



Ionawr/Chwefror/Mawrth 2019

Second Edition – 1.29.19

January/February/March 2019

## Upcoming Events – Mark Your Calendar!

**Gymanfa Ganu** (Singing Festival) – article on page 4

- **Saturday, February 9, 2pm at Grace Lutheran Church**  
22975 24th Ave S, Des Moines, WA 98198

### Annual St. David's Day Celebration

- **Saturday, March 2, 2pm at St. Andrew's Church**  
111 NE 80<sup>th</sup> St., Seattle, WA 98122

### South Sound Night Out of Hwyl

**RSVP required** by noon of day of event to 360-793-7256, southsound@pugetsoundwelsh.org, or via Facebook event

- **Sunday, February 17, 6pm at Elmer's Restaurant**  
7427 S Hosmer St, Tacoma, WA 98408
- **Sunday, March 10, 6pm New Location/Details!**  
This will be a Welsh Theme Potluck with cawl, bread & salad provided. 1730 Melinda Ct. NE, Olympia, WA 98516
- **Sunday, April 14, 6pm at Black Bear Diner\***  
10115 S Tacoma Way, Lakewood, WA 98499 (\*at the intersection of I-5 and Hwy 512 behind the Great American Casino

## PSWA Board Members & Elected Officers

- Mary Lynne Evans, President  
*President@PugetSoundWelsh.org* | 206-525-5864
- Laura Lovell, Vice President  
*Board@PugetSoundWelsh.org*
- Karyn Davies, Secretary/Events/South Sound Night Out  
*Southsound@pugetsoundwelsh.org*  
*Events@pugetsoundwelsh.org*
- Ellen Webber, Treasurer/Membership Secretary  
*Membership@PugetSoundWelsh.org*
- Gerri Parry, Member at Large  
*Webmaster@PugetSoundWelsh.org*
- Alan Upshall, Archivist  
*Archives@PugetSoundWelsh.org*
- Joel Ware IV, Member at Large  
*Board@PugetSoundWelsh.org*
- Maryanne Dehner, Newsletter  
*Newsletter@PugetSoundWelsh.org*  
*We welcome your contribution of relevant articles, announcements, news, events and photos. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: MARCH 13*

## St. David's Day Celebration



The Puget Sound Welsh Association will soon celebrate St. David's Day. Dewi Sant (Saint David) is the patron saint of Wales, recognized by people affiliated with Wales, by birth, family, marriage, heart or head. The Welsh, whether far flung as immigrants or situated in the homeland of Wales, gather to sing and celebrate Dewi Sant around March 1 of each year. Historically, St. David, (c500-c589?) is recognized as the

Welsh bishop of Mynyw (now St. David's) during the 6<sup>th</sup> Century. He was considered a missionary bishop by the church and founder of many monasteries. His dying words are often quoted: "Be joyful, keep the faith, and do the little things."

The PSWA will meet at St. Andrew's Church in Seattle on March 2 for a musical celebration of the good saint. A Te Bach (small tea) will follow. We hope to see many members of PSWA there. We gratefully accept your donations of cookies and sweets and especially appreciate your willing hands with setup and clean up. Set up tasks: donate, arrange and place flowers, set up Te tables, help direct guests. Clean up: pick up hall after Te Bach and return kitchen and hall to sparkling condition. Please contact Mary Lynne to volunteer or contribute.



It's time again for the popular PSWA Limerick contest! This year's starting lines were submitted by last year's winners:

- *Ten Welshmen traveling to Spain*
- *There once was a Bard without talent*
- *A trainload of Welshmen from Bangor*

Submit your entries to Ellen Webber with both your real name and a bardic name that will be used when submitting the entries to our impartial judge. If you submit multiple entries, please use the same bardic name for each one. **The deadline is February 15**, with the winners announced at the St. David's Day celebration.

## Letter from the President

Blwyddyn Newydd Dda, Happy New Year, Dear Members,



Before we look ahead to 2019, a quick look back at 2018. The Association was saddened to note the passing of Elizabeth Menzel, one of our long-time members. She attended many of our events and graced us with her sparkling smile. We were honored to have been asked to have a small part in her memorial service. Thank you to Alan Upshall for giving the Lord's Prayer in Welsh and to Nerys Jones for several vocal selections. It is always a pleasure to listen to Nerys.

We hosted a St. David's Day in 2018, participated in Black Diamond's Welsh Days, held a July picnic, had a booth at the Highlands Games, travelled to Vancouver, BC to see their Mari Lwyd, held our own Mari Lwyd construction party, and a Mari Lwyd/Wassailing Christmas party. South Sound group has held numerous get togethers including their own picnic, and a Christmas party complete with Santa. The Welsh Women have also held numerous events. It has been a full year. The Association has more robust coffers than before, and we have had more attendance at our events. I wish to thank everyone who has participated in so many ways. It is always heartening to be with this group which may break out into song at any moment.

To kick off the 2019 winter season, we support Grace Lutheran Church's Gymanfa Ganu, produced by Phil Wilkerson, and led by Nerys Jones, on February 9. (*see article for details*) Though not a PSWA event, Phil and his musicians and helpers bring all the warmth and spirit of a true Gymanfa to their program. Their Te Bach (small tea) afterwards is totally amazing. We encourage your attendance and welcome your donations.

We will hold our traditional St. David's Day celebration on Saturday, March 2 in Seattle. (Don't forget the crazy limerick contest held as part of St. David's Day. (*see article for details*)) We have a great line up of performers for you. We need your limerick entries, your donations of cookies and other sweets, your skills in putting flowers in vases, selling raffle tickets, being at the door to welcome folks, accompanying our congregational singing, your voices, and of course, most important, lending your hands and your time to help us clean up. This one is really important and easy too, excuse the pun, brush off. Please consider coming a little early and staying a few minutes later to assist our stalwart board. Please call me if you are willing to help out in these ways and others. Also, I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

Wela I chi! See you soon, Mary Lynne Evans, President

## Our International Mari Lwyd Expedition

By Laura Lovell

Back in November, Mary Lynne and I embarked on a trip to Vancouver, BC to attend the annual holiday party of the Vancouver Welsh Society and to check out their Mari Lwyd, making her first appearance to the membership.

We learned a lot. The first thing is that you CAN'T go to the duty-free shop until you are LEAVING Canada. We had to go through customs twice! However, we arrived in our B&B in good spirits and settled in for a quiet evening. We learned that our Google Maps app didn't work in Canada, and promptly got lost on the way to the party the next day, driving to the outskirts of downtown Vancouver, before in desperation we called the wonderful Antone Minard (more about him later) who patiently coached us to the Welsh society headquarters. The Society has a CLUBHOUSE. It is a beautiful social hall, with a bar, good beer on tap, small kitchen, and a piano in good tune. In short, everything you really need to have a party. Though Mary Lynne had met a lot of the people previously, but they were new to me. The wonderful preserver of our alleged sanity, Antone Minard, is the leader and teacher for the Welsh language learners' group, which seems quite large and



enthusiastic. They were the backbone of the Mari Lwyd team. And what a fine back-and-forth rhyming badinage we heard between those that wanted to get in and those that wanted to keep them out! Most of this was in Welsh, but translations were provided. Oh, and they have a REAL HORSE SKULL, which is both very cool and a little creepy. I met

Ruth Baldwin, a language learner, who was a strong member of the "resistance" force to keep the Mari out. I also met David Lewellyn Williams, past president of the society, who noticed from across the room that I could sing the Welsh words to the hymns. I was seriously chuffed.

Anton told us that when the Mari Lwyd idea was first pitched to the club there was resistance from some native Welsh members, because they had never heard of it in their part of Wales, but that some of these people had come to him afterwards and said they had enjoyed and appreciated it.

Steve Crowley from Newfoundland who wore the Mari Lwyd costume was also the hero that prepared the Mari skull – a long process involving something called an "acid bath". He told us he had grown up with the Mari Lwyd tradition, but the Mari in his town had been made of wood, which made a very loud snapping sound when the jaws were worked. He also told us something about mumming at Christmastime, which was fun to hear about and imagine doing.

The next day, we gawped in astonishment at the strange cutting-edge-fashion available in downtown Vancouver, but returned to Seattle (stopping, of course at the duty-free on the way) feeling like we had a fine bit of fun and we will be back!

## Christmas Party 2018

By Mary Lynne Evans

On a chilly Saturday in December, thirty-seven people (from Vancouver to Olympia) gathered at Mary Lynne's house, ostensibly to celebrate Christmas and the tradition of wassailing. But soon after the guests had arrived, the doorbell rang yet again. A rowdy group of ruffians demanded to be let in and given wassail and beer. The group was led by a rather crazed Laura Lovell, (PSWA Vice President) and followed by Ellen Webber, (our Treasurer) a dragon sitting on her hand, Owain Weinert, tall, formidable and deep voiced, and Margie Hunt, who was not to be trifled with. The most frightening aspect of the whole group was the horse—a skull on a pole, its body clad in a white sheet. Christmas balls sparkled as eyes, its long, white mane was bedecked with ribbons, bells and flowers. It stood about eight-feet tall, and was quite frankly, a little scary. "A Mari Lwyd!" someone gasped.



Ellen, Owain, Laura, Mari, Margie

The Lwyd group pushed at the door, singing in Welsh, demanding entry, they whined about injuring their shins on the stile and wondered where the wassail was. The stalwart people inside the house, vigorously recited in English the reasons why they weren't going to let the horse group in. A rhyming contest ensued. Finally, the tense standoff was resolved when the horse group out-rhymed the insider group and tumbled into the house.

The horse with its googley eyes peered at the guests, sat next to several good-looking ladies, rested its heavy head on someone's shoulder, stole guest's drink, and generally caused mayhem, wordlessly. Cameras were produced and the horse posed with guests. Then, without warning, the horse disappeared.

The party however, was energized, and people were hungry. A wassail bowl graced the scene, and the table was laden with food. One of the most appreciated dishes was a delicious authentic cawl (stew). Desserts, wassail, and wine followed as guests chatted.

After dinner, everyone gathered around the piano in the living room. Guests were given music and lyrics for an ancient wassail song, thanking the apple tree for its bounty during the year, and asking for more next year. The melody had been retrieved from YouTube, but



Joy Rogers and Dody Foster

the four-part harmony was devised by one of the guests, Dody Foster, who also accompanied the group on the piano while Laura Lovell played the violin. The group sang a number of Welsh hymns and closed the singing by giving three cheers to the apple tree of old.

This was the inaugural Mari Lwyd enactment for the PSWA. After initially learning about the tradition at a presentation at the North American Festival of Wales in Toronto years ago, conducting research in Wales, consulting with Vancouver Welsh Society officers Antone Minard and Ruth Baldwin, and attending their Mari event with Laura Lovell, Mary Lynne was determined to bring Mari to PSWA.

The Mari Lwyd tradition is quite old, perhaps pre-Christian and later given a Christian veneer. According to one story, the Mari gave up its stable for Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. The Mari Lwyd, once almost wiped out in Wales, is being resurrected as a way of promoting Welsh pride. The tradition is mostly practiced in the central and southern parts of Wales – it was performed in Chepstow last year. Though some Welsh are not familiar with the tradition, others recalled seeing it as children. In Wales, Mari Lwyd are real horses' skulls, stripped and cleaned and mounted on a pole and the person underneath is camouflaged by a sheet so their face and body are never seen. The Mari is accompanied by an entourage of ne're-do-wells going house-to-house in an effort to acquire food and drink. Welsh homeowners let the Mari in, hoping to assure good luck visits for their families and crops.

The Puget Sound group needed a skull of some sort and real horse skulls are not easy to come by. Sian Thomas was contacted and graciously sent us a foam core kit. Joel and Kayla Ware, Gwen Weinert, Margie Hunt, Keith Artz, Laura Lovell, Jay Miller, and Mary Lynne assembled, glued and papier-mâché until a credible Mari emerged. The group also rehearsed songs, studied the tradition, and readied for the production.

It was not clear how the guests would react. We are happy to report the guests were enchanted. The party and the enactment were deemed a success! It took an entire Welsh community here and abroad to bring the production to Seattle. The Mari has been cleaned and mended, and put in a stall for the winter, awaiting the next appearance. The wassail bowl is washed and stored, and both the Seattle Welsh and the Vancouver Welsh seem to be moving into the new year. We are hoping for a fine apple harvest.



Mari and Keith Artz



## Diolch yn fawr iawn



A big THANK YOU to our friends at *The Welsh Society of Vancouver* for hosting our members and being a valuable resource, helping us start our own Mari Lwyd tradition.

# Diolch!

## Welsh Pen-pals

Mary Lynne continues to strengthen the link between PSWA and Wales....here is a recent email from the Chepstow group after hearing of our Mari Lwd:



*Hi all our lovely Welsh and American Mari Lwyd family.*

*This is fabulous. we are so very pleased to know that our festival has had such a positive influence and are really very impressed with your fine efforts. We will be using you photos and text to let all our followers know how important it is to keep our ancient traditions alive...All over the planet. We hear there is Welsh community in Australia and even in Brazil.*

*Please keep up the wonderful work and please keep in touch.*

*kindest regards*

*diolch n fair iawn iti*

*Mick, Tim and the whole crew.*

*Wassail !!!!*

please see our Welsh Border Morris Team

[www.thewidders.co.uk](http://www.thewidders.co.uk) [www.greenmanbackpackers.co.uk](http://www.greenmanbackpackers.co.uk) [www.chepstowwassailmari.co.uk](http://www.chepstowwassailmari.co.uk)

## Gymanfa Ganu & Tea Reception

By Karyn Davies

All are invited to participate in a *Gymanfa Ganu* at Grace Lutheran Church in Des Moines, WA, on Saturday, February 10, at 2pm in the Sanctuary. A *Gymanfa Ganu* (guh-man-vuh gan-ee) is a congregational hymn singing event where a conductor directs the audience singing in both Welsh and English (usually in four-part harmony, but hey, any singing is appreciated!).

No longer associated with a particular denomination, nor with solely sacred songs, the *Gymanfa Ganu* is a unique Welsh custom dating back more than 150 years ago. This annual event at Grace Lutheran has been a showcase of amazing local talent with Nerys Jones (Director, Mezzo-Soprano, and Harpist), along with Annette Dennis (Soprano), Kim Cooney (Tenor), Ken Labertew (Baritone), Brian Soushek (Musician), and many more accomplished musicians and singers.

This event is free; however, your generous donations allow Grace Lutheran to provide this line up of high caliber artists to delight and entertain, a copy of music sheets to follow along during the congregational singing, and a splendid array of food and drink to satisfy your appetite – well worth a gift of \$10 or \$20 per adult for this program!

*Te bach* (small tea) follows the program (although the ladies at Grace Lutheran Church do more than just a "small" tea!) The event is family-friendly for older children, however, child care for little ones is not offered.

\*This is not a PSWA event, although we help with publicity and we are graciously invited to set up display tables and sales items. Please contact Phil Wilkinson at: [bratsche52@yahoo.com](mailto:bratsche52@yahoo.com) for more information.





## Our Speed Map of Wales Has a New Home

By Alan Upshall

Last year the Board of Trustees decided that our valuable Speed map of Wales should be donated to the Great Plains Welsh Heritage Center in Wymore, Nebraska where it could be preserved and available for display on a permanent basis. The Welsh Heritage Center and Museum houses all of the PSWA archives, all of which are also located on line at [www.PeoplesCollection.Wales](http://www.PeoplesCollection.Wales).



Staff at the Heritage Center

The map was sent last October, and the Heritage Center was absolutely delighted to receive our gift. Gwenith Closs-Colgrove, the President of the Center, responded via email in November:

*'I was at the museum last week and the map has arrived!!! We are very excited to unpack and view this wonderful addition to our Archive. I will be sending you a picture of the dedication. Our thanks to you and your organization for gifting this wonderful part of Welsh history to the Great Plains Welsh Heritage Centre.'*

A subsequent email carried this photograph and this message:

*'Attached is a picture we took when we appreciatively received this one-of-a kind relic. I am planning on putting in an article about your gift in the Ninnau. We cannot thank you enough for gifting this treasure to our project. It justly deserves a prominent place of display in our museum'.*

The map will be displayed and the donation from the Puget Sound Welsh Association will be recognized in the display details.

With regards to other archive materials, many new items have been deposited on the People's Collection Wales web site: photographs from the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu held in Bellevue in 1994; newspaper items researched by Joanne Matsamura, relating to St. David's Day celebrations from 1900 to 1908; items publicizing and describing the North American Eisteddfod held in Seattle in 1890 (also researched by Joanne); contributions to a *noson lawen* (party with music) held in 1987 and separately stories and music from the St. David's Day celebrations held that year. Great thanks are due to Joanne Matsamura for researching and passing on her historical findings about past St. David's Day activities in Seattle.

As ever, we would be delighted to receive any materials relating to Welsh activities in the region so that we can accurately record the Welsh Contribution to the development of the Pacific Northwest. Please contact me at [Archives@PugetSoundWelsh.org](mailto:Archives@PugetSoundWelsh.org).

## Donated Speed Map of Wales



*\*An original Speed map of Wales, dated 1610. This copy of a Wales Speed Map was given to the Puget Sound Welsh Association in circa 1985 by Mr. Trevor Thomas, a native of Wales living in Seattle. It has been examined by Mr. Brendan Moss, Vancouver, B.C. who confirms that the map is original and colored, but not unique, there are a number in existence. It is in good condition but has some flaws, especially a thin patch on the left page and some seam tears. The rear of the map carries historical information about Wales that is difficult to read without magnification. The recommendation was that normal care would be sufficient for display, the value (which was around \$300 in 1986) was not enough to warrant high level conservation. In 2018, the map was donated to the Welsh Heritage Project of Wymore Nebraska for their display, with recognition of its provenance. Date of production is an estimate*

\*Source: [www.peoplescollection.wales/items/903006](http://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/903006)



**North American Festival of Wales**  
*Gŵyl Cymru Gogledd America*  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
August 29–September 1, 2019

For more info: [wggaw.org](http://wggaw.org)

## Things to do checklist...

- ☐ Renew my membership
- ☐ Add events to my calendar
- ☐ Write and submit limericks
- ☐ Contact Mary Lynne to volunteer
- ☐ Enjoy a lovely cuppa!



## PSWA Annual Membership Renewal

Annual membership renewals are now due. Your contributions entitle you to a subscription to *Y Ddolen*, our wonderful quarterly newsletter, and provide vital support for our St. David's Day celebration and other activities through the year. In addition to our sponsored events, the Puget Sound Welsh Association acts as a valuable resource for anyone interested in Welsh culture, language, and music. Questions? Contact Ellen Webber.

### Annual 2019 Memberships/Fees

- ☐ Individual (\$10) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Family/Couple (\$15) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Y Ddolen mailed to you (\$5) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Life (\$100) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Overseas Annual Postage (\$50) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Overseas Life (\$150) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Membership is annual  
from Jan 1 through Dec 31  
Thank you for your prompt renewal!

### Donations

- ☐ General Fund Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Memorial Scholarship \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Memorial Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_ In Memory of (Name): \_\_\_\_\_

### Retail Products – \*prices include shipping/postage

- ☐ **PSWA T-Shirts** Total number of shirts \_\_\_\_ x \$18 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\$18\* each. Indicate how many of each size and color:  
Steel Green: \_\_\_\_ LG \_\_\_\_ XL  
Dark Green: \_\_\_\_ SM \_\_\_\_ MED \_\_\_\_ LG \_\_\_\_ XL \_\_\_\_ 2XL \_\_\_\_ 3XL
- ☐ **Welsh Music CD** Total number of CDs \_\_\_\_ x \$15 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*Y Ddraig Goch*, Traditional Welsh Folk music of Wales: \$15\* each

### Make check payable to PSWA

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Information (please print):

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



PSWA is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization 501(c)(3). Contributions may be tax-deductible.  
Please mail this form with payment to: **PSWA, PO Box 27725, Seattle, WA 98165**



Y Ddolen | Puget Sound Welsh Association  
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### Join the PSWA Facebook Group!

Stay in touch with other members across the Puget Sound and Washington state, keep up to date with events and activities, and post relevant events/information to the discussion forum.  
[www.facebook.com/groups/pugetsoundwelsh](http://www.facebook.com/groups/pugetsoundwelsh)

Reminder! If you haven't already done so,  
please renew your membership now.

