

The Welsh Society of Western New England

Cymdeithas Cymreig Lloegr Newydd Gorllewino

Website: WelshWNE.org Email: WelshWNE@gmail.com FaceBook: [WSWNE](https://www.facebook.com/WSWNE)

2ND ANNUAL NOSON LAWEN

Sunday, May 19, 5-8pm, Tap House Grille, 1506 Riverdale St,
West Springfield, MA

We are excited to hold our Second Annual Noson Lawen (literal translation: *Happy Evening*). Noson Lawen has its roots in rural Wales, and just like our Welsh families before us (and in lieu of a parlor where our Welsh ancestors would have gathered to entertain themselves,) we will gather at the Tap House Grille in West Springfield, MA with a Welsh flag “flying” and voices ready.



We will share Welsh fables, poetry, readings, singing, and music in both Welsh and English, while having a meal and drinks together! Dinner from the menu at 5pm.

RSVP to InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com is necessary so we can plan the program of readers and singers. Of course you may attend just to enjoy the evening too!

NEW EVENT: WELSH CONVERSATION GROUP

If you are a Welsh learner or speaker, and are looking for an opportunity to chat in Welsh in a casual, friendly setting, we welcome you to join us. All levels from beginners to native speakers are welcome. **DATES on page 2.**

Dwi'n Siarad Cymraeg



©Mafathur 99

Where: Panera Bread, Evergreen Walk,
100 Hemlock Ave, South Windsor, CT

Look for the Welsh flag on the table!

When: 4th Saturday of the month

PLEASE NOTE THIS EVENT IS FOR MEMBERS
ONLY - It's easy to join: see website:

WelshWNE.org and go to Membership page,
or print the last page of this newsletter.

Here's how you can begin to learn Welsh:

SSiW has Welsh lessons on line and an app for your phone. Free to
\$10/month. www.saysomethingin.com/Welsh

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sat., April 13 & May 11 -
Genealogy Workshop

Sat. April 27 & May 25 -
Welsh Conversation Meet-
up

Sun., May 19 - NOSON
LAWEN

Sat., June 8 - Genealogy
Workshop

Wed., April 10, May 8 &
June 12 - Pub Trivia Nights

Duolingo - also has a website and app.
Partly audio, part written. Free.

www.duolingo.com. See our website

WelshWNE.org for more Welsh
learning opportunities.

GENEALOGY WORKSHOPS

Our Genealogy Workshop meets
monthly to learn how to research Welsh
roots. Meets at 10:15am - 5:00pm.
Come for the whole day or part thereof.
Bring your Welsh family tree and a lunch
dish to share. For info and to RSVP,
email WelshWNE@gmail.com.

- Saturday, April 10 & May 11 & June 8 - Regular Workshops
(May: maybe cancelled, we'll let you know ASAP)

WHAT HAS WSWNE BEEN UP TO?

ST. DAVID'S DAY LUNCHEON



Heidi McCloskey & Jennifer Johnson

On Saturday March 2, on a very snowy morning, 45 members and friends of WSWNE made their way to S. Windsor, CT. It turned out to be a slow drive for many of us, but upon our arrival, the Nutmeg restaurant was decorated with Welsh flags and daffodils, delightfully festive. We greeted old and new friends, all of us feeling quite virtuous at having braved the elements to be with our compatriots on such a day.

We set about enjoying each other's smiles and chat, and explored the table of Welsh ware cared for and attractively presented by Mark and Janet Taylor. The large map of Wales with thumb tacks marking our places of origin was a magnet once again. Thanks to Don Sit, Welsh music was playing in the background.

Our lunch began very appropriately with Leek and Potato soup (Cymry ym byth) and it was good. There was a buzz of conversation and sounds of laughter around the tables, as forty-five Welsh, however orderly, can make a joyful racket. Three children became quick friends with each other, and the adults took delight in their antics.



Don Sit, Maureen Griffith Reilly,
& Tina Davies

Every year we all look forward to seeing Edward Brown and Beth Roberts Brown in their charming and colorful Welsh costumes at our events. This year we had the added pleasure of listening to them describe the purpose of each layer that they wore. They stood, they smiled, no modelers runway needed. A fascinating presentation. Good show!

We listened attentively to Howard Davies of Bethesda, Syr Caernarfon, reading a poem in Welsh entitled 'Lleisio', by Ifor ap Glyn, the poem was written for the UN's Year of the Indigenous Language 2019. It was a thought-provoking poem for all, and especially apt for those members learning to speak Welsh. It stresses the importance of the speaking of the language. A translation of two lines says: "It's verve comes from being voiced, and on children's tongues it will live". This truth came home to me forcefully when a new member, from Culverhouse Cross in Morgannwg (Glamorgan,) told me apologetically that he spoke little Welsh, but his granddaughter in Wales was a fluent Welsh speaker. Oh joy! Diolch i chi, Howard, for the poem. It was music to our ears.

And now to our keynote speaker for this year, Ms Diane Owen of the Washington DC Welsh Society. Diane is a descendant of Welsh immigrants, and she has learned to speak Welsh fluently. She delighted us all. She was both vivacious and inspiring. Diane offered us a guide towards learning the language based upon her own learning experience; it was a story of dedication and she gladdened our hearts.

The last line of our national anthem is:

O bydded I'r hen iaith barhau
O, let the old language live on

With splendid people like Diane Owen, indeed our ancient British tongue will not only survive, but flourish.



President Susan Davies Sit with speaker Diane Owen

We stood for our National Anthem to close our celebration of St. David, "he who was of princely birth, but chose poverty." We sang with renewed vigor and patriotic zeal for our small, beautiful, beloved country..... By Dr Danny & Shirley Gilmartin

WALES ARE THE 6 NATIONS RUGBY CHAMPIONS!

Well, even if you are not Rugby fans, you have to appreciate the amazing Rugby games that occurred during the 6 Nations Championship this year. Wales beat every other team (England, Scotland, Ireland, France and Italy) to win the GRAND SLAM and of course the TRIPLE



WSWNE Members and friends after the game

CROWN. Several of Wales' dedicated fans here in MA and CT watched the games and cheered them on, bit our nails, nervous and excited both... the cream on top of it all was beating England of course, which we did in style. We watched the last game v. Ireland in an Irish pub in Hamden, CT, where we not only out-numbered the Irish fans, but whereas they did not sing their National Anthem, we, of course did it heartily. One Irish fan said to me, "I hope you all don't play as well as you can sing!" Well..... we did.

AROUND OUR WELSH NORTH AMERICAN WORLD

"WALES" by one of our young members

Wales is a small but proud and free nation in the south of the United Kingdom known to most as the "UK". People incorrectly believe Wales is boring and others have not ever heard of that brilliant name! But,

luckily enough for the Welsh, not many people think this. Also, scattered families all over our planet Earth have come to cherish the news that their relatives are living in Wales! People are proving they love that awesome little realm more and more by visiting, supporting, contacting, and learning about little, but big, Wales.

Wales is very old. Hey, people! Wales has proof! Just listen, you English, "Welsh is the oldest spoken language in Europe and spoken by around 500,000 people!" Do the honest Welsh say this too? YES! How could they not? After all, little Wales is theirs and they know it. Inspired by the real Welsh, their supporters rise with them proving little Wales is not small in importance! The firm Welsh lead Wales bravely anywhere she needs to be. People often believe "Oh, look! It says Wales is important. Well, it is, but... Wales is just like a mini England. Why is it special?" Oh, Wales. It isn't true, okay? Here's a bit of proof, little Wales. 1. Wales is a lot more rural. 2. It isn't as busy! 3. In Wales, you'll definitely find more inns than London! See? Oh, here are some of Wales' top attractions! Beaumaris (BO -Maris) castle, Caernarfon (Car -nar-Vun) castle, Conwy (kon-way) castle+ town walls, and Harlech (har-lek) castle.

If, by any miracle, you go to see Wales, please be sure to accept any Welsh cakes. Popular throughout Wales, these little cakes, originally baked on a heated bake-stone, were often served to travelers on their arrival at an inn. In North Wales, they are known as Teisen Gri.

If by any chance you want to bake these little wonders, read below for the recipe. Enjoy!

1lb. flour
1 pinch salt
7 oz. sugar
1 tsp baking powder
4 oz. butter
1 pinch allspice
4 oz. lard
4 oz. seedless raisins (or currants)
2 eggs, beaten, milk to mix if needed

Stir together the flour, baking powder, allspice and salt in a large bowl.
Rub in the butter and the lard.
Add the sugar and raisins.
Beat the eggs and add to the mixture, with a little milk, to make a fairly stiff dough.
Roll out on a lightly floured surface to a thickness of about ¼ inch and cut into 2-inch rounds with a pastry cutter.
Cook on medium heat on a (Editor: greased is not necessary) griddle or heavy-based frying pan for about 3 minutes each side until golden brown.
Sprinkle with sugar and serve warm. Enjoy!



By any chance do you remember our discussion about Wales' castles? Yes, Harlech, Caernarfon, that bunch. If any of those appeal to you, visit Wales! If you do, you could visit London. Getting to Wales is easy, as it's only two hours from London! Well, it is surprising. Oh, how were your Teisen Gri, or, well, let's say Welsh cakes, shall we? Well, next time why don't you add something like ... let's agree on jam, chocolate chips, or maybe some fruit? Well, I hope you're interested in visiting some of Wales's castles.

CYMRU AM BYTH!!!! (Wales forever!)

By: a young Welsh language learner and WSWNE member.

Recipe from "Welsh Teatime Recipes" by A. R. Quinton.

Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada: Celebrating 200 Years of Welsh Heritage

Did you know that there has been a significant Welsh presence in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada for 200 years? On June 11, 1819, 180 Welsh men, women and children arrived in Saint John, New

Brunswick in search of a better life for themselves and their families. Overcoming many challenges, the Welsh settlers established the small settlement of Cardigan and were joined by 20 more Welsh families over the next few years. Today, some of the descendants of these Welsh settlers remain in Cardigan, but most are spread across the continent.

Plan to join us this summer in beautiful eastern Canada as we honour these early settlers and share our Welsh heritage. Our celebration will be held on August 10, 2019 at the Welsh Chapel heritage site in Cardigan, New Brunswick, which is Canada's oldest enduring Welsh community. It will be followed by a special church service on August 11, 2019 in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

Everyone is welcome to join us, admission is free. More information at www.nbwelsh.ca or on Facebook at Central New Brunswick Welsh Society.

The First W.I. in Britain - in LLANFAIR P.G.

The Anglesey village of Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogery-chwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch is world famous for having Britain's longest place name, but far less well known is the fact that it can boast to be the place where the very first Women's Institute in Britain was founded.



The Movement itself was started in Canada in 1897. In 1913 a lady called Mrs Alfred Watt, who had worked at the WI headquarters in Canada, came over to work in London and tried, without success, to start WI's in the south of England. She then joined the Agricultural Organisation Society, which was set up to advise the Government on food production during the First World War. She was invited by Bangor University

College to address the North Wales branch of the society. There, she met Colonel Stapleton Cotton, its chairman, a man who lived in

Llanfairpwll and worked tirelessly to benefit the local community. He invited a group of ladies from the village to meet Mrs Watt and consider starting a WI in the village.

The report in the North Wales Chronicle for 18 June 1915 reads: A well attended meeting, presided over by Col Stapleton Cotton, was held at Graig. The lecturer was Mrs Watt, a lady from British Columbia, who gave an interesting account of the work done in that portion of the Empire by means of the Women's Institute. It was proposed by Mrs Wilson, seconded by Miss Watts, Aber Braint, that a society of this description be established in the village. The motion was passed unanimously. And so the first official British WI was founded in Llanfairpwll in September 1915.



Colonel Stapleton Cotton

Mrs Stapleton Cotton became the first President, a committee was formed and they agreed to have monthly meetings of 'an educational and social character' on the first Tuesday in each month 'at 2 pm in the room kindly lent by Mrs W E Jones, until such time as the Women's Institute has its own building'.

Stapleton Cotton gave help and support to the new WI. About six months after the opening he wrote to Madge Watt that he had himself been one of the many who doubted the capacity of women to conduct even their ordinary business with success, but I have learned more about women than I have learned in forty years . . . I see and believe that women can and will bring all classes, all denominations, all interests, all schools of the best thought together in that common brotherhood of love . . . which every man and every woman longs for in his or her innermost heart



Llanfairpwll was a good place to start the

first WI. The University College at Bangor, just over the Menai Straits, had agricultural studies in its curriculum. There was a supportive Principal, so there was an opportunity to invite as speakers some of the staff there who knew about the latest developments in agriculture. But all was not easy. As the minutes of the first annual meeting of the new WI show, some of Mrs Watt's ideas needed interpretation:

Mrs Watt, who was connected with the movement in Canada, attended the first meeting. Professor Philips, of the University, gave a short talk on the Gathering of Wild Herbs; those required for medicinal purposes. Mrs Hunter Smith of the University, Bangor, talked about the easiest and most humane way of killing a fowl; also the proper manner in which to dress and prepare it, so as to increase its marketable value. But local people also spoke. The minutes record:

Dr Williams spoke at length on a Nursing and maternity scheme. Dr Price of Bangor spoke forcibly and to the point on the dangers of flies and rubbish heaps and the egregious Stapleton Cotton 'demonstrated in a masterly fashion on salads and salad dressings'.

The minutes also show that from time to time the members took action following a talk or demonstration. After a talk on 'The buying of good seed' they agreed to buy co-operatively. They heard a talk on 'The women's labour on the land question' and decided that 'a canvass of the village be taken as to potential help'.

This doesn't sound dissimilar to today's WI's, who still have interesting and topical speakers and get involved in local and national issues. (Thank you to afwi.org.uk and to member Lowri Jones for sharing)



Y Gegin Cymru - The Welsh Kitchen - Recipes Wanted!

We are planning a Welsh Cookbook, and now welcome recipes from members, especially ones from your Welsh ancestors. Please contact Magdalen at magdalandowden@sbcglobal.net with your recipe, the source, and a short bio of the cook. **Email must have subject line of: Welsh Recipes.**

WELL-READ DRAGONS

POETRY & PEACE

The British Empire lost nearly a million men in World War 1. Of these, some 40,000 Welsh soldiers lost their lives, including Ellis Evans, better known by his bardic name of Hedd Wyn.

He was an unwilling fighter and a pacifist. He was killed in Ypres, Belgium in 1917, six weeks before posthumously being crowned Bard in Birkenhead's National Eisteddfod for his poem Yr Arwr (The Hero). His carved Bardic chair was covered in a black sheet and the Eisteddfod became known as the Eisteddfod of the Black Chair.



The Snowdonia National Park Authority opened his childhood home to the public in 2017, and visitors flock to see his Bardic chair, which was carved out of 2,000 year old oak, by a Finnish carpenter. The modest hill farm cottage, is in Cwm Prysor, Trawsfynydd, Gwynedd. He was the eldest of 11 children, born to Evan and Mary Evans. Hedd Wyn left school at the age of 14 to help work on the family farm, as a shepherd. However, he was often allowed to forgo his duties in the mornings, as he would be up very late writing poetry. He was well known locally for his poetry, and it was a sure achievement to rise to the Bardic title, coming from an agricultural family.



P.S. You will hear a poem by Hedd Wyn at this year's NOSON LAWEN May 19, 2019

Ynys Mon (Anglesey) in the Dark and Middle Ages

Of all the places in North Wales, the name for Ynys Môn was deliberately changed by the English/Norman invaders, but it belies the fact that Ynys Môn remains resolutely Welsh, with 7 out of 10 residents speaking Welsh. Because of its location, the populace suffered greatly over the millennia from foreign

invaders, culminating with the wars of 1277 and 1282, when it was conquered as a stepping stone to Eryri (Snowdon), the stronghold of the Welsh princes. After this last war, Edward deliberately razed much that was Welsh to the



ground, including Llanfaes Abbey, the gravesite of Princesses Joanna and Elinor, and built Beaumaris over the top of it." Ethnic cleansing is not a new concept.

When Edward I reached Llanfaes, he forced all the Welsh people to move to a new village called Newborough. The name 'Anglesey' is in fact a Viking word from the 10th

century, indicating that the Vikings were successful enough in their sacking of the island for a place-name to stick, and be adopted later by the English/Normans.

Anglesey has some of the best farmland in Wales, is one of the flatter areas, and is also the driest region of Wales. Thus, settlement has existed on Anglesey as long as people have lived in Wales. Prehistoric megaliths scatter the island.

Knowing a good thing when they saw it, the Romans conquered Anglesey in 61 AD. Anglesey was, in the first century AD, the centre of the Celtic religion in Britain. This situation is confirmed by the Roman historian Tacitus and Emperor Nero, who specifically identified Anglesey as an island that needed to be conquered. Realising the Roman troops could not maintain order and attack Anglesey at the same time, the Empire forsook a final attack on Anglesey. The fact that "druid terrorists" lived in Anglesey meant that Suetonius Paulinus managed to get his army across the Menai Strait and massacred the druids and burnt their sacred groves. The Romans remained aware, however, that the druids might continue to pose a problem and hence they constructed the fortress of Segontium, present Caernarfon, to make sure that what little remained of an intact Celtic culture remained on Anglesey – and did not try to seed dissent in "Roman Britain".

Tacitus wrote how the battle occurred on the coastline of the Menai Strait: "On the coastline, a line of warriors of the opposition was stationed, mainly made up of armed men, amongst them women, with their hair blowing in the wind, while they were carrying torches. Druids were amongst them, shouting terrifying spells, their hands raised towards the heavens, which scared our soldiers so much that their limbs became paralysed. As a result, they remained stationary and were injured. At the end of the battle, the Romans were victorious, and the holy oaks of the druids were destroyed."

After the Romans, came the Irish, the Vikings, the Scots, and the Danes (briefly), but it was strong enough defensibly for the Kings of Gwynedd to seat their court on the west coast at Aberffraw from c.860 AD until c.1170 AD.

by Sarah Woodbury "Romance and Fantasy in the Medieval Wales"

CROESO/Welcome to our new members

- **Howard Davies and family**, from Bethesda, Wales. Howard recently moved to Glastonbury, CT from New Haven. He is interested in getting together with fellow Welsh people, speaking Welsh, and watching Welsh sports.
- **Josh Levithan and family**, from West Hartford, joined WSWNE because of his love for the Welsh Language. His daughter, aged 8, is also learning.
- **Richard & Doris Griffith** are from Manchester, CT. Richard has Welsh roots which he has traced back 200 years in the USA. He is interested in the history and language of Wales and wants to travel there.
- **Avril & Steven Cook**, of North Scituate, RI. Avril is originally from Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant in North Wales and moved here 30 years ago. They would like to connect with some fellow Welsh people.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2019-2020):

President & Genealogy Workshop Coordinator:

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Membership, Email Manager, Newsletter Production: Mark Spencer (MA)

Honorary Member: Trey McCain (MS & WALES)

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WSWNE Membership Form

PLEASE MAIL to Mary Pallos, WSWNE Treasurer, 1542 Main Street, Glastonbury, CT 06033 (check made out to WSWNE, membership year begins March 1st, per family):

___ \$100 (Red Dragon), ___ \$50 (Daffodil), ___ \$25 (Miner's Lantern), ___ \$10 (Student)

Today's date: _____ NEW MEMBER: _____ RENEWAL: _____

Names (list household members):

Address _____

Home phone # _____

Cell phone # _____

Email address (PLEASE PRINT)

Newsletter April 2019: For Treasurer's use only: Date received: _____