

Y Bwletin

Gwasg y Nant - Valley Press

Gaeaf 2017 - Winter 2017



www.ottawawelsh.com

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Editor's comment: many thanks to all the contributors to this edition of Y Bwletin. If you have news or contributions to make to the next newsletter, please contact:

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Y Gymdeithas ar y We / The Society on the Net:

www.ottawawelsh.com



Ottawa Welsh Society/Cymdeithas Cymry Ottawa

Check out our web site and our Facebook page!

Gwledd Dydd Gwyl Dewi Sant/ St. David's Day Banquet

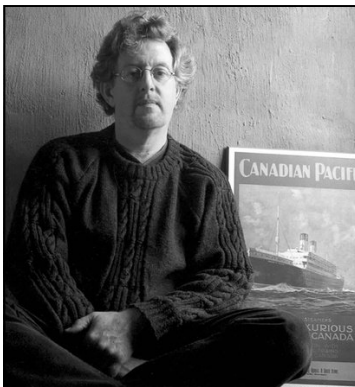
Saturday, February 25, 2017

Following yet another highly successful event last year, we are very fortunate to again have the pleasure of holding our Gwledd Dydd Gwyl Dewi Sant/ St David's Day Banquet in the gracious surroundings of the Royal Ottawa Golf Club. We all really appreciate the ease of access, excellent parking and welcoming reception rooms which make the Golf Club an ideal venue for our event, year after year.

Please join us to honour our patron saint while enjoying good fellowship, excellent food, many witty comments by our Master of Ceremonies, John Price, a challenging quiz about things Welsh, a formal address and musical entertainment- how can you resist!

We will have the pleasure of an address by Phil Jenkins, well known local author, journalist and historian. Phil spent much of his youth in Britain before moving to Ottawa in the late 1970's. Since then he has worked as a journalist for many publications and has written a number of books including *Fields of Vision: A Journey to Canada's Family Farms*; *An Acre of Time*, a history, geological, anthropological, personal, political, botanical – of an acre of land in downtown Ottawa now known as Le Breton Flats; *River Song: Sailing the History of the St. Lawrence River*; *Beneath My Feet*, the memoir of George Mercer Dawson, a Canadian natural scientist; *The Library Book: An overdue history of the Ottawa Public Library*; and *A Better Heart*, the history of the University of Ottawa Heart Institute. In addition to this impressive list of accomplishments, he performs regularly as a singer/songwriter around town and has conducted various writing workshops.

You can be sure that Phil will have a wealth of interesting information to impart to us.



Phil Jenkins, author

This will be followed by a short recital by Ania Hejnar, a young soprano soloist with a glorious voice. She will be accompanied by well known Ottawa accompanist, Judy Ginsburg. Ania has an impressive list of musical achievements including finalist in the prestigious **Brian Law Opera Competition**, Ottawa, in 2013 and 2015. She has appeared in concerts, operas and theatrical productions in Toronto, New York and Ottawa.

Time: Reception 11:30 am - 12:20 pm Lunch Banquet 12:30 pm

Venue: The Royal Ottawa Golf Club 1405 Aylmer Road, Gatineau, Quebec, J9H 7L2

Menu: This year we are offering a choice of chicken or vegetarian meal.

Cost: Early bird tickets \$55 each, deadline **February 11**, \$60 each thereafter.

Dress code: Business casual - no jeans or cargo pants.

Please complete the attached reservation form and return to Marilyn Jenkins before February 11th to benefit from the early bird price and preferred seating.



Ania Hejnar, soprano

- Alison Lawson

Upcoming Events

February 25	Luncheon (see p. 2)
February 26	Gymanfa Ganu (see p. 3)
March 1	Reception at BHC (see p. 3)
May (TBD)	AGM

St. David's Day Gymanfa Ganu

Once again the Ottawa Welsh Society is holding a St. David's Day Gymanfa Ganu at Westminster Presbyterian Church. This year, the event will be held ahead of St. David's Day, on **Sunday, February 26** at 3 p.m.

The Executive have invited Marilyn Jenkins to conduct the Gymanfa. Marilyn conducted the Ottawa Welsh Choral Society for 24 years, leading it to success in the Kiwanis Music Festival and on a well-received tour of Wales in 1990, and on many other adventures. She also taught music to intermediate level students for 33 years, before retiring to pursue other interests more fully. These interests include ASL, voice training, quilting and dressage. She looks forward to encouraging the congregation to sing with gusto and sensitivity.

Alan Thomas, who is featured elsewhere in this *Bwletin*, will once again be at the organ, supporting the singing with his inimitable accompaniments. He will also be leading the Côr Alltudion Westminster, in a an arrangement of the beloved hymn, *Llef*.

In addition, a ladies group, organized by Alison Lawson and Jennifer Davis, is preparing a three part song called *Cenwch y Clychau I Dewi*.

Following is the list of hymns for the Gymanfa. The codes refer to which verses will be sung in Welsh (W) and English (E). (Note: all is subject to change, but unlikely to.)

40	Cwm Rhondda	English
30	Sanctus	1W2E3E
83	Llangloffan	1W2E3E
44	Llanfair	1W1E2E
5	Joanna	1W1E2E3W
96	Gwahoddiad	1W2W1E
52	Sirioldeb	1W1E2E
60	Blodwen	1W1E2E
62	Mae d'eisiau	1W1E2E2W
34	Diolch i Ti	1W2W1E2E
73	Builth	1W1E2E3E
89	Rhys	1W1E2E4E
66	Calon Lan	1W2W1E2E
75	Blaenwern	1W2E3E

St. David's Day Reception

March 1, 2017

Once again the Ottawa Welsh Society has reserved the British High Commission for a reception on St. David's Day.

The reception will begin at 5:30 p.m. and end at 7:30. There will be a cash bar and free munchies.

The British High Commission will be providing a speaker for the occasion.

Please note that you must register your name on our list to be granted entrance at the BHC. It is a diplomatic facility and security measures are in place. Also, there is an upper limit to the number of guests permitted to attend.

If you intend to attend, please contact President John Price at

john.price@sympatico.ca

or at phone number 613-724-3846.

We look forward to seeing many of you out to celebrate.



Cornel dysgu Cymraeg

Two areas that English speakers find Welsh difficult are the alphabet {y Wyddor} and mutations {treigladau}. This time we'll spend some time on Y Wyddor and next time we'll start on Treigladau.

Y Wyddor - Alphabet

The Welsh alphabet has 28 letters. Most are the same as in English but there are eight extra ones and six from the English alphabet that are not used in Welsh.

Here are the additional letters.

- ch chwaer – sister – ch as in the Scottish loch
- dd ddoe -yesterday – sounds like a soft th as in those or they
- ff ffrind – friend – a hard f as in friend
- ng cyngor – advice – as the ng in singing
- ll this one is unique and just must be practiced as in Llandudno and Llanelli
- ph Pharo – Pharo just as in English
- rh Rhaeadr – waterfall – no English equivalent – a hard r sound followed by the h
- th theatr – theater – a hard th as in thistle
- Y Wyddor does not have the English letters j k q v x and z

If you are able to master these sounds Welsh pronunciation is actually quite simple as the language is phonetic – unlike English!

- John Williams

Sports

Wales Six Nations 2017 Fixtures

Wales will be playing in the “world’s greatest rugby tournament”, from February 5 to March 18, 2017.

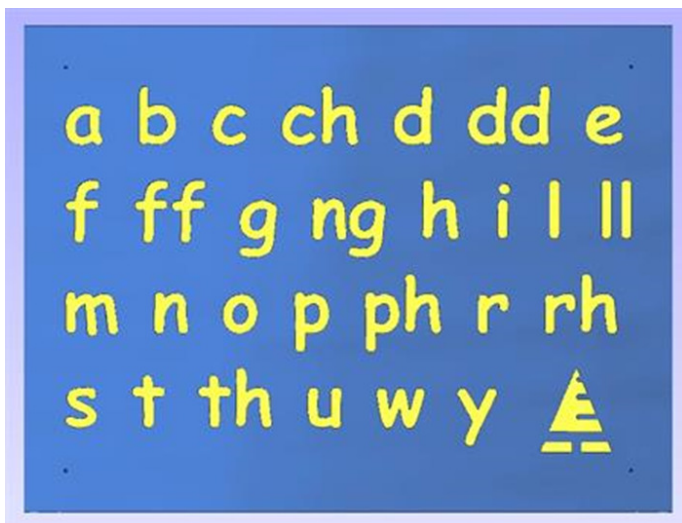
Wales will play two home matches (vs England and Ireland) and three away matches (vs Italy, Scotland and France) in the 2017 Six Nations Championship.

With three wins, one draw and one loss, Wales ended the 2016 Six Nations Championship as runners-up.

For game dates and times and more information, please go to

<http://www.six-nations-guide.co.uk/2017/wales-fixtures.html>

- Information courtesy of Geraint Lewis and the Six Nations Guide.



Ontario Welsh Festival

April 21-23, 2017

Remember how much fun you had when you attended the Ontario Welsh Festival in Ottawa last year? You are sure to have as much fun when you attend the 2017 Festival in Stratford this April! This will be the 56th Ontario Welsh Festival and planning is well underway.

Come and meet your Welsh friends from across Canada and the USA. You will be able to enjoy all your favourite events such as a welcome tea with harp entertainment on Friday afternoon and a traditional noson lawen with loads of talented participants on Friday evening, followed by informal hymn singing. A seminar on Saturday afternoon will feature author Barrie Doyle on the history, legend and the art of storytelling, focusing on how researching the history and legends of Wales are used to bring the nation and its people to life.

Saturday evening there will be a banquet with a presentation of the annual Gold Award, the grand concert, followed by a concert afterglow. On Sunday morning and afternoon there will be two glorious hymn singing sessions.

The Festival headquarters, where many of the activities will take place, is the Arden Park Hotel, where previous Welsh Festivals have been held. The Saturday night concert and the two Gymanfa sessions on Sunday will take place at Avondale United Church, a 5 minute car drive from Arden Park with ample parking spots.

The Arden Park Hotel is offering a very favourable room rate of \$139 per night. Be sure to book early! This rate ends on March 21, 2017.

Call the hotel at: 1800-780-7234 or 519-275-2936 and remember to mention that you are booking for the Ontario Welsh Festival.



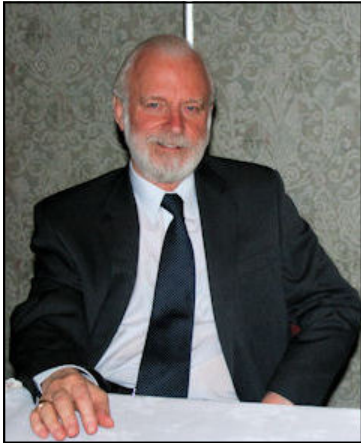
The Festival welcomes to the Gala Concert, members of the renowned Llanddarog and District Choir from Carmarthenshire as its featured guests. The choir was initially formed by Meinir Richards as a ladies party to compete in the folk song competition in the Cerdd Dant Festival in Carmarthen in 2001. But the party soon evolved into a mixed choir, and there are now more than fifty members. They have competed a number of times in the National Eisteddfod and won the mixed choir competition for 45+ members three years in succession between 2010 and 2012. You can listen to this wonderful choir on Youtube at

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=bN4qaJbPCwg>

Please join us - we look forward to welcoming you!

- Alison Lawson & Mairwen Thornley

Alan Thomas in Retirement



Alan Thomas 2015

Alan Thomas is somewhat of a fixture in the Ottawa Welsh Society. On August 29, 2016, he retired from his position as organist/choir director of Westminster Presbyterian Church. We thought it would be good to know what's next and how he feels looking back on his career in church music.

What many of us may not realize is that it was almost a flip of the coin whether Alan would pursue music studies or become a linguist. In a sense, he did both, but the British scholarship committee insisted he choose only one of his interests to follow for his degree; he chose music. His other choices had been French and Spanish, which he continued to study on his own, and later in life, he added Greek and Hebrew, thus enabling a study of the Bible in the original languages.

Alan began his performing career at a young age. He was a choirboy first, and began learning to play the organ for at age 13. Within a few years, his teacher asked him to play at services in the local church.

As a student at Manchester University, he received one-to-one instruction from a German concert pianist, and from other professors in history, harmony, counterpoint, etc. During this time, he was employed by Granada Television to play for live television; a somewhat nerve-racking experience, but one that led to great comfort in playing with little advance notice.

His first post as a musician was actually as a teacher, head of music at a boys grammar school. He was there for several years, then a chance meeting in 1970 with the Headmaster of Ashbury College in Ottawa led, a few years later, to a job at the college, as a music teacher and Housemaster to the

students. Here he made lifelong friends with students from places like Mexico, who invited him to visit, where he could use his fluent Spanish. Alan was also responsible for starting the school band and choir.

While at Ashbury, Alan became involved with CAMMAC's *Come Sing Messiah*, which he continues to perform every December. Initially, he played the organ with the Divertimento Orchestra, but later, the small orchestra was replaced by a group of hired musicians. Alan's role has grown as he has been conducting three Saturday morning rehearsals for the chorus for some years now. He laughs as he confides that the performance is actually easier than the rehearsal.

Alan retired from Ashbury to be a full-time musician in 1984. He loves to perform. As he puts it he is "very comfortable on his hind legs" in front of an audience. He confessed that his favourite times with the church choir were the preparations for and the performing of special music for Christmas, Easter and the annual Church Choir concert, which we have all come to enjoy.

For three years, Alan was the director of the Parkdale Orchestra. The year following, he played the Brandenburg Concerto with the same orchestra, sharing the stage with Karen Donnelly, who played the Haydn Trumpet Concerto. As with many performances, the nine months preparation led to a single 20 minute performance!

Alan's initial involvement with the Ottawa Welsh Society came when Roy Morris asked him to play the organ for the North American Festival of Wales, held in Ottawa in 2000. Since then he has played at least ten national Gymanfa sessions and enjoyed every one of them. Alan has also contributed to the local Gymanfa ganu programs and the provincial Ontario Welsh Festivals since 2000. But that is not the end of it. Alan also acts as MC for Noson lawen get-togethers, director of the pick-up choir, known as Côr Alltudion Westminster, and conductor of Gymanfa programs here in Ottawa. His wit and laid-back attitude are much enjoyed.

Alan grew up speaking English, in Neath. He had to study Welsh in school, and his elder relatives spoke Welsh fluently. He was pleasantly surprised, on a recent visit home, when he observed a group of school-age children chattering happily in Welsh. That would never have happened in his day. It is a clear sign of the resurgence of the language in the more English parts of Wales.

Looking back on his career, Alan is happy with the way things unfolded. He can't think of anything he would change.

So what's next? Alan has few living relatives left; most notably a brother who is a retired architect and very successful photographer, living in Durham. Alan doesn't have a lot on his "bucket list", but he did come up with a few things he'd like to do. His father lived in India for six years prior to meeting and marrying, so Alan has long wanted to visit India. He has done a lot of travelling, including several trips to Russia, skiing in Switzerland and Austria, one trip to China, South America, where he went on a canoe trip of the Amazon which resulted in malaria and dysentery! He is somewhat discouraged by the hassles of modern day travel, especially all the security measures, but still hopes to do more travelling.

Another item that could be considered on his bucket list is the desire to conduct an orchestra again. He enjoyed very much his tenure as conductor of the Parkdale Orchestra. "It's the ultimate power trip, you stand there with sixty people or whatever and boom!" (*conducting a downbeat*)

Alan is currently working with the Unitarian House Choir, which consists mostly of seniors. This group performs two concerts per year. In 2017, their first concert, in March, will be celebrating Canada's sesquicentennial by featuring Canadian folk songs. The second, in June is as yet undecided.

The most recent addition to Alan's repertoire is presenting a series of ten lectures on "Music and Worship Over the Centuries" for the Ottawa School of Theology and Spirituality, on Monday nights. This is run by a Dominican group and has university status. The first session covered Jewish traditions, and the second, on January 16 included Gregorian and Anglican chant. He is finding the research interesting and challenging, but most enjoyable.

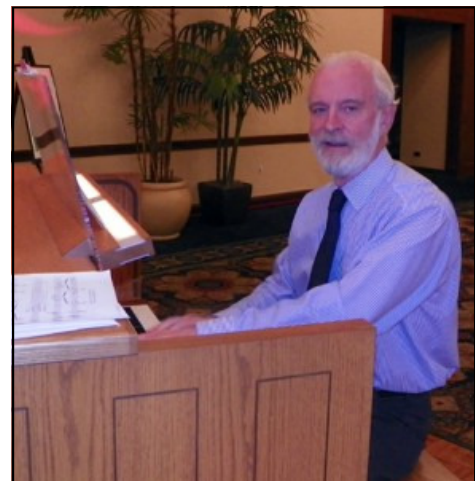
Alan continues to work with CAMMAC on the annual *Come Sing Messiah* and as accompanist to the Capital City Chorus, both of which he enjoys immensely. He might have been a linguist, but his decision to become a musician has led to a lifelong passion for performing that will continue for years to come.

We wish Alan all the best in his "retirement" and look forward to many more years of his performances.

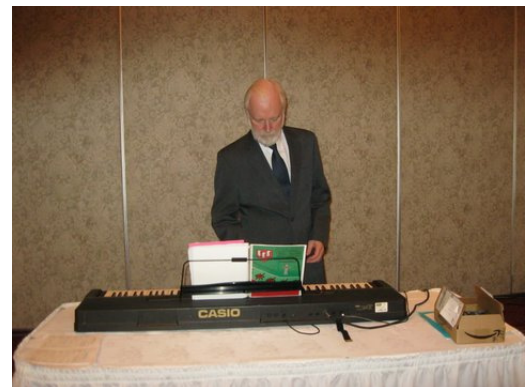
Marilyn Jenkins met with Alan in January at Westminster Presbyterian Church where he has the title of Organist Emeritus, which entitles him to some privileges. He also goes regularly with the minister to Amica at Westboro Park, where he plays for a short worship service.



Alan accompanying a soloist at an OWS Noson Lawen



At the organ for the CAMMAC *Come Sing Messiah*



Making sure everything is ready at the Ontario Welsh Festival

Yn ddiweddar, mi gefais y ffrainc o gyfieithu dyddiadur John Jones, (taid John Smith o St. Catherine's, Ontario) yn disgrifio ei daith i Ganada a'r Unol Daleithiau yn 1912...

Recently, I had the privilege of translating the (Welsh) journal of John Jones (grandfather of John Smith, of St. Catherine's, Ontario). It describes his working trip to places in Canada and The United States in 1912. His character shines through as a kind, humorous, hard-working and adventurous farm labourer.

Here is an excerpt, (including some of my annotations in parentheses) with the kind permission of his grandson, who also provided the photograph. – Olive Phillips, Renfrew Ontario 2016

Dyddiadur Taid (Grandpa's Journal)

1912

Two old boys going to Canada and America from Rhostryfan, namely Hugh (of) New Houses and myself, from Erw Farm, Rhostryfan.

Starting for Canada: we were setting out from Caernarfon for Liverpool. Reaching Liverpool a little before 6 p.m. and Gomer Roberts was waiting for us in the station, and away we went with him to a lodging-house till morning.

Had a fine supper and (then) to bed. But after we put out the light, (I) started to scratch and re-lit the light. What was there was a bed-bug – but anyhow (= never mind that.)

Gomer came to escort us to the steamer- the "Empress of Britain". Then, after we went onto the steamer (which was like a rather large cave) and Hugh and I were so afraid of getting sick, and while Hugh and I were speaking Welsh, here one of the men who were on the ship (= one of the crew) asked me whether we were Welshmen.

"Well, yes," we told him.

"Where are you from?" he said.

"From Rhostryfan."

"Where do you intend going?"

"To Winnipeg, Manitoba," said we; "have you been used to travelling this ocean?"

"Yes," said he; "I've crossed this old ocean over 23 times."

"Well," said I, "I'd like to ask you one thing. What's the best thing for us to do to avoid (sea-)sickness?"

"Oh," said he, "if you'll listen to my advice, the best thing for you to do is to avoid eating foolishly (i.e. overmuch) for the first two days. They (or I) will carry everything to you, the first two days. Beware of getting sick, in order to spare (i.e. keep) your food (down?) for the rest of the voyage."

But Hugh ate everything, every meal, because the food was good. But in about two days, there was old Hugh, sick and throwing up, with me bringing him water; and Hugh feeling ill and asking me, "Am I about to die, old John? (= "John, old buddy?")"

"Don't think that; let's see Canada first, now that we've started out."

Well, next morning, we were in the middle of the icebergs, the mountains of ice, (like) those above the Titanic, that steamer which sank in 1911 (*1912). The next thing was to get the "cow-pog" (= "cowpox" = vaccination.) Then, practice with lifebelts and Hugh fearing the ship would sink.

"Don't be afraid; we're over half way, now. We'll get ashore alive, now (I said.)"

The first thing we saw next morning was Newfoundland, like an island at the mouth of the St. Lawrence River. Down that for many miles 'til we reached the City of Québec, and that was the end of the sea-voyage. It was a very large place, too, and away we went to the Customs to give an account of our possessions, before going to the train for Winnipeg - a journey of some four days and four nights, through the Province of Québec and into the Province of Ontario. Ontario is a very wooded province. I've heard about Canada-that it's a large country with very large things in it. That's quite true. Things were large in it. In the Province of Ontario, there were large, high trees, measuring about 3 yards across. A tunnel through them on the rail-road and a train going through them to make a short-cut towards Port William (and) Port Arthur.

We were in Port William on Whitsun Monday; it was very hot and Hugh and I were eating ice. Then, from there to Winnipeg. A large, clean city and streets as far as you could see, so flat it was, and the countryside so flat that you could see hundreds of miles ahead. And the first man we recognized was Bob, the old farm-hand of Erw, Rhostryfan, (who was) before me in

Erw. We had a short conversation with him. Then, starting from there to finish the journey to Waldron, Sask(atchewan,) a journey of 500 miles to the West, through flat, very fertile land, with everyone ploughing and planting the crops. We reached Waldron about 2 in the morning and waited in the station until daybreak. Then, in the morning, we asked about William Roberts, (some-)one from Pontnewydd, who was (= had been) in Canada, farming, for some time. "You'll find(??) the house," the station-master told us, "about a mile from the town of Waldron."

When we reached there, we had a very fine tea there. Then, Roberts told me that Guto (= Gruffudd) Williams, Pen Bryn, Rhostryfan, had made a place ready for me with Will H.

"I'll come with you there (this) afternoon with a 'buggy'," (said Roberts?)- and I agreed with him (i.e. W.H.) for 35 dollars the month. (To) start this afternoon. Walk(ing) there with everything.

Next morning (he) got us up at 4.30 a.m. Breakfast at 6. Then, to the Lot to plough till midday. Then, start after dinner until 9 p.m. At 10 p.m., - supper and to bed.

On Sunday, I went to look for a Welshman called O. Roberts; and he asked me where I was staying, and I said I was staying with W. H. since Friday.

"Well, my boy," (said he) "go from there for your life. You'll get nothing, working for him."

Well, Monday morning, here he was calling (us) for breakfast at 4.30a.m., and to the Lot to plough. And about 6 p.m., I asked Guto whether he would leave (work?) with me at 6 p.m., and he wouldn't.

But I did so at the Head (of the Lot?) and jumped on the back of one of the four horses and off I went, home. And I saw the Boss coming on the bronco and he asked me where I was going- that it was not 9 p.m., (and) that I should go back to plough.

"No," said I, "it's time to eat and I want food."

Guto came home about 9 30 p.m. and we went for supper about 9.30, and after supper, I said that I was going to leave him (i.e. the boss), and about 11 p.m., I went to get my things and away I went.

And as I was going towards the town of Waldron, I lost the way, and I was going in the direction of Bangor, instead of Waldron. And there (I put) the trunk and the suitcase down on the Prairie and I slept soundly until morning.

There was no hedge nor lane anywhere- only vast, flat countryside and all the huge machines around (me.)

Well, next afternoon, I started with W. Roberts, a man from Corwen; a very good place. (I was) with him for about seven months.....

Thereafter, John worked in various other places in Canada and The U.S.A. He was even able to visit his sister, in Montréal. Eventually, he returned safe and sound to Rhostryfan, Caernarvonshire.



Homage to Patagonia

This year, the Executive decided to try something different for our autumn event. We decided to focus on the Patagonian Welsh and the celebration of their 150 years in Patagonia.

The event was well-attended, with nearly 80 members and guests on hand to see the demonstrations of *tango dancing*, presented by local professional dancers, thanks to Pawl Birt. We were also treated to a lecture on the history of the Welsh in Patagonia, presented by our own Professor Pawl Birt, one of the world's leading experts on Patagonian Welsh. The final entertainment of the evening was the mini-concert, ably presented by Ellen MacIsaac with the Celtic Choir and Alan Thomas with the Côr Alltudion Westminster. Jennifer Davis and Alison Lawson brought a small ladies ensemble to sing a lovely ballad, called *Mimosa*, by Robat Arwyn, which tells the story of the Welsh leaving from Liverpool for Patagonia.

As always, there was plenty of food on hand, this time in the form of empanadas and little dessert cookies. Many thanks to Judith Winstanley, Patricia Pepper and their helpers for preparing the food for service, and to Alison Lawson for arranging the food. Once again, we thank Lezlie Wood for her contribution of coffee and tea to the proceedings. Thanks also to John Price and family, who took care of distributing the wine which was donated by the Argentinian embassy.

Thanks to David Jeanes and his crew for working tirelessly to get the hall ready for the evening. And finally, thanks to Ron Pepper for taking the photos for the *Bwletin*.



Clockwise from top left: Kitchen workers, Pawl Birt, Tango dancers, the crowd, Merched singers, John Price introducing Pawl.

Service of Lessons and Carols

On December 11, 2016 at 3:00 p.m., members of the Ottawa Welsh Society met to celebrate Advent with the annual Service of Lessons and Carols. There was a good representation from the membership and the singing was enthusiastic.

The worship was led by the Rev. Neil Wallace, retired pastor of Cityview United Church. Neil has been enthusiastically adopting the Welsh for some years, leading us for the Christmas and St. David's Day services.

Lessons were read variously in English, Welsh and French. There were some new readers this year, we are happy to report. It's always nice to get new people involved. Many thanks to all for their fine efforts!

Special music was provided in the form of two anthems/carols sung by the Côr Alltudion Westminster, under the leadership of Alan Thomas at the piano. This pick-up choir has been organized by Bob Price for several events, now. We are grateful for his constant desire to encourage the singing of Welsh music. Also providing a solo was tenor John Griffiths, a perennial favourite.

Once again, we must thank Lezlie Wood for providing the coffee and tea for the Te bach. Of course, there are plenty of members who assist with the provision of goodies to eat and with the clean-up, following the event. Thank you to all of you.

We look forward to seeing many of you out at our upcoming events.

- Marilyn Jenkins

St. David's Day Luncheon Reservation Form 2017

February 25, 2017 at the Royal Ottawa Golf Club, Aylmer, Qc

Note: Early bird deadline is (**received by**) February 11, 2017 with each meal costing \$55.

After the deadline, the meal cost will be \$60. **Reservations must be received by February 22.**

There are two choices for the meal; chicken and portabello stack (vegetarian).

Every effort will be made to seat you with your friends if your reservation is received by February 11, 2017.

Please complete a section for **each participant**.

Name _____

_____ Herb-crusted Chicken

_____ Portabello Stack (vegetarian)

Please list any special needs: _____

Please indicate any food allergies or sensitivities: _____

Name _____

_____ Herb-crusted Chicken

_____ Portabello Stack (vegetarian)

Please list any special needs: _____

Please indicate any food allergies or sensitivities: _____

Summary:

_____ chicken meals @ \$55 (early bird) _____ or \$60 **after February 11, 2017** _____

_____ vegetarian meals @ \$55 (early bird) _____ or \$60 **after February 11, 2017** _____

Total enclosed: _____

Friends with whom we would like to share a table:

Please send a cheque made out to the Ottawa Welsh Society

Completed forms may be mailed to:

Marilyn Jenkins, 267 McClellan Road, Nepean, ON K2H 8N7

Questions may be emailed to: marilyn.e.jenkins@sympatico.ca or phoned to 613-820-6687