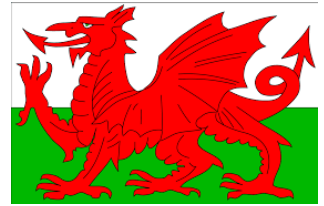


# The Welsh Society of Western New England



Cymdeithas Cymreig Lloegr Newydd  
Gorllewino

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

## NOSON LAWEN & OWAIN GLYNDWR CELEBRATION-on-ZOOM



The flag of Owain Glyndwr

**Saturday,  
September 19th  
at 3:00PM -  
5:00PM**

Our annual Noson  
Lawen (literally  
translates to "Happy

Evening") will also celebrate Owain Glyndwr Day.  
Noson Lawen was traditionally held in front parlors  
where friends and family would gather to play music,  
sing, and read poetry, fables and literature in Welsh  
(now in English too).

*Join in to read a poem in Welsh or English, read  
a part of the Mabinogion or favorite Welsh short  
story, sing a Welsh hymn or song, play an  
instrument, or just join us to enjoy the festivities.  
We have invited friends from Wales to join us,  
including a member of the Welsh choir: Côr y  
Penrhyn.*

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sept: every  
Tuesday- Welsh  
Conversation on  
Zoom

Sept. - 8 & 22  
Online (Zoom)  
Genealogy

Sept. 19 - On-Line  
(Zoom) Owain  
Glyndwr NOSON  
LAWEN

Oct. - 5 & 19  
Online (Zoom)  
Genealogy

Oct. Every Tuesday -  
Welsh Conversation  
on Zoom

Sat, Dec 5 -  
Annual Christmas  
Holiday Luncheon  
- SAVE THE DATE

We will also hear about Owain Glyndwr, the last native Welshman to hold the title of Prince of Wales. While Glyndwr has always been a Welsh hero, when the National Assembly for Wales was created in 1998 his name took on a new significance. Glyndwr had created the first Welsh parliament at Machynlleth in 1404.

***MUST RSVP to [InfoWelsh@gmail.com](mailto:InfoWelsh@gmail.com) to be on the Zoom email invitation and to get on the program.***

## OWAIN GLYNDWR



Owain Glyndwr, last Welsh-born Prince of Wales

September 16th is the anniversary of the proclamation in 1400 of Owain Glyndwr as the Prince of Wales, and that date is now celebrated annually as Owain Glyndwr Day.

No name is so frequently invoked in Wales as that of Owain Glyndwr

(c1349-1416), a potent

figurehead of Welsh

nationalism ever since he

rose up against the

occupying English in the first few years of the fifteenth century.

Glyndwr was a member of the dynasty of northern Powys and, on his mother's side, descended from that of Deheubarth in the south. The family had fought for Llywelyn ap Gruffydd and regained their lands in north-east Wales only through a calculated association with the powerful Marcher lords.

In 1404, Glyndwr assembled a parliament of four men from every commot in Wales at Machynlleth, drawing up mutual recognition treaties with France and Spain. At Machynlleth, he was also crowned king of a free Wales. A

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second parliament in Harlech took place a year later, with Glyndwr making plans to carve up England and Wales into three, as part of an alliance against the English king: Mortimer would take the south and west of England, Thomas Percy, earl of Northumberland, would have the midlands and the north, and he himself Wales and the Marches of England.

Draconian English anti-Welsh laws stayed in place even during the accession to the English throne of Henry VII, a Welshman, in 1485. Wales became subsumed into English custom law, and Glyndwr's uprising became an increasingly powerful symbol of frustrated Welsh independence.

*Gwyn A. Williams, "When Was Wales," Penguin Books, London, 1985.*

*"Wales - The Rough Guide," Mike Parker and Paul Whitfield, Rough Guides Ltd, London, 1994. For a full account, see last year's newsletter or the above-mentioned books.*

## WELSH GENEALOGY-ON-ZOOM

Researching Welsh genealogy, answering questions, helping each other with our brick walls:

**When: 11:00AM on Tues. Sept. 8; 11:30AM on Tues. Sept 22nd; and 11:00AM on Monday, October 5 & 19.**

**Note: Sept. 22 features a class by Nikki Hall, DNA specialist, who will explain centimorgans in our DNA and will run through a couple of case studies on how to sort out the complexity of a DNA match on *Ancestry.com*.**



Must reply to [InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com](mailto:InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com)

to be added to our Genealogy-on-Zoom invite Zoom call. Cost for DNA presentation on 9/22 is \$10.

**How: Join our ZOOM Welsh Genealogy group: email [InfoWelshWNE.com](mailto:InfoWelshWNE.com) to be added to the email invitation.**

# WELSH CONVERSATION-ON-ZOOM:

## September & October

If you are a Welsh learner or speaker looking for an opportunity to chat in Welsh in a casual and friendly setting, we welcome you to join us. All levels, from beginners to native speakers, are welcome. NOTE: this is not a class.

Where: Currently online on Zoom every Tuesday at 6:30PM

How: To join our ZOOM Welsh Conversation group, please email us at [InfoWelshWNE.com](mailto:InfoWelshWNE.com) so we can add you to the Zoom email invitation.



## AROUND OUR WELSH-AMERICAN WORLD

To keep up with news, both from Wales and around North America, please subscribe to NINNAU: the North American Welsh newspaper. 6 issues per year at \$30 per year or \$20 for digital issues at: [NINNAU.com](http://NINNAU.com).



## NEWS FROM WALES

### The Dylan Thomas Summer School in Creative Writing

The Dylan Thomas Summer School is a 12-day escape in West Wales for writers of all ages, styles, and genres. We lead students to castles, mines, gardens, Stone Age monuments, and many more extraordinary

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and ravishing locations, where they write on site to imaginative prompts. Our goal is to help students generate new writing, rather than to intensively critique their work. We're based on the rural campus of the University of Wales, Trinity St David, in Lampeter, where students also attend workshops and evening readings by Wales' finest writers. Our reading series has included Poets Laureate of Wales, Gillian Clarke, Gwynth Lewis, and Ifor ap Glyn, as well as Menna Elfyn, Owen Sheers, and many others.

The program is fully accredited and may be taken for credit or just for fun. All-inclusive cost for 2021 is £1950 without airfare; dates are 31 May - 11 June, 2021. Class size is 15-18 students. Note that we alternate between three



Lampeter-based itineraries: Mining Valleys, Brecon Beacons, Swansea, and Gower

Peninsula; Pembrokeshire, including St David's, the Around Wales Coast Path, and Pentre Ifan dolmen; and North Wales, featuring Snowdonia, Llechwyd Slate Mine, and Ty Newydd, the National Writers' Centre. For information contact Pamela Petro at [ppetrol@lesley.edu](mailto:ppetrol@lesley.edu), and visit our website, [www.uwtsd.ac.uk/dylanthomas/summerschool](http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/dylanthomas/summerschool).

## WSWNE NEWS

- **North American Festival in Wales (NAFOW) 2021**, September 2-5th, in Ottawa, Canada.
- **NAFOW 2022**, Sept 1-4, in Philadelphia, PA - a definite road trip, start saving, let's go!
- **NAFOW 2023**, Aug 31 - Sept 3 in Lincoln, Nebraska

### **Reilly, Thomas P.**

The husband of Maureen Griffith and fellow member passed away May 16, 2020. They had been married for 52 years. He came to many of our luncheons before his illness prevented him from doing so. Born in New York City, he was a veteran of the United States Navy, serving on mine-sweepers during the Korean War. Later he became a Customer Sales Rep for American Airlines, and took Maureen around the world. Thomas will be missed. We will continue to see Maureen at our events, and she hopes to further her Welsh family history research.

## **Annual Christmas Holiday Luncheon**

**LOOKING FORWARD TO HOPEFULLY BEING TOGETHER:  
Save the date! Sat., Dec. 5th, 2020. If we are able to do so,  
this is the plan:**



The Welsh Society of Western New England's festive annual Christmas Holiday luncheon at the Storowton Tavern, West Springfield, MA. Presenter: **John Bollard's "Dafydd ap Gwilym's Wales"** : Dafydd ap Gwilym is widely acknowledged as the greatest poet in a land of poets. He traveled all over Wales and composed poems to his patrons, his friends, and most often to his girlfriends and other women he hoped would be his girlfriend. It is hard to tell if he was being serious or not, but a lot of the time he was simply downright hilarious. He continues to delight audiences almost 700 years later.

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John Bollard will be reading translations of Dafydd's poetry and showing stunning photographs by Anthony Griffiths of places Dafydd knew, taken from our fifth collaboration: Cymru Dafydd ap Gwilym / Dafydd ap Gwilym's Wales.



**Member Shirley Gilmartin** says "He is one of the great poets of the Middle Ages. He was born in 1320 in Brogynin in the parish of Llanbadarnfawr, Ceredigion. It is believed that Dafydd is buried in Abaty Ystrad Fflur, Nr. Aberystwyth".

Shirley Jones Gilmartin, Glyn Dowden and Susan Davies Sit

[InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com](mailto:InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com). Hope to see you! More news in November.

## The Welsh woman who left everything behind to help slaves to freedom in America

www.WalesOnline by John Cooper

*The stories of Jessie Donaldson and Willis, a slave who found his freedom in Swansea, were almost forgotten to history, but one historian's tireless work has captured them.*

Born in Bristol in 1799, she was the daughter of anti-slavery campaigner Samuel Heineken and picked up her father's mantle in opposing slavery throughout her 90 years.



**Jessie Donaldson was part of a network helping slaves cross the border into the northern United States (Image: Jazz Heritage Wales)**

As well as being a vocal supporter of the abolition of slavery from her home in Wales, Jessie moved to Ohio in the United States in 1854 to set up a safe house on the 'underground railroad', a network used by slaves in the south to escape to freedom in the north and Canada.

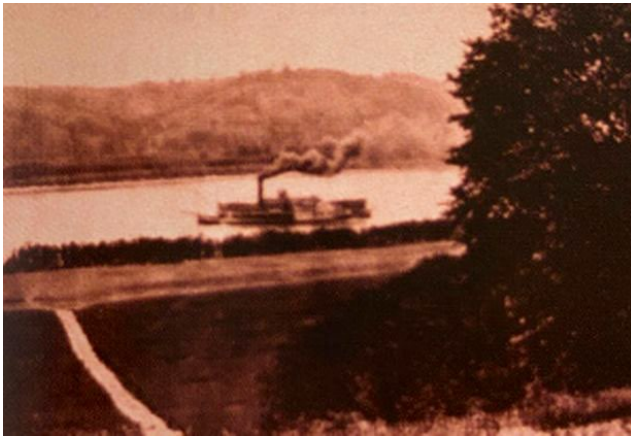
It took historian and founder of Jazz Heritage Wales Jen Wilson 10 years to piece together Jessie's story together, starting with one of several what she calls "eureka" moments searching old newspapers at the library. "I'm a cultural historian and I was tracing how African-American music had first come to Wales.

"It said that a Mrs Donaldson had died [in 1889] and that was highly unusual because women's obituaries did not appear in papers then". "The first two-thirds were about her father, of course, but the final paragraph said 'Mrs Donaldson died at nearly 91 and lived in America for 10 years and ran safe houses for runaway slaves.'

"I was gobsmacked. If a historian gets one eureka moment this was mine but then it was followed by a second."

Trawling through the pages of *The Cambrian* again later in her research, Jen found another incredible story linking Swansea with





slavery in the United States.

*The view to the River Ohio from Jessie Donaldson's safe house (Image: Jazz Heritage Wales)*

In February 1833 a 21-year-old man known

only as Willis, the name he was given on the American plantation where he had been enslaved, docked in Landore, Swansea, aboard a copper ore carrier called the St. Peter.

Willis had stowed aboard the vessel in New Orleans where the ship had stopped for supplies after picking up its cargo of Chilean copper ore bound for Swansea.

"It must have been good luck that he stowed away in that particular ship. He hid in the hold and one of the seamen found him and took him to the captain.

"The captain gave him a couple of sovereigns, enough for about two weeks accommodation, and that was it."

The Slavery Abolition Act was passed in the British Parliament in August 1833, just months after Willis' arrival in Swansea, abolishing slavery in most British colonies.

The trail on Willis goes cold after that, except for a newspaper article in the Cambrian News which Jen thinks might suggest he stayed in Swansea.

It is a story about well-known characters in the city, published when Willis would have been in his 80s, and mentions an old black man who was known for sitting on a wall in Northampton Lane. He would nod, smile, and wave at passers-by and tell them: "I used to be a slave."



*Jessie's cousin Susannah and her husband in Penmaen safe house (Image: Jazz Heritage Wales)*

Jessie's story took another turn when Jen's son moved to the US, by coincidence to Cincinnati near to where the Donaldson's safe

house was. When visiting her son, Jen trawled through the records at a local museum.

"This is where I found out the American side of her story. The people at the museum couldn't understand what I was saying because I was talking so fast and waving Jessie's obituary at them.

"They said 'slow down ma'am' and after I told them the name they said: 'We have a Mrs Pat Donaldson who comes in here quite a lot tracing her family history actually.'

"I asked if it was possible to meet her. They rang her up and she said: 'I'm coming over.'"

Jen and Pat formed a friendship and Jessie Donaldson's descendant filled in the blanks for Jen, sharing incredible images taken from Jessie's safe house in the 1800s.

The house, named Clermont by Jessie, was one of three safe houses set up by the Donaldson family along the Ohio River in the 1800s. One of them, called Penmaen after a farm owned by the family, is still standing today.

Jessie and her husband Francis returned to Swansea in 1866 and she died there in 1899 at the age of almost 91. Her incredible story was almost lost to history but it is now known that she played a major part

in the freeing of slaves and knew the abolitionist and former slave Fredrick Douglass among other key figures in the American anti-slavery movement.

At the moment a debate is raging about whether the names and images of those who profited from slavery should have a place in the public realm in the form of street names and statues.

The sad truth is that there were many slave owners of Welsh origin and 15% of African-Americans are believed to have Welsh-sounding surnames today.

It was recently revealed that slavery was widely used in the copper industry, of which Swansea was one of the world's biggest players, particularly in South America.

However Jen and others are calling not for statues to be pulled down but for some sort of memorial to Jessie and Willis to be placed in Swansea to immortalise their story.

"It's an opportune time to do this. Jessie deserves a plaque and after that we'll try and get funds for statues of Jessie and Willis down on the docks. It would be fantastic but that's down the line somewhere," she said.

***You can read the stories of Jessie and Willis in Jen's book Freedom Music: Wales, Emancipation and Jazz 1850-1950 which is available from University of Wales Trinity Saint David Press***

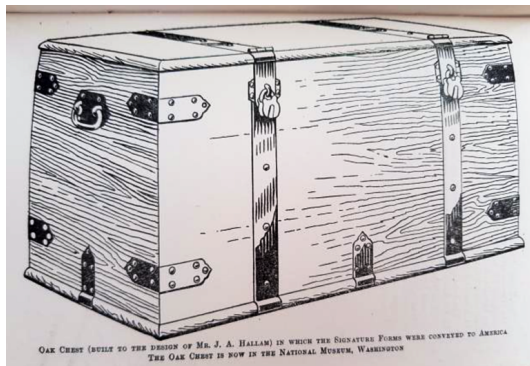
## Heddwch Nain Mamgu

(text and diagram from [wcia.org.uk](http://wcia.org.uk))

The Welsh Women's Peace Petition to America is one of the most inspiring stories to have emerged through the Heritage Lottery Funded 'Wales for Peace' programme over the WW100 centenary period 2014-18. Led by the Welsh Centre for International Affairs in partnership with 10 of Wales' leading organisations, Wales for Peace explored how, in the 100 years since WW1, people had contributed to the search for peace - involving many hundreds of volunteers and

community groups Wales-wide in uncovering and 'joining up', for the first time, the 'national story' of Wales' rich peace heritage.

A great Welsh Oak chest was designed by Mr J. A. Hallam, in which to convey the enormous number of signature forms to be conveyed to America, with the intention that the chest be presented to the National Museum in Washington - today better known worldwide as the Smithsonian Institute. The ladies



toured the USA, lobbying for support for the peace initiative going to Washington D.C., Los Angeles, Chicago, San Francisco, Salt Lake City, New York, Colorado, plus the Grand Canyon and Niagara Falls.

Following correspondence between WCIA and the Smithsonian in 2016, it was established that the chest was still held within the collections there, and in 2018, Jill Evans MEP had the opportunity to visit the Smithsonian as part of a political delegation, and was able to witness the signature sheets still held within the chest.

Over 2019, through the lobbying efforts of Heddwch Nain Mamgu supported by WCIA, there has been a developing correspondence between the National Library of Wales and the Smithsonian Institute with a view to exploring scope for digitising the signature sheets, and/or organising a Wales-America project to uncover and share the story of the Welsh Peace Petition to America.

The Women's Peace Petition itself has fascinated thousands of exhibition visitors, attracted the interest of politicians and academics, and inspired creation of a community-led campaign, 'Heddwch Nain Mamgu' (which translates as 'Grandma's Peace') which aims to involve Welsh women in taking action on peace today, towards the centenary in 2023-4.



If you'd like to get involved please email: [WelshWNE@gmail.com](mailto:WelshWNE@gmail.com).  
Annie-Jane Hughes Griffiths holding the Welsh Women's Peace Memorial outside the White House, following their meeting with US President Calvin Coolidge; alongside Mrs Ruth Morgan, Miss Eluned Prys and Mrs. Mary Ellis.  
TI Ellis Collections, NLW

## RECIPE FROM WALES

### Welsh Rarebit Savory Muffins

250 grams/2 1/4 cups Plain/ All purpose flour

2 tsp Baking powder

1/2 tsp bicarbonate of soda/Baking soda

1/2 tsp mustard powder

75g/2.5 tbsp unsalted butter, melted

1 egg, beaten

250ml/1.1 cup light ale/beer

1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce

125g/1 heaped cup mature cheddar,  
grated

Chutney, to serve on the side (optional)



1. Preheat oven to 180C and line a 12 hole muffin tin with paper cases.
2. Sift together the flour, baking powder , baking soda, mustard, and little salt and pepper.
3. Stir together the butter, egg, beer and Worcestershire Sauce. Make well in center of dry ingredients and pour in wet ingredients, along with most of the cheese. Gradually stir, until combined, but don't overtax. Spoon into muffin cases.
4. Sprinkle over remaining cheese and bake for 20 minutes. Allow to cool slightly, and serve with your favorite chutney. Makes 12, ready in 35 mins ([drinkaware.co.uk](http://drinkaware.co.uk)). Thank you to Elizabeth Davies for forwarding the recipe.

## TERRIFYING STORY OF EARLY WARNING TOWERS

by Mari Jones, NorthWalesLive

People in North Wales are no strangers to historic structures dotting the landscape. But the stories behind some of them are particularly dark. In the 17C, Britain was gripped by the fear of Barbary pirates. They were buccaneers who traveled to Europe from North Africa, and were the scourge of merchant ships and in the Mediterranean. They came in search of riches and a precious, but sinister, cargo. As well as stealing wares from ships, they would also take the sailors themselves.

The threat came too close for comfort when, in 1631, the harbour village of Baltimore in County Cork, was sacked by the pirates. They took about one hundred of the inhabitants, men and women. The men would be galley slaves or sold in slave auctions, the women as concubines within the walls of the Sultan's palace. Only two captives ever returned to Baltimore, and the village lay abandoned for nearly 170 yrs.



(Image: J. lawson-Reay)

The tower on Bryniau hill overlooking Llandudno, is a remnant of this threat to North Wales during this time. Sir Roger Mostyn, who was the largest landowner in the region, was Muster-Master and Custodian of Crown Arms and Armour. He had to take action, faced with the threat not just to shipping but to the inhabitants. He

built an early warning system, a chain of lookout towers, on Bryniau Hill, Llandrillo yn Rhos, Abergele and Whitford, in Flintshire.

They were all stone towers except at Llandrillo where a tower was added to the church tower. Remnants of the towers remain to this day. Local historian John Lawson-Reay said: "They were all on elevated land within sight of each other, so that they could signal each other by lighted beacons. "Should a pirate be sighted, the watchmen would raise the alarm, so that they could retreat inland to hide."

Each of the towers would have been manned to alert the surrounding countryside by smoke or flame. Similarly, the towers could alert one another,

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forming an innovative line of communication running along the coastline of this region. According to records kept by Mostyn Estates, Sir Roger Mostyn was continually instructed to "keep the beacons in good repair", such was the fear of Barbary pirates.

There is no evidence that the pirates ever managed to land in North Wales, but it has been estimated that over a million Europeans were taken during their 250 year reign of terror.

Announcement:

Cymdeithas Madog announced that Cwrs Cymraeg (late July 2021) will be held in the Hartford, CT area... more info next year

## Begw Arian Finding & Sharing Pearls of Wales

### The Breakwater in Holyhead, Anglesey

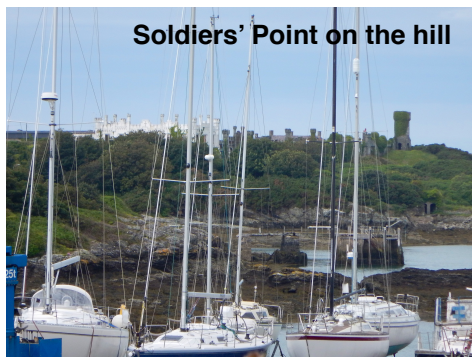
This intriguing looking property, now a burnt-out ruin named Soldiers Point, was built in 1849 by Charles Rigby as his family residence. He was contracted to build the Holyhead Breakwater which at 1.7 miles it's the longest breakwater in the UK.

Over 7 million tons of stone was quarried from Holyhead Mountain and about 1,300 men employed on the project taking over 28 years to build, officially opened 1873. It was built to enclose more than 400 acres of deep water to create a sheltered

harbour.

March  
2018  
Storm  
Emma

ravaged Holyhead Harbour, causing millions of pounds worth of damage. Plans are under way to build additional sea defenses.



You can walk along the top of the Breakwater, visit the old quarry sites now opened as a Country Park, see some of the machinery used, and discover the industrial heritage in the information centre. Walk the footpaths; spot the wildlife, in this designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

**WSWNE NEWS is published by the Welsh Society of Western New England, Inc**

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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, one per family at same address):**

\_\_\_\$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) \_\_\_\_\_

Your Welsh Interests: \_\_\_\_\_

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Newsletter Fall, 2020: For Treasurer's use only: Date received: \_\_\_\_\_