# The Welsh Society of Western New England

Cymdeithas Cymreig Lloegr Newydd Gorllewino



Website: WelshWNE.org / Email: WelshWNE@gmail.com / FaceBook: WSWNE

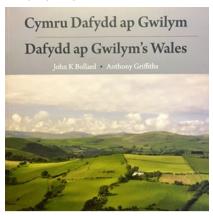
# Annual St. David's Day-on-Zoom

### Sat., March 6, 2021: 2:00PM - 4:00PM

Our St. David's Day celebration will be on Zoom, hopefully for the last time, as we begin to get vaccinated and can plan to be together soon. The featured speaker this year will be none other than Dafydd ap Gwilym! However, because Dafydd is, understandably, unable to attend in person, John Bollard and Margaret Lloyd will be reading some of John's translations of poems by the great fourteenth-century poet.

Dafydd ap Gwilym is widely acknowledged as the greatest poet in a land of poets. He traveled all over Wales and composed poems to his patrons, his friends, and most often to his girlfriends and other women he hoped would be his girlfriend. Sometimes it can be hard to tell whether he was being serious or not, but at other times he was downright hilarious. His poems continue to delight audiences almost 700 years later.

John Bollard earned an MA in Medieval Welsh Language, Literature, and History from the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, and a PhD from the University of Leeds with a comparative study of medieval Welsh and English Arthurian tales. His published studies of the Four Branches of The Mabinogi revolutionized our understanding of that great Welsh classic. He has published five books of translations of medieval Welsh prose and poetry, all with stunning photographs of the Welsh landscape by Anthony Griffiths.



Margaret Lloyd is a poet and painter, also with a PhD in English from the University of Leeds. She has published four books of poetry, including most recently her poetic response to The Mabinogi entitled *Travelling on My Own Errands: Voices of Women from The Mabinogi* (Gwasg Carreg Gwalch, 2017)

A signed copy of John and Anthony's Cymru Dafydd ap Gwilym: Dafydd ap Gwilym's Wales (Gwasg Carreg Gwalch,

2019), containing over thirty poems and seventy photos of places Dafydd knew, can be yours. Simply send \$20 to John Bollard, 17 Lilly St., Florence, MA 01062. And don't forget to let him know to whom it should be signed.

After the presentation, we will hold a short Annual Meeting to wrap up WSWNE's 2020-2021 and to nominate the Board for 2021-2022. If you are interested in joining the Board, or volunteering in any way, please email us at *WelshWNE@gmail.com*. New Board members are



always welcome!

We will also hold a complimentary raffle. All WSWNE members attending the St. David's Day event, as well as each nonmember who attends the event, will have a raffle number assigned to them. First prize ticket wins a bottle of Penderyn Welsh Whisky, or if you prefer a \$75 gift certificate from UK Gourmet in Bethel,

CT, or a box of Welsh Cake goodies

from Copper Kettle bakery (*copperkettlebakery.com*) who make the best Welsh Cakes you can buy! (The Penderyn cannot be shipped outside of CT and MA; within CT and MA we will deliver.) We will end the program with the Welsh National Anthem.





# WSWNE EVENTS

### **MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE!**

There are no changes to our membership fees in 2021; memberships are \$25-\$100 for all members living at the same address. The only difference in the membership levels is your generosity and support to WSWNE. Your fees are essential, as they are one of our sources of income to cover Society expenses for our newsletters and events. You may mail your check directly to our treasurer with the membership form (page 15) or go online to pay by credit card (see below.) For the first time, we ask that you make your payments shortly AFTER MAR. 1 (rather than before MAR. 1, for bookkeeping reasons). Thanks.

### **NEW THIS YEAR:**

To reduce costs we will be sending out the Annual Meeting notice by email not regular mail. If you prefer a paper copy, please email *WelshWNE@gmail.com* or call Susan at 860.987.7097 to let us know.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

Every Tues. in Feb. - Welsh Conversation -on-Zoom

Sat. Feb 7 - March 20 - 6 Nations Rugby

Mondays, Feb 8 & 22 - Welsh Genealogy-on-Zoom

Sat. Feb 14 - Sat. March 6 -WalesWeek/New England 2021

Sunday, Feb 14 - "WEST" a live play from Wales.

Sat, Feb 20 - Penderyn Whisky Tasting

Sat., March 6 - St. David's Day-on-Zoom

Every Tues. in March. - Welsh Conversation-on-Zoom

Mon. March 15 & 29 - Welsh Genealogy-on-Zoom

### **NEW ONLINE PAYMENT OPTION via WSWNE WEBSITE**

To pay membership dues by credit card you can go to our website's Membership Page in the "About" menu (*welshwne.org/membership*). Submit the online membership form. Then click on your choice of membership level and you will be taken directly to a secure checkout page hosted by Square Inc - here you can pay with your major credit card. There is no added cost to you for paying online, as WSWNE is absorbing the service charge during this first year as we evaluate the cost. (Note you can

still pay by check with the online membership form or with the printed one at the end of this newsletter.)

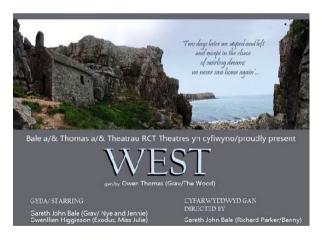
The online payment option will also be available for many of our future events. And it is an option on our new Donations Page (at *welshwne.org/donations*) that offers an additional way to support WSWNE in advancing the knowledge and appreciation of all things Welsh.

## WELSH GENEALOGY-ON-ZOOM

Our Genealogy Workshop meets ON-ZOOM to research Welsh roots. Meets 11:00AM-12:30PM. For Zoom invite please email *InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com* 

- Monday, Feb 22
- Monday, March 15 & 29
- Monday, April 12 & 26

# "WEST" - A play...live from Wales



.... will be streamed live from Wales on Sunday, February 14, 2021 at 3pm - 4:30pm. Ticket (\$10) via this website: https://www.tickettailor.com/ events/garethbale/478071 This link will also be sent to everyone via email. Once ticket is purchased you will be sent the Zoom link. Please feel free to send the ticket information email on to

family and friends. Non-members please email for the ticket information: *InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com* 

'West' is the brand-new play from the award-winning writer of '*Grav*' and '*The* Wood'. Starring Gareth John Bale and Gwenllian Higginson, the play explores the lives of two Welsh people who fall in love and decide to leave

Wales in order to build a new life in the New World. It details the hardships and adventures they faced, focusing primarily on the theme of immigration. The play is written in a lyrical, poetic style and presented using minimal set and a physicalised performance style. It is directed by Gareth John Bale, the Welsh actor and director whose credits include 'Grav' and 'Nye and Jennie' and Gwenllian Higginson, best known to Welsh theatre audiences for 'Miss Julie', 'Exodus' and 'Merched Caerdydd'.

'West' was commissioned by the North American Festival of Wales and received its first public performance in the Ballroom of the Hilton Hotel, Milwaukee, Wisconsin on Friday 30th August 2019. The first American performances received standing ovations from an enthusiastic American audience.

# PENDERYN WHISKY TASTING

On Saturday, February 20 at 5:00PM, we will host a FREE Penderyn Whisky Tasting, for a max of 24 people ( a few spots remaining). If you want to be included, please email us ASAP at

*InfoWelshWNE@gmail.com* to be included. Miniature bottles of Penderyn Whisky will be



available to be picked up in Glastonbury, CT, or even delivered within central CT or Western MA, if you can't pick up. On a Zoom session, the Impex Penderyn importer rep will guide us through the whisky tasting. Should be fun, all from the comfort of your home and... no driving!

# **RUGBY - 6 NATIONS CUP - 2021**

Rugby's greatest championship, between Wales, Scotland, Ireland, France, Italy, and England, will take place over seven weekends in 2021, beginning on Saturday, Feb 1st, with Wales defending their 2020 win. Want to see some of the games? Feb 13th (Sat) 4:45PM - Scotland v. Wales, in Edinburgh

Feb 27th (Sat) 4:45PM - Wales v. England, in Cardiff

March 13th (Sat) 2:15PM - Italy v. Wales, in Rome

March 20th (Sat) 2:15PM - France v. Wales, in Paris



WSWNE continues to support Wales Week WORLDWIDE, a celebration of everything Welsh - yes its actually 2 weeks, as one week is just not long enough!

WSWNE contributions to Wales Week 2021:

Penderyn Whisky tasting via Zoom (complimentary) on February 20th
Welsh Conversation sessions via Zoom

Welsh Genealogy workshops via Zoom

• Wales 6 Nations Rugby Championship on TV

• A play, live from Wales, called WEST on February 14th

So, if you're interested in running an event next year, or have some ideas that you'd like to discuss for 2022, please contact us at *WalesWeekNE@gmail.com*. We are also on Twitter #WalesWeekNE.

## SANTES DWYNWEN



It is told that during the 5<sup>th</sup> century, Brychan Brycheiniog, King of South Wales, had 24 daughters. Dwynwen was the most beautiful and spirited. She fell in love with Maelon Dafodrill, son of a neighbouring king, but her father refused him Dwynwen's hand

in marriage, as he had already arranged a match for her. Maelon was furious, and took his anger out on Dwynwen and left the palace in a rage. Dwynwen ran into the forest, and cried herself to sleep. During a dream, a

spirit came to her to say Maelon would trouble her no more; he had been turned into a block of ice. She was also granted three wishes. Her first wish was for Maelon to be thawed, second for true love to always be protected in her name, and thirdly that she would never again fall in love. All 3 were granted.

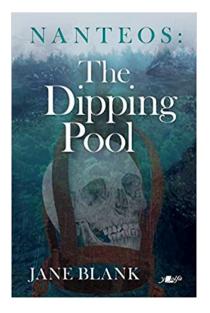
She became a nun, travelled through Wales, eventually settling in Ynys Llanddwyn, Anglesey. Remains of her church are still there today, in addition to a well in which folklore says lives a sacred fish who can predict whether couples will



be happy. If the fish is seen swimming in the well, it is a sign of a faithful and devoted husband.

Welsh lovers celebrate every January 25<sup>th</sup> by sending their cariad a card, flowers, or traditionally a carved love spoon.

by Begw Arian



# New Book from Jane Blank

Author Jane Blank has launched a new novel, "Nanteos: The Dipping Pool"... a prequel/ sequel to her renowned "Shadows of Nanteos" from 2017! It was scheduled for launch during this year's National Eisteddfod of Wales and is now launching "virtually".

As with her earlier work, Jane's new novel engages the reader with vivid imagery and beguiling protagonists, set against the rough and ready backdrop of Ceredigion in the 18th century. It is great for any lover of historical tales, and especially for those enthralled by Wales and its intriguing, somewhat less popularized earlier industrial history. The

book is available on Amazon for \$13.99.

## **ANNUAL DYLAN DAY**

The Scots have Burns Night, and Wales has Dylan Day. The Welsh Government and Literature Wales announced in 2014 that from then on, May 14 in Wales would be known as "Dylan Day". Dylan Thomas' grand-daughter Hannah Ellis broke the news in 2014 at an event at the National Library of Wales.



The Welsh Government says Dylan Day is aimed at building on the legacy of the *Dylan Thomas 100 Festival* and came in response to requests to establish a day to remember Thomas' life and works. May 14 is the date on which *Under Milk Wood* was first read on stage at The Poetry Centre in New York in 1953 (Wales ONLINE).

### Lie Still, Sleep Becalmed by Dylan Thomas

Lie still, sleep becalmed, sufferer with the wound In the throat, burning and turning. All night afloat On the silent sea we have heard the sound That came from the wound wrapped in the salt sheet.

Under the mile off moon we trembled listening To the sea sound flowing like blood from the loud wound And when the salt sheet broke in a storm of singing The voices of all the drowned swam on the wind.

Open a pathway through the slow sad sail, Throw wide to the wind the gates of the wandering boat For my voyage to begin to the end of my wound, We heard the sea sound sing, we saw the salt sheet tell. Lie still, sleep becalmed, hide the mouth in the throat, Or we shall obey, and ride with you through the drowned

https://www.internal.org/Dylan\_Thomas/Lie\_Still\_Sleep\_Becalmed

## CROESO/Welcome to our new members:

- Lou Ann Broad from Arnold, MD, who has enthusiastically joined our Welsh Genealogy group.
- **Anne Stewart** from Pointe au Baril, Ontario is the sister of the President's high school friend Siân, and attends our Noson Lawen.

# **10 WELSH WOMEN WHO CHANGED THE WORLD**

by Claire, the Hisdoryan

(https://hisdoryan.co.uk/famous\_welsh\_women)

If you live in Wales you cannot have missed the fact that the BBC have (quite rightly) been celebrating Hidden Heroines - the monumental Welsh women largely forgotten to history whose incredible achievements helped shape modern Wales. There is a reason for this celebration. There is currently **no outdoor statue of a woman in the capital city of Cardiff.** But all that is going to change. A short list of five inspirational women was drawn up from an initial long list and voting is currently open online to see who will who will be the first real women to be immortalized in an outdoor statue in Cardiff.

Choosing one person was never going to be easy. There are literally hundreds of famous Welsh Women from history - here's my top ten!

(Note: WSWNE will be highlighting one of these women in each subsequent newsletter.)

### Bridget Bevan aka Madam Bevan - Educational Reformer and Public Benefactor

Bridget Bevan (1698-1779) was chief supporter of rector Griffith Jones and his system of circulating schools. The Circulating Welsh Charity School system moved from village to village and fostered education for children and adults throughout Wales, in the Welsh language. Much of Madam Bevan's considerable wealth poured into these free schools, and she even ended up managing the project for 18 years.



Between 1736 and 1776, 6,321 schools were founded and 304,475 scholars taught. **Wales achieved one of the highest literacy rates in Europe.** News of the schools' success even reached the ears of **Catherine the Great** in Russia, who ordered her ministers to make enquiries.

# **NEW SERIES - MEET OUR MEMBERS**

Because of the absence of gatherings these many months, an idea evolved to learn about each other through the newsletter. In this column my intention is to invite members in no particular order to respond to questions, thereby sharing their histories and revealing our similarities and differences.

Please contact me if you wish to introduce yourself on our pages! Evan Williams, at-large WSWNE Board member: Info@WSWNE.com

### **Meet Lowri Jones**

#### Q. Tell us a bit about your present family and work life.

I currently live in Southbury, Connecticut with my husband David Brancaccio (no, NOT that David Brancaccio, correspondent for NPR.) David and I are both retired after many years of work in the mental health field working for the state of Connecticut. I have been a Registered Nurse for the majority of my working life. I went on with my education to get a Master's degree in Public Health.

### Q. Speak about your origins in Wales.

I was born in Beaumaris, Anglesey, North Wales. My parents, Megan (Roberts) Jones and Deryck Jones were Welsh speakers \_ My family emigrated from Wales in 196

Welsh speakers. My family emigrated from Wales in 1961 when I was five years old in order for my father to have more employment opportunities. We first lived on City Island in New York with my mother's aunt Mary Brown and her family. Novels could be written about Aunt Mary!

### Q. In what ways have you nurtured your Welsh connections?

I feel the Welsh Society provides so many opportunities to experience aspects of Welsh life, history, culture, and interaction with Welsh people. I do not think any areas are not being addressed. My mom, who was the most "Welsh" person I have ever known, lived with us for many years before she died in 2016. We remained close to our extended family in Wales, with many visits and correspondence for years. So I continue to have a strong sense of my Welsh roots and identity. With the hiraeth that goes along with it. I find myself recalling so many of my mother's stories of growing up on Anglesey.

I grew up maintaining contact with my grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, and now my cousins' many fabulous children. It helps that we live near New York, so visiting us has been relatively easy, but also desirable for those with a sense of fun and adventure.



### **Q.** How are you enjoying your involvement in the Welsh Society?

I was so lucky to connect with the Welsh Society after my mom died in 2016. I was sorting her copies of Ninnau, when I saw the information about the genealogy group. My mom had always been fascinated by genealogy, so I thought I would learn more by contacting the Society. What a great decision! I have been delighted to discover wonderful new friendships, fabulous cultural events, and of course help with genealogy. But, all those threads provide me with the continued strong theme of "Welshness" in my life. There is nothing else like it. I am so grateful.

### Meet Susan Jenkins Meers

#### Q.Tell us about your present family and work life

I was born and raised in CT, even though we called Wilkes-Barre "home", so I've never felt like a real Yankee. I have felt like a transplanted Welshwoman all my life. Today, I live in the house my parents bought in 1958 with my eldest daughter, her husband, their 14 year old daughter and my son, Jason. My other daughter, her husband and 3 children live within 10 miles, so I am blessed to have my immediate family so close around me. I get frequent "cwtches". I am retired and genuinely appreciate the time I can dedicate to my favorites, including WSWNE.



#### Q. Share how you were introduced to your Welsh heritage .

My parents' families both settled in the Wilkes-Barre, PA area when they arrived from Borth, Goginan and Merthyr Tydfil, Wales in the mid-1800's. So, when we visited "home" from CT, I was immersed in my Welshness. I realized at an early age that was special. Seeing the people with their meat pasties from the Welsh Church going up and down the hill on Saturday; attending Welsh church with my grandmother and being overcome with the natural robust singing in parts (quite different from the stoic New England church singing), being surrounded by Welsh names and the occasional Welsh word all made me aware and proud of my Welshness. My father's mothers family (Jenkins) was a seafaring bunch who sailed in and out of the Aberystwyth area well into the 20th century; and the Rodericks were lead miners from Goginan. My mother's family were farmers in the Rhondda and mid-Wales originally and in later generations miners. I have actually traced one of my (3) Williams' lines back to Gruffyd ap Cynan King of Gwynedd.

#### Q. In what ways have you nurtured your Welsh connections?

After 4 trips to Wales, I still can't get enough of it. If I had my "druthers", I'd live there. North or South Wales, either one as I have cousins there.

### Q How are you enjoying your involvement in the Welsh Society?

WSWNE has been a life-line for me during years between visits to Wales. Connecting with others of like mind for Welsh knowledge and interests has enriched my life immeasurably and led to many opportunities for education and travel. I have been serving as Vice President of the Society.

## 2nd INTERNATIONAL NOSON LAWEN: JANUARY, 2021

If life in the time of pandemic has taught us anything, it is how we can come together in ways we would never have expected or considered a year ago. We've had to get creative and proficient in technological skills some of us may have thought were beyond our grasp. Thus, in order to bring together the members of the Welsh Society of Western New England, the second International Noson Lawen was presented via Zoom. This electronic celebration of Welsh poetry, stories, and song, brought together a mix of performers from the United States, England, and Wales, and was well attended by many members and guests.

Our celebration kicked off with a piece composed by member and gifted composer David Owens. His piece, Ffidilio yng Nghyumru (Fiddling in Wales) was beautifully played by violinist, Cynthia Cummings.

Linda Brown, from Bethesda, North Wales, joined us live from Bethesda and read poems by two Welsh poets: "Tangnefeddwyr" (Peacemakers) by Waldo Williams, and "Hon" (This) by T.H. Parry Williams. We traveled back to America for a rendition of one famous Welsh folk song, The Ash Grove, sung by member Sandy DeFelice's daughter, Noelle. How many of us got a little teary-eyed when recalling how we sang this in school as youngsters? I know I did. Once again, we virtually traveled to Wales, where we were treated to a rendition of Trafaeliais y Byd (I Traveled the World) by Welsh actress, Lisa Jên Brown, a member of the renowned folk band 9Bach. What an appropriate Lisa Jên Brown of 9Bach



choice, and it was a treat to hear. Then we heard a bit of Welsh history from Tempest Crowell. Tempest recounted the history of the oldest lullaby in Britain. *Pais Dinogad* dates back to the 6th or 7th century. We stayed in America for our next two performers; Veronica Chapman gave a very moving reading of her own poem, titled Requiem: Reflections on a visit to a poet and dear friend, followed by member Marian Evans Lubbert, who played the Welsh hymn Bread of Heaven (Cwn Rhondda) on her digital organ, and several of us sang along.

St. Dwynwen's Day may have passed earlier in the week, but her spirit became alive for us in the reading of her story. Helen Coates, from the

eastern part of Massachusetts, told us the tale of the beautiful maiden and her star crossed lover.

Siân & Chris abt 1970

Chris Docksey from Belgium and Sian Thomas from Wales delighted us with Neithiwr yn y Trwbadwr a Welsh language rendition of the old Tom Paxton folk song, Leaving London. As Chris and Sian sang, the years fell away as sweet memories of coffee





houses and strumming guitars filled my thoughts.

Emeritus Professor of Poetry at the University of South Wales (Glamorgan), Tony Curtis, came to us live from Barry, Wales. He read some of his own compositions. We were so lucky that the magic of Zoom could bring him into our homes.

Veronica Chapman returned to recite her own poem about Hiraeth, bringing a tear to many an eye. For our final musical offering, we were entertained by a friend of the Welsh Society, the harpist Andrea Wild. Andrea, who came to us from Portland, OR, played Y Deryn Pur and Hob y Deri

Dando, along with her daughter on harp and son on violin.

Magdalen Dowden once again graciously served as our Mistress of Ceremonies, and Welsh Society President Susan Davies Sit brought our happy afternoon to a close. I'm sure that most of the attendees would agree that this "virtual parlor" celebration of all things Welsh brought us closer to our roots, gave us a sense of connection, and for a short time, set our hearts at home.



## Welsh Cawl with Rarebit

A recipe from Bethan Chamberlain in the United Kingdom

Traditional Welsh cuisine brings not only full bellies but brings my family together to eat and be joyful hence the famous Welsh saying 'Bwytewch a byddwch lawen'. I am fiercely passionate about my Welsh heritage, language, culture and food! I would like to share with you a typical Welsh meal that would be celebrated on St David's day (patron saint of Wales) March 1st, or traditionally on cold dark winter nights eaten around the table.

I have worked for G4S as a prison custody officer for just over 20 years this year. I am based at HMP Parc in Bridgend in the cultural country of VAIes United Kingdom. This is where I met my partner in 2002 who also works for G4S and is currently a Senior Manager at the prison. We have 4 beautiful children. I have recently switched roles and now having the pleasure of being the Welsh language coordinator allows me to promote and teach our beautiful language to the residents and staff.

#### INGREDIENTS

For the Cawl Ikg middle neck or shoulder lamb (preferably Welsh lamb) 2 onions (chopped) 2 neilum potatoes (peeled and chopped) 4 carrots (peeled and chopped) 1 medium suede (peeled and chopped) 2 leeks (washed and sliced) Lamb stock Salt and pepper (to taste) For the Rambit

#### METHOD

#### Cook the Cawl

- 01 Place the lamb in a large cast iron saucepan, cover with lamb stock and bring to the boil. Simmer for 2-3 hours over a low heat. Leave overnight to cool and the next day skim the fat that has risen to the surface.
- 02 Cut the meat off the bone and return to the stock. Add the potatoes, carrots, swede or parsnips and simmer until cooked. Season with salt and pepper.
- 03 Finally add the shredded leeks.

#### Make the Rarebit

- 01 Melt the butter in a small saucepan and the grate cheese until smooth.
- 02 Mix in the mustard and Worcestershire sauce and season with black pepper.
- 03 Lightly toast and butter the bread, then pile up the cheesy mixture on each side.
- 04 Cook under a hot grill for a few minutes until brown and bubbling.

This recipe was submitted by member Lowri Jones, whose cousin entered it into a competition. The recipe was published in a cook book.

#### For the Rarebit

50g butter 250g cheddar cheese 2tbsp English mustard 2tbsp Worchestershire sauce 6 thick cut crusty bread

#### 86 | Flavours of G4S



#### WSWNE NEWS is published by the Welsh Society of Western New England, Inc BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2020-2021):

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WSWNE Membership Form for mailed-in checks only:

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)
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Today's date:	NEW MEMBER:	RENEWAL:
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Names (list household members):

Address\_\_\_\_\_

Home phone # \_\_\_\_\_

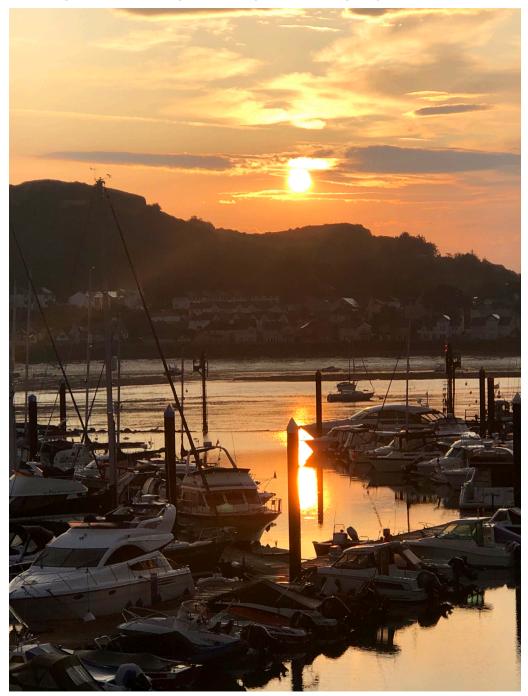
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Email address (PLEASE PRINT)

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

Newsletter Spring, 2021: For Treasurer's use only: Date received:\_\_\_\_\_

August sunrise looking from Conwy Marina to Deganwy, northern Wales.



Taken by Susan Davies Sit, 2019