



St. David's Society of Utica



Newsletter - April 2018

Upcoming Events

SPRING GYMANFA GANU

Sunday, May 6 th at 3 p.m.

New Hartford Presbyterian Church,
(45 Genesee Street)

Conductor - Iwan Edwards,

Soloist - Margaret McAvaney

Organist - James Hanosh

Pianist - Jeanne Jones.

Te Bach to follow

Memorial donations due by April 23rd

(More details page 2)



SUMMER PICNIC



Plans for a summer picnic are in progress but date is not firm yet .Check our website for further news

REMSEN STEUBEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY EVENTS

Enlli Song Fest, May 20 at 3pm French

Rd Song Fest, July 15 at 2pm

NELSON WELSH CHURCH

Gymanfa Ganu - Sept.8 at 3pm

REMSEN BARN FEST

Sept. 23-24

Gymanfa Ganu, Sunday afternoon

NATIONAL GYMANFA GANU

Labor Day weekend 8/31-9/2/18

Washington, D.C.

More information about future events can be found on our website

www.saintdavidssociety.org or 315-768-7115.

Music takes center stage at Christmas party

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Trumpet duo Rachel and Kaitlyn Williams



Christmas cake a-plenty.

Flag raising ceremony celebrates St. Davids Day

About 20 members attended the raising of the Welsh flag at Utica City Hall on St David's Day.

Mayor Palmieri officially declared March 1st as St David's day and related many accomplishments that Welsh immigrants had brought to the area.

Local TV stations WKTV, WUTR and Spectrum YNN covered the event.

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(L.to R) Mayor Robert Palmieri, Linda Walters (new president), Judge James Griffiths, and Ted Engle (past president)

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Applications can be found on our website. (Events page)

Deadline is June 1st.

Christmas Party 2017 is big hit

Our annual Christmas Party was held Dec 16th 2017 at the United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall in New Hartford. The event is now a yearly tradition where we try to focus on activities that will appeal to the younger people of Welsh descent. The society provided cold cuts, pizza and cake while members brought a dish to pass. Ralph and Lois Humphreys who attend this church along with past President Stew Williams and Esther Williams again organized the yearly event for 70 guests which included both members and over 30 children.

Bob and Jeanne Jones led in Christmas Carols. Notable among the performers were the extended family of Richard and Joanne Williams from California who sang and played the piano. We also had a trumpet duet by Rachel and Kaitlyn Williams and a piano, clarinet duet with David Dudgeon and his granddaughter Koty.



Finalists in the Indoor Snowman Building Contest

Besides musical performances was a magic act by Stew Williams. We also had indoor games for the toddlers and a group project decorating gingerbread men with Teresa Williams supervising. Teresa provided all the cookies and art supplies and helped the children decorate their own Gingerbread men. Finally, the children were organized into four teams who worked to build competing snowmen using tissue paper, carrots, and other apparel. The team with the most original design won prizes. The judges felt every entry was outstanding and prizes were given to all.

Among the guests was St David's Scholarship winner Sydney Rachel Gape, currently majoring in Museum Studies at Nazareth College, Rochester. Rachel said the financial assistance she received from our program helped with her education expenses.

All children received a Christmas present of a Welsh Dragon ornament.

St. David's Day Banquet

More than 80 people attended the annual banquet at Harts Hill Inn, Whitesboro.

Entertainment was provided by Kendall Evans and Gracie Ruganis and Rachel Williams, granddaughters of Stewart and Esther Williams, led the Pledge of Allegiance. Robert Jones led attendees in singing the Welsh national Anthem and Dr. John Morris gave the invocation.

There was also a display of Welsh quilts by Susan Jones Graf who is doing research on

Music Talent assembles for Gymanfa, May 6th

Conductor Iwan Edwards, the celebrated Canadian choral conductor was born in Wales. He has been appointed a Member of the Order of Canada for his outstanding work in the field of music.

Soloist Margaret McAvaney has a degree in Music from Ithaca College, taught music and is assistant director of the Mohawk Reformed Church Choir. She will be accompanied by Pat Snyder.

Organist James Hanosh recently retired after 44 years as Minister of Music at the church and pianist Jeanne Jones teaches music in the Utica area and is former president of the Utica B-Sharp Music Club.

Flag ceremony and talk on local Welsh history

Mayor Palmieri and County Judge James Griffiths helped us celebrate St David's Day at a flag raising ceremony March 1st at Utica City Hall. Area churches also held ceremonies and a celebration dinner was held at a local

restaurant Sunday evening.

Judge Griffiths talked briefly about the early settling of the area in 1801 by six families from North Wales.

Attracted by the availability of cheap

farmland and the construction of the Erie Canal in 1815, the area soon became most densely settled areas of Welsh-Americans in the U.S. Dire conditions in Wales and subsequent pressure to emigrate, coupled with a growing network of Welsh Church congregations and Welsh societies made this

Heritage Day Highlights Welsh Influence in Upstate NY



Cindy Gilbert and Janet Washburn demonstrate how to make teacakes



David Dudgeon and Roger Williams do genealogy research

Heritage Day, held November 2017 at the Oneida County History Center on Genesee Street, highlighted the immigration of the Welsh to Upstate NY and some of their contributions.

The day included an illustrated slideshow of the attractions and landscape of Wales compiled by David Dudgeon from his last vacation, followed by a lecture outlining the story of Welsh-Americans in Oneida County and famous historical figures such as Baron von Steuben and Robert Everett.

This was followed by a demonstration of Welsh cooking by Cindy Gilbert and Janet Washburn with free samples of Welsh teacakes.

Stew Williams then described the various display tables and visitors were allowed to mingle and examine items of clothing, photographs, love spoons and other artifacts. Bob Jones concluded by reading the Lord's prayer in Welsh so everyone could appreciate the distinctiveness of the language.

Two stations were also set up to give genealogy assistance to those who requested tips on tracing their ancestors.

The society is grateful to the Oneida County History Center and assistant curator Rebecca McLain for co-hosting the event.

FALL 2017 GYMANFA

Last October, our society returned to its earliest roots when it held the Fall Gymanfa Ganu at the historic Plymouth Bethesda Church in Utica.

The Bethesda congregation was formed by 14 Welsh immigrants in 1802 and for over 158 years had services in Welsh.

For many years it was the oldest Welsh-speaking congregation in North America.

The Plymouth Church was formed in 1884 to serve English speaking people of Welsh descent merging with Bethesda in 1963.

The current pastor, Rev. Michael Ballman gave the Innovation and read a Psalm, and Wales native Rainer Morgan Rzucidlo read the Psalm in Welsh.

The conductor, Jay G. Williams III led more than 60 attendees in hymn singing in both Welsh and English.



Plymouth Bethesda Church

Plymouth Bethesda former pastors

The congregation had many well-known figures during its history. An early pastor, Rev. Robert Everett, came to Utica from Flintshire in 1823 and was famous in the Temperance and Abolitionist Movements. He began publishing 'Y Cenhadwr Americanaidd' (American Missionary) in 1840 which was distributed nationally. He was a significant influence in inspiring new Welsh immigrants to become citizens and vote against slavery. Internationally known, Everett was a friend of Harriet Beecher Stowe and Frederick Douglass.

Another former pastor was R.W. Hughes, recruited from Wales and remembered because of his unusual departure after 13 years as pastor. He was on a three-month vacation in Wales in 1939 when he could not return because of the outbreak of World War II. The ocean crossing was deemed too dangerous for his young family so he was forced to resign. But his youngest daughter and grandchildren still keep contacts in Utica and are planning a visit soon.

SCHOLARSHIP DONATION FORM

Awarding scholarships has been a tradition of our St. David's Society for many years and will continue to happen with your help so please consider making a donation this year. Contributions go into a Trust Fund which is used to provide assistance to students for this coming school year and in the future.

FROM: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL: _____

Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$ _____ (payable to St David's Society of Utica, NY)

Please mail to: Treasurer: Cindy Gilbert, 3 Woodstock Court, New Hartford, NY 13413