

The Gulf Coast St. David's Welsh Society

Official autumn in Sarasota has brought us some welcome cooler days. On one such delightful day the current and former officers of the Welsh Society celebrated the 100th birthday of long-time board member, Muriel Patram. Her daughter surprised her by flying in from Nevada, and joined us in our outdoor champagne toast and cupcakes at Glebe Park on Siesta Key. We all wore masks and except for family, kept our distance.



Happy birthday, Muriel!

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GYMANFA ONLINE: Our song leader (and Society Secretary) Dr. John Garrison, accompanied by Mona Garrison, will lead us in singing favorite Welsh music this **Sunday evening, October 11, at 5:30 p.m.** thanks to the wonderful online technology of Zoom. If you want to join us from home, let me know right away and at least before noon on Sunday, so I can send you the song sheets and the Zoom link. If you are near Englewood, you are welcome to join John and Mona in person at Crosspoint Englewood

Church of the Nazarene, 404 W. Green Street, Englewood. It is a large church with plenty of space for safe distancing and has ample parking. Thank you, Garrisons! I hope to hear from many of you and that many of us will "make a joyful noise" on Sunday!

Welsh books

Francis Jones, *Treasury of Historic Pembrokeshire* [1996]

Roy Noble's *Wales* [1999]

Tenby, a Photographic History of Your Town [2001]

D. Ken Daniels, *Pembrokeshire Returns* [1998]

Contact Pattie Lanier if you would like to give one of these books a new home: 941- 955-9623

Historic photo of Welsh in Scranton, Pennsylvania, submitted by Don Hughes.



***Traditional Welsh Costume* by Ben Johnson**

Not many countries can say that their national dress may have saved a nation! (See the article below about Jemima the Great and her "armed forces".)

Traditional Welsh dress was worn by women in rural areas of Wales. The distinctive dress was based on a form of bedgown made from wool, of a style dating from the 18th century, worn over a corset. This was teamed with a printed neckerchief, a petticoat, apron and knitted stockings. The dress was completed by a high crowned hat reminiscent of 17th century fashions and a red, caped cloak.

Prior to the late 18th / early 19th century there was no such thing as a Welsh national costume. During the 1830s, Lady Llanover, the wife of an ironmaster in Gwent, was very influential in encouraging the wearing of a 'national' dress. She considered it important to establish a Welsh national identity as at this time many felt their national identity was under threat. She encouraged the use of the Welsh language and the wearing of an identifiable Welsh costume, based on the rural women's traditional dress.



The adoption of the costume also coincided with the growth of Welsh Nationalism, as the rise of industrialisation was seen as a threat to the traditional agricultural way of life. And as most of the costume was made from wool, this also boosted the Welsh woollen industry.

As the 19th century progressed, the wearing of traditional dress became less popular and by the 1880s the Welsh costume was worn more as an attempt to maintain tradition and celebrate a separate Welsh identity, than as an everyday costume.

Today Welsh costume is worn on St David's Day and by performers at concerts and eisteddfodau. It is also very important for the tourism industry: dolls in Welsh dress make excellent gifts and souvenirs!

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Speaking of Welsh women, do you know about "Jemima the Great"?

JEMIMA THE GREAT: The last invasion of Britain took place at Fishguard in Wales in 1797, when French troops successfully landed near Llanwnda.

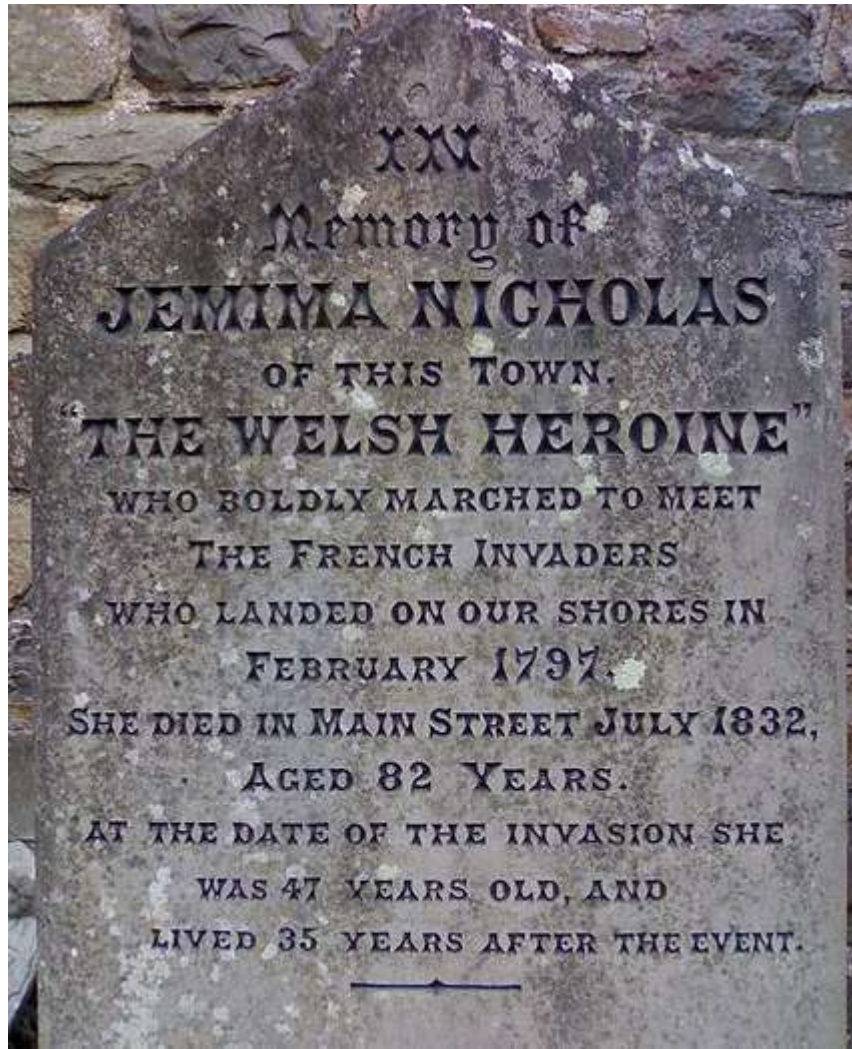
After a looting spree during which much wine was consumed (a Portuguese ship had been shipwrecked just a few days earlier and her cargo 'saved' by the locals), many of the invaders were too drunk to fight. Within two days, the invasion collapsed and it was reported that the French surrendered to a local militia force.

Strangely though, the surrender agreement refers to several **thousand** British redcoat soldiers coming at the French – but there were only a few hundred soldiers in Fishguard! There were, however, in this rural area, hundreds of Welsh women dressed in their traditional red cloaks and black hats who had come to see what was happening. At a distance it appears that the drunken French may have mistaken these women for British Grenadiers!

During their two days on British soil the French soldiers must have shaken in their boots at mention of the name of "**Jemima Fawr**" (Jemima the Great).

The 47-year-old **Jemima Nicholas** was the wife of a Fishguard cobbler. When she heard of the invasion, she marched out to Llanwnda, pitchfork in hand, and rounded up twelve Frenchmen. She 'persuaded' them to accompany her back into town, where she locked them inside St Mary's Church and promptly left to look for some more!





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Not all the Welsh are Heroic, we must confess. One rather despicable scoundrel was Colonel Griffith J. Griffith. Who was the Welshman, Colonel Griffith? Certainly not one of our "favorite sons"! In fact, Griffith was such a nasty rich man that it is speculated that Walt Disney based Scrooge McDuck on his personality. But Griffith Park in Los Angeles is, indeed, named for him. Read his story and you will agree that you would not want to be his neighbor or in his family!



Interested?: Here is the link: <https://blog.eogn.com/2020/09/01/who-was-colonel-griffith-j-griffith/>

By permission of Dick Eastman from his *Online Genealogy*

Newsletter for September, 2020

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Did you remember to log into the free Festival links during September? Here are some of my favorites which I hope can continue to be accessible:

<https://vimeo.com/452634189/7f56961089> John Ieuan Jones put together a lovely selection of songs both Welsh and from Broadway, which he had hoped to sing to us in person in Philadelphia. I remember when Marilyn Parry sang "My Little Welsh Home" at our Welsh Society's 25th anniversary St. David's Day banquet. That must have been the first time I had heard it. Wait until you hear "Calon Lan" sung to the melody of "The Rose"!

If you're curious about the poetry winners, here is the link to the announcement and you can watch the winners reading their poems: <https://vimeo.com/452442861/3e2f55a774> also 2019 adult and youth vocal winners will sing for you.

Learn about the Welsh who settled on the Great Plains of the U.S. <https://vimeo.com/452634449/440b54d8b6>

[What's Wales in Welsh](#) is an intriguing question: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlFuTf45jFQ> Click on cc for captions, knowing that they're not always accurate (such as fanatic for phonetic!)

And if you've ever hoped to go to Patagonia as I have, you can learn more about it here: [Esquel, Welsh Patagonia](#)

<https://vimeo.com/440515092/9650ff4e36>

And here are some links for you to sing along: <https://vimeo.com/445059780/afc788c17f> and

<https://vimeo.com/445028278/43c5accd36>.

Here is the men's choir, Côr y Penrhyn, which had expected to sing for us in person in Philadelphia, with a greeting from their conductor, so you can listen on this clip: <https://vimeo.com/453141629/ad939a5f8e>

And this beautiful organ music by David Enlow will sound very familiar: <https://vimeo.com/453091370/8ff6155f6c>

Sincere thanks to the North American Festival of Wales (NAFOW) for this great effort to present a virtual festival so all may participate at home.

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Do you agree with the advice given by this popular newspaper columnist? From the Sep 17, 2020 "Ask Amy" column

.Tribune Content Agency By [Amy Dickinson](#)

Dear Amy: My husband and I have been together for 20 years (married for 12). He is from the UK (Wales). When we visit his relatives and friends in Wales, everyone is kind enough to speak English while I am in the room (Welsh is their native language). When we are in the States, my husband speaks to his family and friends frequently on the phone — always in Welsh. I find this rude, and when I mentioned it, he said he was not talking about me and that therefore it shouldn't bother me. I often hear my name mentioned in his conversations and although I am sure it is not malicious, I am still uncomfortable as he babbles on in his native language. Is it too much to ask that he speak English while I am present and in my own house? What is the etiquette for these types of situations? — **Not from Wales**

Dear Not from Wales: If someone can speak multiple languages, it is most polite to speak the language of the more linguistically limited speaker in the room. But this is Welsh! If your husband was a Spanish speaker, he would have many opportunities to speak his native language in many different contexts, outside the home. Welsh, however — "dim cymaint" (not so much)! Welsh is one of the oldest spoken languages in Europe, and, outside of Wales, it is extremely rare to hear it. (My research for your question revealed that there are only about 2,000 known Welsh speakers in the United States — many of them, curiously, living in Florida.) Furthermore, the language was in danger of dying out altogether until concentrated national efforts in Wales have resulted in something of a revival. Your husband is not being deliberately rude. I think he is trying to communicate with his landsmen using expressions that are unique to a very small population. He is seeking a sort of verbal "cwtch" (a comforting hug). In doing so, he is also defying centuries of English cultural and language dominance (and often, outright oppression). There are many Welsh primers available to study the language. I have also checked a popular language-learning app; Welsh is one of the languages they offer for instruction. It would serve multiple purposes for you to become conversant, and I hope you will.

(I just finished my first lesson — so "lechyd da!")

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TERRIFYING STORY OF EARLY WARNING TOWERS



Bryniau hill overlooking Llandudno

By Mari Jones, *NorthWalesLive*

"People in North Wales are no strangers to historic structures dotting the landscape. But the stories behind some of them are particularly dark. In the 17C, Britain was gripped by the fear of Barbary pirates. They were buccaneers who traveled to Europe from North Africa, and were the scourge of merchant ships and in the Mediterranean. They came in search of riches and a precious, but sinister, cargo. As well as stealing wares from ships, they would also take the sailors themselves.

The threat came too close for comfort when, in 1631, the harbour village of Baltimore in County Cork, Ireland, was sacked by the pirates. They took about one hundred of the inhabitants, men and women. The men would be galley slaves or sold in slave auctions, the women as concubines within the walls of the Sultan's palace. Only two captives, Joane Broadbrook and Ellen Hawkins, were finally ransomed and brought back to Baltimore, and the village lay abandoned for nearly 170 yrs.

The tower on Bryniau hill overlooking Llandudno, is a remnant of this threat to North Wales during this time. Sir Roger Mostyn, who was the largest landowner in the region, was Muster-Master and Custodian of Crown Arms and Armour. He had to take action, faced with the threat not just to shipping but to the inhabitants. He built an early warning system, a chain of lookout towers, on Bryniau Hill, Llandrillo yn Rhos, Abergele and Whitford, in Flintshire.

They were all stone towers except at Llandrillo where a tower was added to the church tower. Remnants of the towers remain to this day. Local historian John Lawson-Reay said: "They were all on elevated land within sight of each other, so that they could signal each other by lighted beacons. Should a pirate be sighted - their sails were very distinctive - the watchmen would raise the alarm with residents living in the area, so that they could retreat inland to hide. Each of the towers would have been manned to alert the surrounding countryside by smoke or flame, should danger be imminent. Similarly, the towers could alert one another, forming an innovative line of communication running along the coastline of this region.

According to records kept by Mostyn Estates, Sir Roger Mostyn was continually instructed to "keep the beacons in good repair", such was the fear of Barbary pirates. There is no evidence that the pirates ever managed to land in North Wales, but it has been estimated that over a million Europeans were taken during their 250-year reign of terror."

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After that gloomy history lesson you need some smiles: Here is a picture I took in South Wales

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Clever Planters in Glamorgan



"Girls sheep racing", 1969, photo by John Drysdale



Submissions and suggestions are always welcome by your Welsh Society committee.

If you no longer wish to receive communications from the Gulf Coast St. David's Welsh Society, just let us know.

Amy Ferrell on behalf of your Welsh Society Board of Directors

Gulf Coast St. David's Welsh Society, P.O. Box 19343, Sarasota, FL 34276