh rebel leader (or, more appropriately in today's *politically correct* terminology, '*a one-time local warlord*') had strong links with the Wrexham area and, as such, it was appropriate the college should bear his historic name! *Professor Mike Scott* would continue as principal (despite his gaffe) becoming vice-chancellor as well! The campus has around 6,000 students and became a full member of the *University of Wales* in 2004.

NOTABLE WELSH FIRSTS Even before *Albert Einstein* arrived on the scene a couple of Welsh mathematicians could be credited with two significant developments in their field. In 1550, *Robert Recorde* of *Tenby, Pems*, introduced the *equals* symbol (=) while later, in 1706, *William Jones* of *Anglesey* became the first to use the 16th letter of the Greek Alphabet, *pi*, to represent the ratio between the circumference of a circle and its *diameter*. If the 1st name had been *David* would that latter term have been spelt a little differently - as in *daiameter* we wonder?

ANOTHER NOTABLE LEWIS A recent article in *Ninnau* drew attention to a personage of significance in US history - a *Founding Father* now buried in an unmarked grave in *New York's Wall Street Trinity Church*. Your editor's encyclopaedia gave a brief description of a "*Francis Lewis* (1713–1802), born in Llandaff and a New York State signer of the *Declaration of Independence* who spent most of his fortune in support of that patriot cause during the *American Revolutionary War*. From 1775-1779 he was a member of the *Continental Congress* and distinguished himself in work related to the problems of army supplies!" Arriving in America in 1738, Lewis became a wealthy city merchant by the age of 50. He was a strong supporter of *George Washington*! However, the great personal tragedies associated with his life and times were ignored in that referred historical volume! *Ninnau* contributor, *Michael Cridland*, bemoaned the fact that Lewis *had been forgotten in his native land and almost forgotten in his adopted one* except for a couple of city street names and a high school in *Queens*. From reputedly being the *second wealthiest man in the colonies* he lost all his property and saw his wife imprisoned by the dastardly Hanoverian British and later dying in captivity! Lewis, by signing the *Declaration*, sealed his own fate as a traitor! Interestingly, as in the case of Canada's *David Thompson*, *Francis Lewis* was educated at London's *Westminster School* and gained a reputation as a classical scholar rather than, as in *Thompson's* case, someone who happened to be 'good with figures'! During the earlier *French Indian Wars*, Lewis was captured at *Fort Oswego* - his life being spared by an Indian chief who believed the Welsh language Lewis spoke was another native Indian one! He was shipped back to France and, upon release, returned to New York to continue with his business interests! His son, *Morgan Lewis*, became Governor of New York State and the founder of New York University! One wonders, how could a couple of names - of a father and son of such renown - be forgotten, anywhere?

St.BENET PAUL'S WHARF Members of the dwindling Welsh speaking congregation of this landmark *City of London* church (designed by *Sir Christopher Wren*) have been forced to worship elsewhere. Completed in 1683, after the *Great Fire of London* had destroyed the previous building, the church is considered a valuable example of

Wren's work and is one of only a handful of city churches to escape damage during the blitz of WW2. It is located in the heart of the city with more than 300,000 people passing its doors each day. A church has been on the site since 1111. Welsh language services are now held at *St. David's Church*, Paddington, where Welsh-speaking clergy conduct services. New uses for *St. Benet* are under consideration by the London Diocese.

A PORTHCRAWL AERODROME Indeed there was one, the location of your Ed's first airplane flight as a young lad! A recent visit to the town unearthed a wealth of information about it although the term *aerodrome* could have been something of an exaggeration for a facility that consisted of a landing area in a field adjacent to ***Rest Bay*** with an odd tent or two and the aircraft tied down with ropes at night for security against gusts of wind that could cause damage! This did not discourage the ***Daily Herald*** newspaper from proclaiming (in 1936) that 'a new airport for Porthcawl would serve the purpose of air travel to London and the Midlands' and that 'the resort was now on the airways map'! Thus, the field abutting *Locks Lane* was referred to by locals as '*The Aerodrome*' - an enterprise started by ***George Pine, M.B.E.***, a local garage owner and caravan salesman, who saved up for some 26 years with the intention of starting the venture! The machine he first purchased was a 130 hp ***de Haviland Fox Moth*** with a ***Gipsy Major*** engine capable of carrying four passengers as well as the pilot who sat in an open cockpit. Your Ed vividly remembers this set-up of two particularly deep 2-seater bucket seats (no individual safety belts) and the pilots face visible through a little porthole window in the rear of the cabin. In those days a trip around the bay cost 5 shillings and a straight 'up and downer', just half a crown! The venture was such a success that a second plane was purchased. Both aircraft had a number of hair-raising adventures ranging from 'prangs' with the field's surrounding dry stone walls, leading an R.A.F. bomber lost in fog to a safe landing at the airstrip and another to a forced landing near ***Margam***. On the odd occasion, the field was used by travelling '*flying circuses*' to put on aerobatic displays for holiday makers and townsfolk. After the WW2 years, the airfield was not put to further use!

ATOMIC EVANS ON TIME It was a small step for a Welshman recently - but, hopefully, a giant step for science when Aberdare-born, white haired, rugby loving, 63-year-old Dr. Lyn Evans began the world's biggest ever experiment by clicking a computer mouse to finally put 20 years of work (and funding of \$10 billion) to the test! Like something from a *James Bond* type villain's lair, the gigantic *Large Hadron Collider* (LHC) was set in motion allowing scientists to glimpse conditions a split second after the 'big bang' at the very dawn of time! A former Aberdare grammar schoolboy who got his PhD at UC Swansea, Dr. Evans has been the overall manager of the project for 15 years. Ironically he mentioned that his biggest academic hurdle was passing O-level French - an absolute nightmare for a person without an interest in languages. He now works in French and lives in Switzerland!

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