

The Welsh Society of Western New England

Cymdeithas Cymreig Lloegr Newydd Gorllewino

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

UPCOMING EVENTS:

July - Welsh conversation group will meet online, page 2

July & Sept. - Online Genealogy, see page 2, & **Sept 12** - Genealogy Workshop (to be conf)

Sep. 18 - Owain Glyndwr NOSON LAWEN

Sat, Sep 26 - Welsh conversation Meet-up

Sat, Oct. 24 - Welsh conversation meet-up

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



How is everyone doing in quarantine? It has been a difficult and scary time for all of us. True heroes are health care workers, from janitors to doctors; supermarket and pharmacy workers, and restaurants that stayed open to provide take-out and delivery meals, and what about those teachers and parents dealing with on-line learning! The internet was invaluable for us all - from staying in touch with each other, digging deeper into family history, reading, video-conferencing, playing board games with distant family members etc.

For our Welsh Society, the internet was a terrific way to stay in touch: we set up a subscription

on Zoom, a video conferencing app, for a weekly Welsh conversation group, and a weekly Welsh Genealogy session, which we enjoyed very much. For the weekly genealogy sessions we set ourselves research goals to help break down some genealogy brick walls, and a particular high spot was

UPDATES TO OUR EVENT CALENDAR FOR 2020

- **AUGUST 29, 2020:** Côt Y Penrhyn Concert - **postponed to August 27, 2022.** We will fortunately have another opportunity for us to host them here, in West Hartford.
- **RUGBY TRIP, 2021** to Wales and Scotland - **postponed to 2022**
We are hoping to reschedule for February 2022. As locations are closed, we are unable to plan for this trip. Also, our leader Mark needs time to travel to Wales to see his mum once the quarantine is over.
- **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!

OWAIN GLYNDWR - NOSON LAWEN

Save the date: Friday, September 18th, 2020, 5PM-8PM

We are excited to (potentially) hold our Third Annual Noson Lawen (literal translation: *Happy Evening*). Noson Lawen has its roots in rural Wales, and just like our Welsh families before us (and in lieu of a parlor where our Welsh ancestors would have gathered to entertain themselves.) LOCATION TO BE DETERMINED, with Welsh flag "flying" and voices ready. We will share Welsh fables, poetry, readings, singing, and music in both Welsh and English, while having a meal and drinks together! Dinner from the menu at 5pm.

PLEASE WATCH THIS SPACE/FB page and Website for updates to this event.

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

WHAT'S WSWNE BEEN UP TO?

ST. DAVID'S DAY LUNCHEON

Saint David's Day was celebrated March 7th at The Nutmeg Restaurant in East Windsor, CT. The well attended event was a chance to catch up with old friends and to get to know some of our new members. During the cocktail hour



we were treated to the recordings of the Welsh male voice choir, Côr Y Penrhyn from Bethesda, Gwynedd, who were slated to present a concert in West Hartford on August 29th. Many gathered around a large map of Wales to find and pinpoint their Welsh heritage. Members Beth and Ed Brown dressed in historic Welsh garb, and people were able to have their picture taken with Beth and Ed, who later explained their clothing to the group.

After a delicious meal and conversation, there was a drawing for three prizes. Third prize was a bag of Welsh goodies courtesy of

the Welsh government through Wales Week Worldwide, including pen, book, keychain



The 3 prize winners: Rob Davies, Stratford Wild, & Howard Davies.

and sea salt. Second prize was pottery made in Wales. First prize was a bottle of Penderyn whisky courtesy of Impex, importers of Penderyn. A one year print subscription to Ninnau was won by Howard Davies.



The highlight of the afternoon was the concert of Welsh songs, given by Straford Wild.

Accompanying himself (and audience members) on the guitar, Straford presented a program of Welsh music especially for Spring, complete with sing alongs. It was the perfect way to celebrate the day. The afternoon ended with everyone singing the Welsh National Anthem.



NINNAU 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 printed or \$20 digital at: NINNAU.com.

On-line Genealogy During Quarantine

by Susan Davies Sit

During this quarantine period, our Welsh Society decided to move our genealogy meetings and Welsh Conversation meet-ups, online. As the weeks have stretched on, it has made me stop and think that this may be a great way for us to continue this way, as well as eventually meeting in person, as members who have moved away have rejoined to be part of it. We used Zoom and we pay \$15 a month so we can have more than the basic 40 minutes of time.

In the second of our weekly sessions on the Zoom platform,

which usually last for an hour and a half, members Warren, Margaret, Susan, Beth, Marion from Maryland and Barbara from Pennsylvania, shared our thoughts on how we can get the younger generations interested in our genealogy work. We offered each other our own ideas about sharing genealogy with children and grandchildren, with hopes of spiking their interest and for us to, one day, pass on our genealogy work to them.



We each had a story about connecting with grandchildren, such as Beth sharing Welsh words, recipes, and stories with her granddaughters. I shared how I connected a newspaper editor and published poet ancestor from the mid 1800's with my daughter, who is an editor and writer. I connected my grandson with his great grandfather when I told him that my dad used morse code on a ship after WW2, while 11 year old Aiden was interested in the Titanic. But he is perhaps more interested in my husband's American Chinese family as, he says, the family is "so old"!

Taking children and grandchildren to visit Wales is certainly a wonderful opportunity to share our roots with them. Walking the pathways, visiting the castles, homesteads and family vacation places are precious. Planning and hosting a family reunion, while posting a paper copy of the tree on the wall for everyone to enjoy, is a huge favorite with family members, especially if you include photos of their ancestors and themselves. They see their place in family history on the wall before their eyes. Susan Meers' granddaughter loved hearing how she is connected to Princess Gwenllian in Wales, and confirmed her place in society as a princess. Beth's granddaughters love the

stories of their grandfather coming home from the slate quarry in Vermont with both he and his lunch pail covered in slate dust. Warren was thrust into Welsh genealogy after his father died and left Warren boxes of papers. Warren has taken that work on, and connected it to the bigger picture of Rees Morgan in Springfield, MA, and then from him back to the Morgans of Tredegar House in Wales. His tree goes back to 1000CE in Wales. Warren can even see where exactly the Morgan name transitioned from a first name to a family name. Those boxes of papers, although daunting at first, were an amazing treasure trove for Warren, and connected him to being Welsh, having not even known that the name Morgan was Welsh. However, I'm not so sure our children and grandchildren will want boxes of papers. The last things my son wants me to give him are papers and printed photos. In this digital age, we really do need to think seriously about digitalizing all our records, including all those photos. This can be done fairly easily these days by scanning documents and photos into our family trees. No, don't throw away those photos and precious old documents if you really want to keep them, and for sure hand them down, but don't expect them to be kept forever. The children and grandchildren will decide for themselves what they want to keep and hand down, but a digital tree will hold everything for years to come.

I give my son and daughter access to our family trees via the ancestry.com app on their phones, for them to get to know the tree, and to be able to look things up themselves (...when WAS Nain born?) but with instructions not to add/ delete etc. Their time will come to be working on it.

Family history books and family newsletters shared with family members can spark interest too. Try an emailed or printed short newsletter, highlighting an ancestor's story, one per month. Sharing stories connects our younger family members with their past, and hopefully one of them will catch this hobby bug we call genealogy and carry it forward to future generations.

WASHINGTON TRIBUTE:

The Welsh woman who helped change the face of American politics

dailypost.co.uk

A formidable Welsh woman who became a hero in the United States is to be commemorated by a statue in Washington. Feminist icon Martha Hughes Cannon will be immortalised in the sculpture which will take pride of place in the Capitol Building when it's finished later this year.

Born in a small

terraced home on Madoc Street in Llandudno in 1857, Martha's family emigrated to America in 1860 when she was just three years old.

She went on to become a pioneer in American politics, leading the way on workers' rights, education, health, and becoming the first female senator in the country's history.

Martha defeated her own husband to win election to the upper house of the senate in 1896, and is today honoured outside Utah's state capital building with an 8ft high bronze statue

She will soon be inducted into the National Statuary Hall in Washington D.C as one of only two representatives from the state.



The statue of Martha Hughes Cannon in Utah (Image: Daily Post Wales)

Her success came despite her difficult early years as the daughter of Mormon parents, who emigrated to America in 1860 to avoid religious persecution. Her sister Annie died on the way to Salt Lake City, Utah, a state known for its blistering heat and mountainous landscapes. Her father Peter also died soon after they arrived.

Welsh historian Wil Aaron, who is supporting a bid to install a plaque to her in her hometown of Llandudno, believes her achievements were unrivalled among women at the time, making Martha a significant figure in both American and Welsh history.

He said: "What she did was remarkable. She became a senator representing the Democratic party and did a lot of good things.

"She's definitely a person who deserves to be remembered, and we hope to commemorate her in Llandudno now."

Mr Aaron said that her journey to America would have been a punishing one, as she travelled from the UK to newly founded settlements in Utah.

He said: "Almost 5,000 Mormons left Wales with an absolutely horrendous journey in front of them. In addition to leaving behind family and friends, they would have migrated not once but twice, across the Atlantic Ocean and then across the North American plains.

"Much of the journey was taken on foot and during a period where the civil war was breaking out in the eastern states of America. It was very dangerous and sadly, not all of them made it." After settling in to a Mormon community Martha became a talented student, studying chemistry and medicine at

university, before setting up a medical practice in Salt Lake City.



Martha Hughes Cannon was born in Madoc Street, Llandudno on 1 July, 1857 (Image: Daily Post Wales)

In keeping with a common Mormon practice at the time, she entered into a polygamous marriage with Angus Cannon, becoming the fourth of his six wives. She gave birth to their first child Elizabeth shortly after, though the relationship came at a cost.

In 1886 Martha was exiled to Europe as the US federal government sought to crack down on polygamy in the mid west. With her husband Angus sent to jail, she travelled back to the UK, as well as France and Switzerland to avoid questioning from federal marshals, who intended to make her testify against other members of the community.

She returned home to Utah just over a year later, to be reunited with Angus and resume her medical practice. Her political career began 10 years later when she won a seat as senator for the state.

As a politician, she campaigned for women to be allowed to vote in elections, and was one of 10 candidates who ran for five Utah seats in the Senate in 1896.

Martha died in 1932 after moving to Los Angeles to be closer to her three children Elizabeth, Jamie, and Gwendolyn. Her remains were later returned to Utah, where she was buried alongside her husband in Salt Lake City.

The proposal for Martha's plaque in North Wales came from organisers at the National Eisteddfod, who aim to coincide with the induction of her statue in the National Statuary Hall in Washington D.C.

Aaron, who has written a book about the mass movement of Welsh Mormons to Utah in the 19th century added: "It really is an extraordinary tribute, to be chosen to represent Utah. The other Utah statue is of Brigham Young. The Virginia statues are George Washington and Robert E. Lee, so you can see the sort of company she's keeping. And yet in her home town of Llandudno, nobody had heard of her until we started a campaign to publicise her name. The campaign in Wales is happening under the auspices of the Women's Archive Wales. We hope to unveil a commemorative plaque to Martha on the Orme near her last known address in Wales on the same day as the statue is unveiled in Washington, some time in August or September."

The Red Dragon of Wales

by Ben Johnson



Although an integral part of the United Kingdom, Wales is not represented on the national flag, or Union Flag, more popularly known as the Union

Jack. The proud and ancient battle standard of the Welsh is The Red Dragon (*Y Ddraig Goch*) and consists of a red dragon, passant (standing with one foot raised), on a green and white background. As with any ancient symbol, the appearance of the dragon has been adapted and changed over the years, and hence several different variations exist.

The current flag was officially adopted in 1959, and is based on an old royal badge used by British kings and queens since Tudor times. The red dragon itself has been associated with Wales for centuries, and as such, the flag is claimed to be the oldest national flag still in use. But why a dragon? The answer to that particular question is lost in history and myth.

One legend recalls Romano-British soldiers carrying the red dragon (*Draco*) to Rome on their banners in the fourth-century, but it could be even older than that.

It is considered that the Welsh kings of Aberffraw first adopted the dragon in the early fifth century in order to symbolise their power and authority after the Romans withdrew from Britain. Later, around the seventh

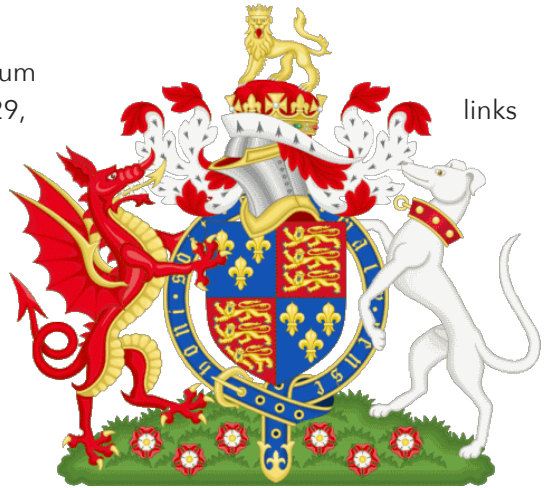


century, it became known as the Red Dragon of Cadwaladr, Gwynedd from 655 to 682.

king of

Geoffrey of Monmouth in his *Historia Regum Britanniae*, written between 1120 and 1129, the dragon with the Arthurian legends, including Uther Pendragon the father of Arthur whose name translates as Dragon Head. Geoffrey's account also tells of the prophecy of Myrddin (or Merlin) of a long fight between a red dragon and a white dragon, symbolising the historical struggle

between the Welsh (red dragon) and the English (white dragon).



links

The oldest recorded use of the dragon to symbolise Wales however, is from the *Historia Brittonum*, written by the historian Nennius around 820. The red dragon was even said to have been used as the British standard at the Battle of Crecy in 1346, when the Welsh archers, dressed in their beloved green and white, played such a crucial role in defeating the French.

And although Owain Glyndwr raised the dragon standard in 1400 as a symbol of revolt against the English Crown, the dragon was brought to England by the House of Tudor, the Welsh dynasty that held the English throne from 1485 to 1603. It signified their direct descent from one of the noble families of Wales. The green and white stripes of the flag were additions of Henry VII, the first Tudor king, representing the colours of his standard. During Henry VIII's reign the red dragon on a green and white background became a favourite emblem on Royal Navy ships.

As the national flag of Wales, the red dragon appears to have regained popularity in the early part of the twentieth century, when it was used for the 1911 Caernarfon Investiture of Edward, Prince of Wales. It wasn't until 1959 however, that it became officially recognised as the national flag of the country.

The Red Dragon now flies proudly over public and private buildings throughout Wales, and thousands still cross the border into England every other year, when the two nations meet for their 'historic struggle' on the rugby battlefield known as Twickenham. Welshmen, women and children carrying the dragon as a symbol of pride in their history and culture.

Beddgelert, north Wales, home of the grave of Gelert.

(Susan Davies Sit, Aug 2019)

The fable: Gelert is a legendary dog associated with the village of Beddgelert (whose name means "Gelert's Grave") in Gwynedd. In the legend, Llywelyn the Great returns from hunting to find his baby missing, the cradle overturned, and Gelert with a blood-smeared mouth. Believing the dog had savaged the child, Llywelyn draws his sword and kills Gelert. After the dog's dying yelp Llywelyn hears the cries of the baby, unharmed under the cradle, along with a dead wolf which had attacked the child and been killed by Gelert. Llywelyn is overcome with remorse and buries the dog with great ceremony, but can still hear its dying yelp. After that day Llywelyn never smiles again.



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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2020-2021):

President: Susan Davies Sit (CT) (860) 987-7097 WelshWNE@gmail.com

Vice President: Susan Jenkins Meers (CT) (860) 334-5119 SJMeers43@gmail.com

Treasurer: Mary Jones Pallos (CT) (860) 781-2302 Mary.Pallos@Singulus.com

Secretary: Mark Taylor (CT) (860) 303-1625 marktaylorfromwales@gmail.com

BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE (2020-2021):

Webmaster: Ed Brown (MA) (413) 454-9477 edbethui@gmail.com

Beth Roberts Brown (MA) (413) 454-9476 supernain4@gmail.com

Shirley Gilmartin (CT) (860) 887-1794 dsgilm@comcast.net

Magdalen Dowden (MA) (774) 343 9244 magdalendowden@sbcglobal.net

Glyn Dowden (MA) (508) 888-1583 glyndowden@sbcglobal.net

Evan Williams (CT) (860) 205-5012 evanwilliams.ms@gmail.com

Annie Rodgers (MA) (413) 281-4986 reikianne53@charter.net

Chaplain: Vacant

Past President: Dr. Tom Bernard (MA)

Founder: John Dixon (MA)

Email list; Newsletter Production: Mark Spencer (MA)

Honorary Founding Member: Shirley Keifer (CT)

Honorary member: Trey McCain (Wales)

=====

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: _____

Newsletter Summer, 2020: For Treasurer's use only: Date received: _____