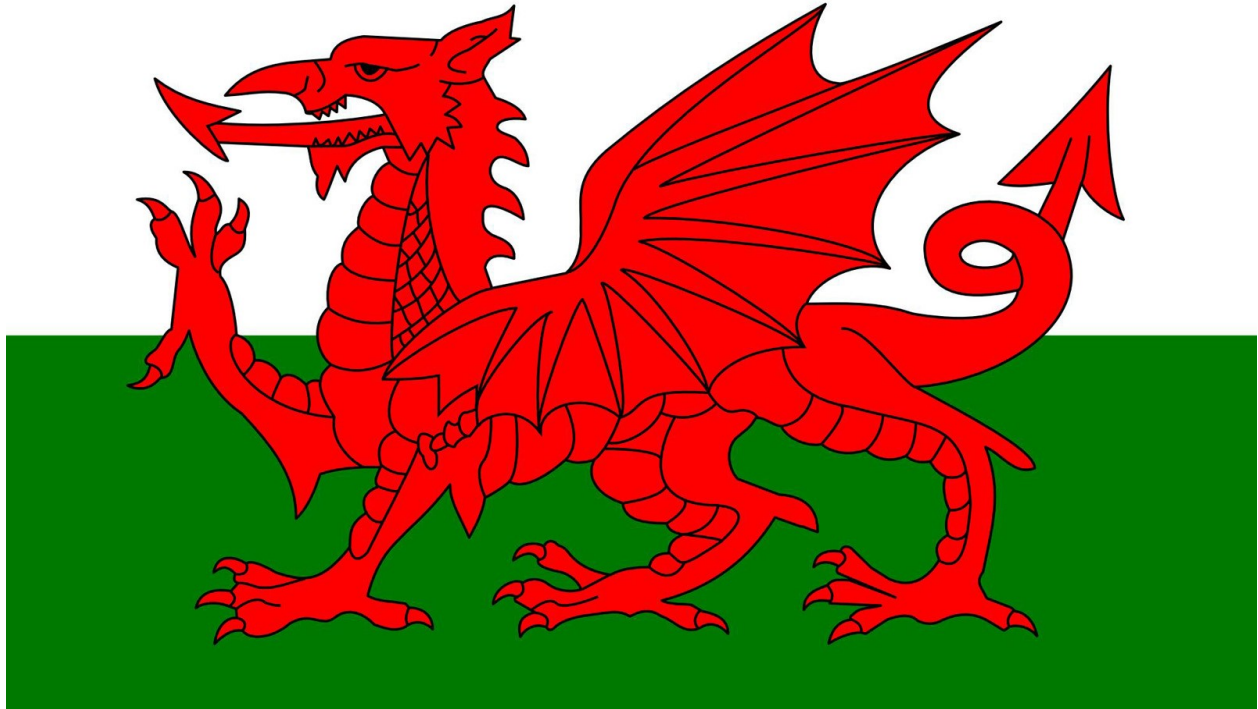


Croeso! — Welcome!

The Welsh Society of Western New England
Cymdeithas Cymreig Lloegr Newydd Gorllewino



January 2023 Website: WelshWNE.org Email: WelshWNE@gmail.com FaceBook: WSWNE

A Message From Our President, Susan Davies Sit

The WSWNE Board wishes you all a very happy New Year for 2023. Blwyddyn Newydd Dda! We are looking forward to a busy year celebrating all things Welsh, as well as some member requested Zoom presentations to keep us all connected this winter.

If you have ever thought about tracing your Welsh roots back through the centuries, maybe 2023 is the time. Genealogy Workshops continue twice each month. Our Welsh Language Conversation groups have continued on Zoom post-Covid and are going strong.

A highlight of the year is our annual St David's Day Luncheon which this year will be held on Saturday, March 4th at the Nutmeg Restaurant in East Windsor, CT. We'll enjoy a full program of celebration together.

Details for all events are found at www.WelshWNE.com/events. If you read about an event in your neighborhood that has Welsh content, please pass it on to InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com, so it can be shared with other members.

We enjoy meeting you at our events, now that we can do that safely! It has also been a joy "meeting" so many of you in our *Meet Our Members* section, and also meeting some of our geographically more distant members at recent Welsh events. We're looking forward to seeing more of you in 2023.

A New Editor and a New Name

By Susan Davies Sit

I am extremely happy to be handing the work of Editor of our newsletter over to Diane Jeffer. A WSWNE member from Hope, New Jersey, Diane is active in our Welsh Genealogy group. She has been the editor of a few newsletters over the years, including *Focus*, the newsletter of United Astronomy Clubs of New Jersey.

Diane and her husband travelled through New England in October so we got to meet in person, which was wonderful. She is also actively involved with The Welsh Society of the Southern Tier in her home state of New York where she has been a member since 1980. She is a past president and currently serves as treasurer.

Diane's editorial debut this month is jam-packed with great news articles and a fresh, eye-catching layout. Thank you Diane for sharing your time and energy with us and being part of this team, bringing everything Welsh to our membership. Please send your suggestions and submissions for future newsletters to Diane.Jeffer@gmail.com

The Board of Directors recently decided to name our newsletter. After a lively discussion, they chose *Croeso! — Welcome!* We encourage you to participate in the events we have planned for 2023 and hope you will feel welcome when you read these pages.

Visit our Website!

Be sure to visit the Welsh Society of Western New England often at www.WelshWNE.org. You'll find a full calendar of events, photos and videos from past events, profiles of the members of our Board of Directors, previous newsletters, and a resources page with links to all things Welsh. Check it out today!



Meet Our Members

Margaret Korhonen lives in East Granby, Connecticut, and her Welsh connection is through her maternal grandfather. Her great grandparents, Salisbury and Jones, came from Llanelidan and Bontddu, North Wales.

During a semester of study in Bristol, England, she was able to meet her Welsh cousins while also discovering the beauty of Wales and Welsh people. Later, she and her husband, Wayne, with their children, visited Wales and were always warmly greeted by her Welsh family and people there.

Margaret, who recently joined our board of directors, especially enjoys the events and programs that WSWNE and the greater Welsh community offer that broaden our understanding of Welsh culture and history.



Croeso—Welcome Our Newest Members

Your Name: Jane Allison of Oreland, PA

Your Welsh interests?: I am particularly interested in Welsh genealogy and finding my Welsh ancestors. I also love Welsh music, especially traditional singing and male choirs. I hope to travel to Wales next year, so help in planning the trip would be great too.

Your Name: Andy Crispell, Red Hook, NY

Your Welsh interests?: Ancestors from Merthyr Tydfil/Ponty-Prydd settled near Scranton/Kingston, PA. I have had an interest in Wales for many years and have still not visited and hope to before too long and am joining the Welsh Conversation group.

Your Name: Andrea Taylor of South Yarmouth, MA

Your Welsh interests?: I serve an Episcopal parish named for St. David of Wales and we are planning a pilgrimage next year to celebrate St. David's 900th anniversary of canonization. I'd like to meet people to help me learn more about travel in Wales - maybe even come with us as a leader?

Your Name: Dodi Wozniak of Hamilton, OH

Your Welsh interests?: Learning language, tracing Welsh ancestors, learning more about Welsh history and culture.

Winter Zoom Events with WSWNE

Write to InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com to request a Zoom link for any of these presentations; please specify which one(s) you are interested in.

Genealogy-on-Zoom

Mondays 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM

January 9 & 23, February 13 & 20

This group shares research tips and success stories.

On **February 20**, Phil Bufton, Chair of the Powys Family History Society, will join us to discuss how a Welsh Family History Society can help our research.



Welsh Conversation-on-Zoom

Every other Wednesday 5:30 PM (Beginner)

January 11 & 25, February 8 & 22

This is not a class, though there will be a little homework.

Every Tuesday 5:30 PM (Intermediate)

Chat in Welsh in a casual, friendly setting. We use imaginative weekly topics/questions which enable us to learn new vocabulary. (This session is currently full, but please join the waiting list.)

More Winter Zoom Events

Write to InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com to request a Zoom link for any of these presentations; please specify which one(s) you are interested in.

Sunday, January 8, 2023 at 2 PM

Welsh Food Stories

With author Carwyn Graves from Wales.

A wonderful account of the history of traditional food in Wales. "I couldn't put it down! Who knew wheat and leeks could be so fascinating?"

Carwyn Graves has written nine chapters which are "a nine course feast."



Gareth Jones

Thursday, January 18, 2023 at 7 PM

Gareth Jones: The Man Who Knew Too Much

Gareth Jones was an investigative journalist who told the world about Stalin's 1932-1933 famine in Ukraine in which millions perished.

Hosted by Margaret West, this Zoom presentation is a fascinating look at the life and work of Gareth Jones. It uses, amongst other sources, the diaries he left behind in Wales.

A journalist from Rhayader in mid-Wales, Margaret is a founding producer of NPR's "Talk of the Nation" based in Washington DC.

Saturday, February 5 at 1 PM

A National Forest for Wales

Presented direct from Wales, Erika Dawson Davies, Head of the Welsh government's National Forest Programme, will discuss the concept and vision of the National Forest for Wales. The commitment to this forest will create areas of new woodland and help restore and maintain irreplaceable ancient forests. In time it will form a connected network of woodlands throughout Wales.

Still More Winter Zoom Events

Write to InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com to request a Zoom link for any of these presentations; please specify which one(s) you are interested in.

February 16, 2023 at 7 PM

Hidden History

One hundred years ago, over 390,000 Welsh Women signed a peace petition. In 1924, a delegation brought the petition to American women and meeting President Coolidge was NOT the highlight of their trip. How did they gather those signatures and what's next in 2024?

Join our members Ann Griffith and Susan Davies Sit for a presentation about this fascinating bit of history. Ann and Sue are members of Heddwch Nain Mamgu, a group formed to research the signatories and promote the vision of peace and justice.

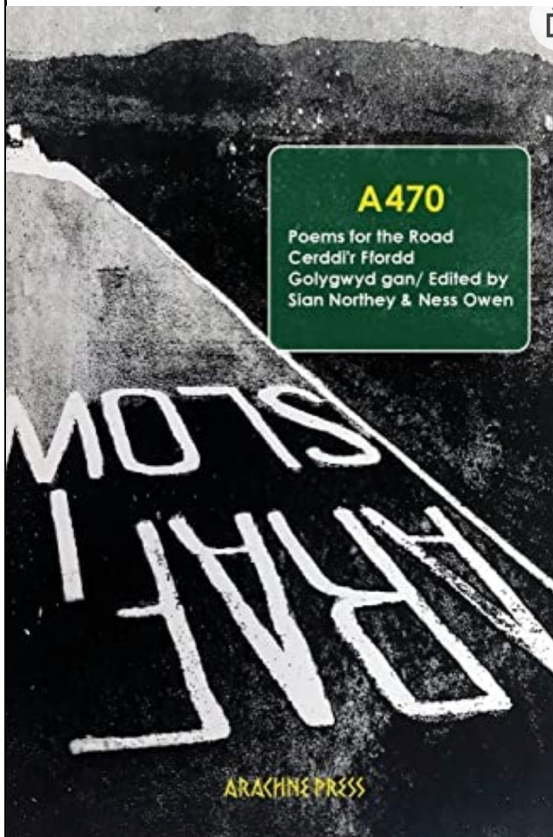


1924 Peace Petition delegation

Sunday, February 26, 2023 at 2 PM

Poetry-on-Zoom

A470: Poetry for the Road



The A470 is 186 miles from shore to shore through the backbone of Wales, linking north to south. Peaceful and picturesque or slow and never-ending: the road out of here, the road home, the beginnings of devolution? Glorious national parks, the road to the Royal Welsh Show and from sea-shore to slates, to forests and mountains.

Fifty-one original poems, translated into and out of Welsh, are included in this entirely bilingual poetry collection.

Poetry-on-Zoom will feature a presentation with NAFOW Eisteddfod Poem in English Language winner Adele Evershed, and Sian Northey & Ness Owen, editors and translators, and Cherry Potts, Director of Arachne Press Limited.

Online and In-Person Events Celebrating Wales Week New England

See www.WelshWNW.org/wales-week-in-new-england for up-to-date details about Wales Week.

Thursday, February 16 at 7 PM

Hidden History. See page 6 for complete details about this Zoom presentation.

Monday, February 20 at 11 AM

Genealogy-on-Zoom. See page 4.

Tuesday, February 21 at 5:30 PM

Welsh-Conversation-on-Zoom. Details on page 4.

Wednesday, February 22 at 5:30 PM

Beginner Welsh Conversation-on-Zoom. See page 4.

Saturday February 25 at 11:45 AM

Six Nations Rugby Championship Wales v. England. See page 9 for details about our in-person watch parties for this and other matches.

Saturday February 25 at 12:15 PM

Poultney Area St. David's Society's annual "Gathering of the Clans" lunch and meeting. At TAPS tavern, 158 Main Street, Poultney, Vermont. We will order off the menu and pay our own tabs. (**Saturday March 4** in case of inclement weather)

Sunday February 26 at 2 PM

A470 - Poetry for the Road. See previous page For details about this Zoom presentation.

Tuesday, February 28 at 5:30 PM

Welsh-Conversation-on-Zoom

Wednesday, March 1—St. David's Day at 11 AM

Second Annual St. David's Day Walk. Meet in the parking lot at Elizabeth Park in West Hartford, CT. Dress warmly, and bring Y Ddraig Goch. Hot cider to follow! No need to RSVP.

Saturday, March 4, 11 AM to 3 PM

Our annual St. David's Day Luncheon at the Nutmeg Restaurant, 297 South Main Street, East Norwich, CT. Join us for a full program of celebration including NAFOW's Eisteddfod Winning Poets and a one hundred year anniversary Heddwch Nain Mamgu presentation, "In Her Own Words." Please see www.WelshWNE.org/events for ticket information.



Ry'n Ni Yma O Hyd—We're Still Here

by Begw Arian

Originally released in 1983, a new recording of the song *Yma O Hyd*, by Dafydd Iwan, was named the official anthem for Wales' participation in the 2022 World Cup. The tournament for the Football World Cup has been contested since 1930 (except 1942 and 1946 due to WWII) with Wales' national football team entering every World Cup since 1950, and qualifying for the final tournaments, in 1958 and 2022. (See page 18 for details about 2022 the outcome.)

Dafydd Iwan wrote the song to inspire the Welsh Nationalist movement and remind people that in spite of everything, *Er Gwaetha Pawb a Phopeth*, Wales and the Welsh language will survive. It is regularly sung in the stands by fans of the Welsh rugby team.

The lyrics tell of the survival of Wales and the Welsh language for over 1,600 years, since Roman officer Magnus Maximus or Maccsen Wledig as the Welsh called him, left Wales and the island of Britain to become Emperor of the Western Roman Empire in 383 AD. Early genealogies have Maccsen as the founder of post-Roman Welsh Kingdoms, including Dyfed and Powys; these kings would later use the authority of Maccsen Wledig as the basis of their inherited political legitimacy. Welsh poetry also frequently refers to Maccsen as a figure of comparison with later Welsh Leaders.

The Mabinogion tells how Maccsen Wledig, the Emperor of Rome, dreamed of a lovely maiden in a faraway land. So vivid was the vision that he scoured the earth in search of her, eventually finding her at Segontium (Caernarfon) The girl, Helen Luyddawc, reciprocated Maccsen's feelings, and in return for her hand, her father was granted sovereignty over Britain. In Maccsen's absence however a new Emperor seized Rome. With the help of men from Britain led by Helen's brother Kynan Meriadoc, Maccsen marched across Gaul and recaptured Rome. In gratitude to his British allies Maccsen rewarded them with an area now known as Brittany. Sevira, daughter of Maccsen and Helen, is commemorated on the Pillar of Eliseg (an early medieval inscribed stone near Llangollen) which says she was married to Vortigern, king of the Britons.

So *Wal Goch*, celebrate our team in the up-coming Six Nations Tournament with a rendition of the spine-tingling *Yma O Hyd*.



Photo from Nation.Cymry

2023 Guinness Six Nations Rugby Tournament

In-Person Watch Parties

Since 2000, the six nations of England, France, Ireland, Italy, Scotland, and Wales compete in this annual event. Beginning in 1883 with England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales competing, this is the oldest international rugby tournament. The 2023 competition will take place over five weekends in February and March.

In the US, the games will be broadcast on the Peacock streaming service (peacocktv.com). WSWNE will host **watch parties*** in Glastonbury, Connecticut for most of the games. RSVP for location: InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com.

The Welsh team will play on the following Saturdays.

February 4, 9:14 AM—Wales hosts Ireland

February 11, 11:45 AM—Scotland hosts Wales *

February 25, 11:45 AM—Wales hosts England *

March 11, 9:15 AM—Italy hosts Wales

March 18, 9:45 AM—France hosts Wales *



Photo from WalesOnline.co.UK

Beaten & Burned Out: Welsh Anti-Slavery Hero Robert Everett

Rev. Robert Everett was a Welsh-American who came to Oneida County, New York in 1823 from Wales. He very quickly became involved in the anti-slavery movement. In 1835, Utica was selected as the site for the first New York State Anti-Slavery Convention. The meeting was broken up by an angry mob.

From Utica, Everett was forced to move several times. His church services were often interrupted by people who continued to support slavery. He was physically assaulted while preaching and had his horse injured and home burned down by pro-slavery activists.

Everett encouraged Welsh-American citizenship and support of the abolition movement through political action within the newly established Liberty and Republican parties.

Wanting to work with Welsh-speaking Congregationalists, he moved to the Remsen-Steuben area of Oneida County and became a publisher and preacher, taking the ministry at Capel Ucha in Steuben and Penymynydd near Steuben. Capel Ucha was founded built in 1820, and although it no longer stands, there is a monument in Capel Ucha Cemetery marking its location.

Starting in 1840, Everett published a monthly newsletter, *Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd* (*The American Messenger*), spreading the anti-slavery message to Welsh communities throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, and India.

Also while in the Remsen-Steuben area he became a stationmaster in the Underground Railroad and helped many people escaping slavery who were fleeing to Canada.

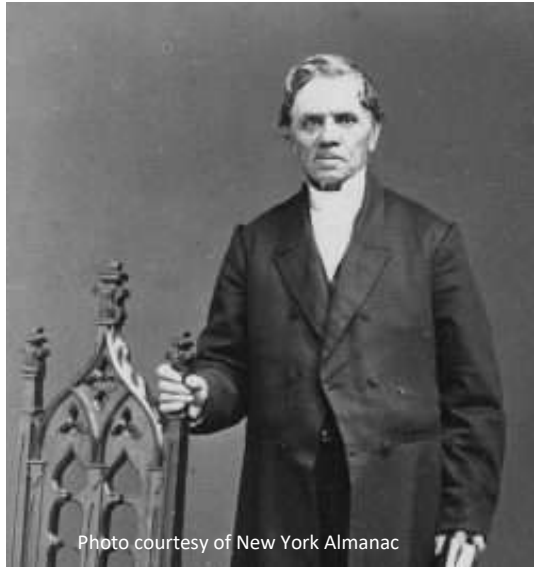
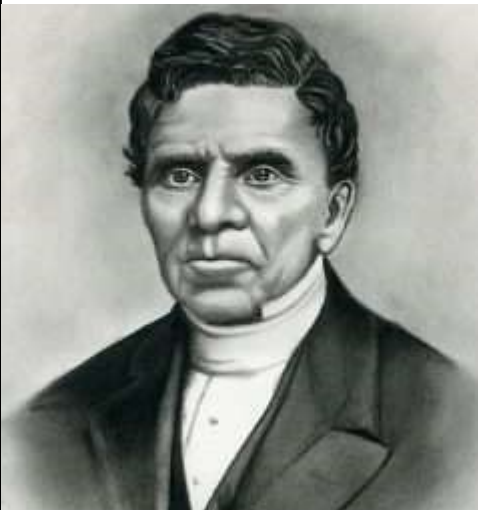


Photo courtesy of New York Almanac



Everett's sons attended the integrated Oneida Institute at Whitesboro, NY and his son Robert fought pro-slavery forces with John Brown in Kansas, after moving his family there to support the cause.

Everett came to believe and encouraged the notion that the Civil War was a moral crusade, resulting in extensive participation in the Union cause by Welsh immigrants and their first- and second-generation descendants. His writing aided in mobilizing European public opinion in support of the Union cause and after the war, Everett's daughters aided freed slaves and were teachers in integrated schools.

Continued on next page

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He believed and preached that “slaveholding was a sin and that a slave was a man for whom Christ, our Lord died.” Frederick Douglass and Harriet Beecher Stowe considered him a strong voice in the abolitionist movement and allowed him to translate and publish their works into Welsh. By the time of his death in 1874 Everett was internationally known and revered. He is buried in Capel Ucha Cemetery in Steuben, Oneida County, New York.

In October 2022, Rev. Robert Everett was inducted into the National Abolition Hall of Fame and Museum in Peterboro, Madison County, New York. Rev. Everett was nominated by a group dedicated to his legacy: St. David’s Society of Utica, Oneida County History Center, Remsen-Steuben Historical Society, Welsh North American Association, Professor E. Wyn James, and Ted Engle.

Adapted from an article published online on September 14, 2022 by the New York Almanac.

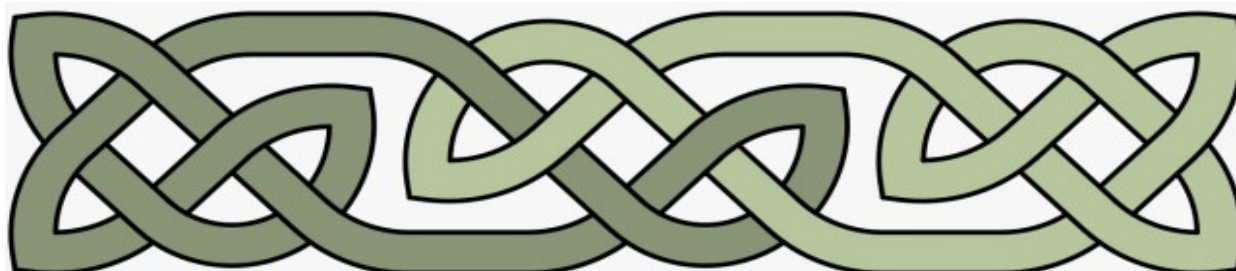
See <https://tinyurl.com/RobertEverett>.



NINNAU & Y Drych, the North American Welsh Newspaper® is the result of the 2003 merger of NINNAU which was founded in 1975, and Y Drych, the oldest Welsh newspaper in the Americas, which began in 1851. Now united as one newspaper, NINNAU & Y Drych provides complete coverage of the North American Welsh community.

The newspaper is dedicated to preserving and enhancing the vitality of the North American Welsh community by serving as a link between the North American Welsh people and their organizations, and Wales. It provides a forum for discussion and individual expression while informing readers of local and general news and events of interest and sharing details about Welsh traditions.

If you would like to subscribe, please visit www.NINNAU.com. There are six issues per year available in print (\$30) or digital (\$20) formats.



10 Welsh Women Who Changed the World

This is the final installment in a list published online by the Hisdoryan at <https://hisdoryan.co.uk/welsh-women-from-history>.

10. Sarah Jane Rees, Master Mariner, Teacher, Poet



Photo courtesy of hisdoryan.co.uk

Born in Llangrannog, in 1839, Sarah Jane's first claim to fame was as a master mariner. She accompanied her sea captain father onboard ship and went on to earn her master mariner's certificate at a navigation school in London – a qualification that allowed her to command a ship in any part of the world. Back in West Wales, she became a head-teacher at the tender age of 21 and set up her own navigation school where she taught local men.

In 1865 her immense writing skills meant she became the first woman to win a major prize at the National Eisteddfod of Wales. Writing under the name of Cranogwen, her winning poem, *Y Fodrwy Briodasal* (*The Wedding Ring*), was a satire on the married woman's destiny. A book of poems, *Caniadau Cranogwen*, followed this in 1870.

She also became editor of the Welsh-language women's periodical *Y Frythones* (1878–1889), a "platform for Welsh bluestockings and proto-suffragettes." In 1869–1870, she toured the United States, addressing mainly Welsh emigrant communities as far west as California. One of the founders of the South Wales Women's Temperance Union (UDMD) in 1901, Rees died at Cilfynydd and was buried in St Crannogs churchyard, where her grave is marked by a large elaborate obelisk.

(Read more about Sarah in the November-December 2022 issue of Ninnau.)

Artifacts from Llyn Cerrig Bach

By Begw Arian

The Llyn Cerrig Bach hoard comprises over 150 objects of bronze and iron. They were found during the construction of a runway extension of RAF airfield at Valley, Anglesey in 1942. Workmen discovered these objects whilst digging peat from the site of a former lake edge.

The collection includes seven swords, six spearheads, shield fragments, part of a bronze trumpet, two gang chains (slave chains), fragments of iron wagon tyres and horse gear, blacksmith tools, fragments of two cauldrons, iron bars for trading, and animal bones. Many of these objects had been deliberately broken. Some appear to be of local manufacture, a few are from Ireland, many originate from Southern England. This holy site could have had national fame, or the items traded, or plundered.

The range and size of these finds is of great importance to the understanding of Iron Age weaponry, metal working, tools, and the development of art styles. The collection of metal objects is thought to be an offering to the gods/goddesses; such offerings are part of a long tradition during the Bronze and Iron Ages in Wales.

The Roman historian Tacitus described Anglesey as a centre of Druidical learning at the time of the Roman conquest, about 600 AD; their sacred groves were destroyed at the time of the conquest. Could Llyn Cerrig Bach have been the site of Druidical ritual? The large number of weapons suggests the objects may have been offered before or after battle.

Recently the site has been re-assessed after fieldwork, additional study of the artefacts, and chemical testing of the metalwork. Rather than representing a single depositional event, it now seems more likely that this was a religious site at which many small deposits were made at different times spanning the period 300 BC to 100 AD.

Most of the items found at Llyn Cerrig Bach are now displayed in the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff.



Photo courtesy of National Museum of Wales

Obituary

Gwladys Evans Mahoney

On November 27, 2022, WSWNE member Gwladys Evans Mahoney, died peacefully at her home in the loving care of her family. Gwladys, who was born August 27, 1925 in Penygloddfa, Newtown, Wales, was preceded in death by her beloved husband John Mahoney, daughter Maureen, son Bryn, and granddaughter Evan Catherine Tracy. She was the daughter of a coal miner, Edward Evans, and his wife Gertrude (Morgan) Evans.

Gwladys grew up in Wales, attended the Penygloddfa Council School, and came of age during World War II. Upon leaving school she worked as a seamstress in the Kymric Mills, making dresses which were exported for sale in Argentina to support the War effort.



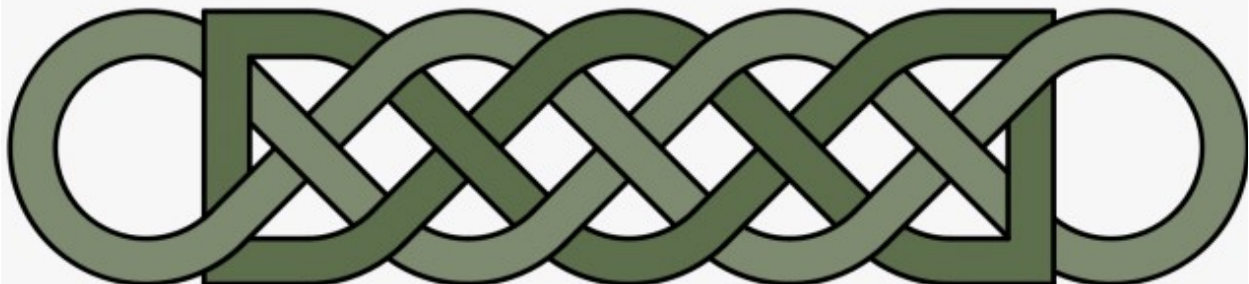
Gwladys was also a World War II veteran, having served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service attached to the Royal Engineers. In 1945 she met her future husband, Sergeant John Mahoney. At that time John was recovering from injury sustained while serving in France. John and Gwladys married in Nottingham, England; their uniforms served as wedding attire.

On April 1, 1946, Gwladys sailed into New York harbor aboard the USS Tyler. She recalled ship staff awakening the passengers to see the Statute of Liberty and the lights of New York City. After living in blackout conditions during the War, she was amazed to view the city lit up.

Gwladys and John lived in Westfield, MA and raised six children together. During her lifetime she was a talented seamstress and quilter, a great cook, and an avid reader. She enjoyed art and music and held a season ticket at the Springfield Symphony for many years. Gwladys was a loving, kind, and compassionate wife, mother, grandmother, sister, and friend. She is survived by her children Patricia Mahoney, Sheila Mahoney Tracy, Sean Mahoney, Bruce Mahoney, and Teresa Mahoney Mullen, eight grandchildren, and eleven great-grandchildren.

Published by Firtion Adams Funeral Service on November 30, 2022.

You may read the full obituary at www.firtionadams.com/obituary/Gwladys-Mahoney



Cymru I'r Byd/Wales to the World

By Susan Davies Sit, WSWNE President

The WSWNE Board was invited along with representatives from other Welsh Societies and our own Megan Williams, of Ninnau and NAFOW to attend a gala at the Sony Hall in Times Square, New York City on November 14, 2022. The event was hosted by S4C, The Welsh Government, the Urdd, and the Football Association of Wales to celebrate Wales in the World Cup 2022.

It was a wonderful evening, attended by six members of WSWNE. The star-studded event featured a red carpet where the stars were photographed and interviewed. Performers, presenters, and award honorees included Syr Bryn Terfel, Ioan Gruffudd, Mark Evans, Mared Williams, Lemfrec, Eve Goodman, Dionne Bennett, Sywel Nyw, and Rob McElhenny and Ryan Reynolds, co-owners of Wrexham FC, who received the Dragon Award from the People of Wales.

At the end of the concert we all loudly and riotously joined in and sang Yma O Hyd (see page 8) while watching the new video produced in Wales for the World Cup with Dafydd Iwan, and finally the National Anthem. It was a knockout of a night, a truly wonderful experience and we were honored to be there to represent our Welsh Society and Wales.



Susan Davies Sit, Annie Rodgers, Susan Meers. Photo by Don Sit

A September Afternoon with Friends

By Margaret Korhonen, WSWNE Board Member

A sunny, warm September afternoon found many members and friends of WSWNE sharing time together at Lost Acres Vineyard in Granby, CT.

Folks gathered in the main reception room at Lost Acres and enjoyed tasting several red and white wines made at the vineyard as well as sampling six varieties of Welsh cheese. Perhaps you know of or have tasted cheese made in Wales, but it was a delightful first-time treat for some. There were several kinds of Welsh cheese to sample that day, including three from Snowdonia Cheese Company: **Amber Mist**, a cheddar with a smokey flavor; **Black Bomber**, a smooth, creamy but tangy cheddar; and **Green Thunder**, a mature cheddar with a balance of garlic and herbs. Cheese samples from Croome Cuisine Company included: **Tintern**, a cheddar with chives and shallots mixed throughout; and **Harlech**, a mature cheddar blended with horseradish and parsley. Lastly, **Caerphilly** was also available, and although similar in flavor to English Wensleydale cheese, Caerphilly gives a smoother, more buttery taste. All these wines and cheeses were accompanied by a selection of fruits, crackers, bread, and spreads including Stokes Red Onion Marmalade, Ploughman's Chutney, and Mrs. Bridges Caramelized Onion and Garlic Chutney.



During the afternoon, the story of Owain Glyndwr, 1354-c.1416, a Welsh historic figure, was read to us in English by Susan Davies Sit and in Welsh by Howard Davies. From 1400 to roughly 1412, Owain Glyndwr led uprisings and war campaigns in hopes that Wales would be free of the harsh rule by the English and thus free to form Wales into an independent country. The resurgence of nationalism in Wales during the 19th and 20th centuries, along with the discovery of more papers and artifacts relating to Owain Glyndwr, have caused the Welsh to truly embrace his life and what he stood for. ↪ *Barbara English, Jason Ellsworth, Don Sit*

A high point of the wine and cheese afternoon was the opportunity to spend time with WSWNE members catching up on news and happenings around the New England area. It was also good to meet new members and friends of our Welsh Society thus broadening our views, perspectives, and connections to Wales.

In addition, the wonderful flavors enjoyed during the afternoon, whether cheeses, spreads or wines, left many knowing there are excellent Welsh cheese and chutney/relish choices available close to home in western New England. The fellowship of friends and acquaintances, coupled with our wine and cheese tastings made for a full and enjoyable event. ↪ *Carol Cadwalader, Howard Davies, Julia Imperato*



Calan Comes to Connecticut

By Tina Davies, WSWNE Member

Back in mid-October, the celebrated Welsh band, Calan, roared into Hartford with the zeal and energy of a right proper *Ddraig Goch*. Thanks to WSWNE (who spotted a small gap in their schedule, between concerts in Somerville, MA and New York), the band was able to fit in a gig at the Unitarian Society of Hartford, through the auspices of a local production company.

Calan currently comprises five musicians: Bethan Rhiannon, Shelley Musker Turner, Patrick Rimes, Samuel Elias Humphreys, and Angharad Sian Jenkins. The first four of these appeared in Hartford to delight the crowd. No official poll was taken, but it appeared that roughly half the house had some Welsh connection and was ready for a lively evening of pub music.

The absence of one member, Angharad, who was at home with a new baby, did nothing to dim the musicianship. This is not your standard two-guitars, keyboard, and drums band. Think of combining a Welsh harp, fiddle, penny whistle, accordion, bagpipes and, yes, guitars. (Not all at once, mind.) As far as percussion is concerned, it turns out, a pair of hard-soled clogging shoes fills that role admirably. Bethan, Calan's resident clogger, gave us several energetic (and highly aerobic) demonstrations as she tirelessly set the pace with her feet.

The performance was generous; each set represented the content on one of two CDs brought for sale. The first set drew from an older album, featuring a more traditional grouping. This set evoked an evening in the pub, allowing a glimpse of their beginning years busking on the streets of Cardiff, not altogether unlike a different group, in a different era, from Liverpool.

Intermission permitted the band a deserved break, and the audience a chance to wander to the refreshments downstairs. Cider was available, but the feature treats were served up by Ed and Beth Brown in traditional Welsh dress. Welsh cakes, generously provided by Helen Coates of Copper Kettle Bakery, were offered (and rapidly consumed), with the cider to wash them down. We may have won a few Welsh-cake converts that evening.

Back on stage, Calan's second set featured music from their recent album, *Kistvaen*. The group's evolution into a more adventurous, exploratory style is evident here, with harmonies simultaneously alluring, dissonant, and mystical. If you have access to a CD player, it's worth your while to get hold of a copy and have a listen (actually, several). Better yet, if you are anywhere in Calan's vicinity, get yourself to a concert and hear for yourselves!



Wales and the World Cup

Howard Davies, WSWNE member

Do you remember where you were on the afternoon of June 5, 2022? That's a day that I will never forget! The Wales football team qualified for the 2022 World Cup Finals in Qatar to end 64 years of heartache with a 1-0 win against Ukraine at Cardiff City Stadium. This was the first time Wales qualified since 1958 when they reached the quarter finals only to lose 1-0 to Brazil with an unknown 17-year-old called Pelé.

Over the many qualifying campaigns since 1958 there has been heartbreak, disappointment, and near misses. It's something that most Welsh fans honestly never thought would happen since most of us in our lifetimes had never seen Wales qualifying and playing at a World Cup, but all our football dreams finally came true in 2022.

We soon learned that the other teams in our group would be the USA, Iran, and England; on paper a difficult group, as all the teams were ranked in the top 25 teams in the world. It was now time for the rest of the world to see the special connection between the Welsh Players and their fans, Y Wal Goch (The Red Wall), the bucket hat-wearing fans who epitomize the country's unique culture. It was time for the world to witness the best anthem in the world, *Hen Wald Fy Nhadau*, sung so proudly in our ancient language that it can invite proud tears of joy to run down the cheeks of anyone. It was time for actor Michael Sheen to proudly give his rousing speech to the team, *The Sons of Speed* (www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-63044024). It was time to witness Dafydd Iwan and Ar Log and Y Wal Goch sing the spine tingling official Cymru World Cup song "Yma o Hyd" (www.youtube.com/watch?v=iLXtf1XFczk).

So fast forward to Monday November 21st at Vaughn's Pub in Hartford where there were 12 - 15 Welsh Society members dressed in red supporting the Welsh team versus the USA. We might have been outnumbered 10-1 by the US supporters at the bar (The American Outlaws) but when it came to the anthems we were not to be out sung, Hen Wlad fy Nhadau was sung with passion, pride and a few tears. Once the game started the banter between the fans was friendly and fun. The US started better and deservedly scored to make it 1-0, the Outlaws went crazy celebrating loudly and spraying beer throughout the bar, half time couldn't come soon enough. Before the start of the second half the Welsh manager Robert Page made a few changes which turned the game around, Wales played much better in the second half and were awarded a penalty in the 79th minute. Up stepped the Captain Gareth Bale to take the penalty. We all sat quietly as time stayed still. He took his time, took a deep breath, and hammered the ball into the net to tie the game 1-1. We erupted with joy, high fives, hugs, and, a few tears. The game ended a few minutes later, tied 1-1. We were exhausted and proud, it was a lifetime coming but worth the wait. The next two games versus Iran and England ended up being disappointing, we didn't get the results we needed and unfortunately we did not qualify for the knockout stages, but the rest of the world were able to see our country, our passion, and our flag at the World Cup finals in Qatar in 2022.

Who says dreams can't come true?

YMA O HYD!

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View from Chepstow Castle; photo by Diane Jeffer 2019