



**THE GULF COAST ST. DAVID'S WELSH SOCIETY
INVITES YOU
TO A MAY DAY PICNIC
SUNDAY, MAY 1, 2022
BEE RIDGE PARK, SARASOTA, FLORIDA
1 P.M.
BRING A DISH TO SHARE AND YOUR BEVERAGE
(AND YOUR SINGING VOICE)**

WELSH FAMILY PICNIC: Come to a May Day party! Sunday, May 1, come by 1 p.m. or earlier to Bee Ridge Park, south of Bee Ridge Road at the corner of Lockwood Ridge and Wilkinson. Please bring a dish to share and your own beverage. We will have water available. There are plenty of picnic tables but you may bring a lawn chair if you prefer. The park has a playground, ball fields, and a basketball court. Restrooms are attached to the pavilion which is very close to parking. Please **RSVP** by email to Sarasotawelsh@gmail.com, or contact Corresponding Secretary Maureen Jones: 941-918-2318 so we will know how many to expect. **No charge!**

WELSH MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS From the *Welsh Otter guide to the wonderful May Day customs and legends in Wales:*

The May Day tradition of dancing around a maypole is around 600 years old and the activity often brings communities together. Traditionally the dancers position themselves in pairs of boys and girls before beginning their routine. The dance creates a multi-coloured pattern which creeps steadily down the pole. The dancers then reverse their steps to undo the ribbons. This is said to represent the lengthening of the days as summer approaches, but the significance of the pole itself is not really known.



1) Kick-starting summer

Known as Calan Mai or Calan Haf, the first day of May was an important time for celebrations and festivals in Wales, as it was considered the start of summer. May Day would be the time of year when herds would be turned out for pasture, and families would move from their homes from the valley (Hendre), to their summer pastures on higher land (the Hafod).

2) Carol singing in Spring?

At the dawn of May Day people in villages and surrounding farms would be woken by May carol singers. They would visit each house, sometimes with a verse dedicated to the family. The aim of these visits was to bring good luck to each of the families, and to wish them a fruitful summer after the hardship of winter.

3) Watch out for the spirits....

Ysbrydnos' (Spirit Nights) took place on May Eve, when the world of the supernatural was closest to the real world. Steps were taken to prevent witches from entering houses, for instance by drawing chalk crosses on every door as protection.

4) The magic of fire

Fire lighting was associated with the first of May in the times of the Druids. Bonfires would ward off harmful spirits, ensure a fruitful summer and represented opportunities for purification and protecting animals from disease

IN THE NEWS:

Rhianon Hardy was featured on the front page of the Siesta Key "Observer" on the week of her 103rd birthday, April 6, in response to Dorothy MacDaniel's call to the paper. The reporter came to the Hardys the morning of her birthday! 15 of us arrived in the afternoon to take photos and to serenade her. Here David Rees is giving her a birthday greeting in Welsh while Dorothy MacDaniel and Don Hughes listen, too. Don then led us singing some of Rhianon's favorite Welsh songs ("Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah", "We'll Keep a Welcome", "The Ash Grove", and "All Through the Night") as well as "Happy Birthday". Rhianon and Pat thanked everyone and he shared some memories, then of all the attendees had an opportunity to recall events with Rhianon, to congratulate her, and to sing her praises. Additional photos will be on our Sarasotawelsh.com website.



Harry Sayer
Rhianon Hardy turned 103 on April 6.

103 on Siesta Key

Rhianon Hardy spent her 103rd birthday with family and friends on Siesta Key on April 6.

Hardy has enjoyed nearly half of that time living on Siesta Key with her husband, Patrick. She enjoys birthdays in particular — countless friends and neighbors visit to leave cards and gifts.

Hardy, who was born in North Wales, is a dedicated member of the Gulf Coast St. David's Welsh Society and was congratulated by fellow members.

Patrick said he and Rhianon enjoyed the birthday cheer and would likely continue on with their day.

"When you're 103, you've done everything before," Patrick joked.



A photo and article about our March 1 "Te Bach" from our spring Welsh Society's newsletter was reprinted in the national Welsh newspaper, "The Ninnau"!

Why didn't they ask Evans? Sue Lewis recommends this show on Britbox. "It is based on a Christie mystery which has been adapted, produced, and directed by Hugh Laurie. Set in Wales and opens with a men's chorus. Nice to hear Welsh singing and see the beautiful countryside."

INTRODUCING LEWIS MORRIS: This interesting article was on the Puget Sound Welsh Association Facebook page which noted Lewis Morris' birthday. Have you heard of Lewis Morris?

"Lewis Morris (signer of the Declaration of American Independence) was born April 7, 1726 in Morrisania, New York. His grandfather, also Lewis Morris, was from Tintern in the Wye Valley." Morris was appointed as a judge of the Admiralty Court for the province in 1760. In 1774, as the Revolution drew near, he was elected to the New York Provincial Congress. He signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and on being warned that there may be dire consequences for signing the document replied, "Damn the consequences. Give me the pen."

According to the Welsh Society of Philadelphia, of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence on July 4 1776, Lewis Morris and 15 others were of Welsh descent. The others were: William Williams, Williams Hooper, James Smith, Francis Lewis, John Hewes, George Read, John Penn, Thomas Jefferson, Button Gwinnett, John Morton, Francis Hopkinson, William Floyd, Robert Morris, Stephen Hopkins, and George Clymer."



Continuing from Doug Evans in the Welsh *HERALD*:

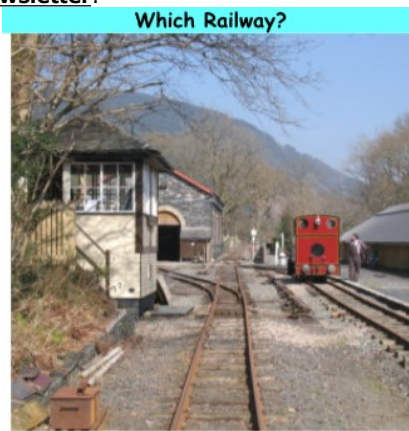
"The Welsh were among the very first settlers to go to America, so it's fitting that we played such a big role in this historic moment. In 1681, King Charles II gave 45,000 square miles of America to Quaker William Penn, who wished to call it New Wales (Charles II insisted on it being called Pennsylvania).

Many Welsh Quakers who only spoke the Welsh language had recently moved there, fleeing religious persecution back home. More immigration in the 18th century brought the Welsh to a West Pennsylvania area now known as Cambria County. Delaware and the Carolinas also have Welsh roots, and a part of Jackson County, Ohio, is called Little Wales. The second wave of Welsh immigration took place in the mid-1800s, and this continued throughout the Industrial Revolution, when Welsh immigrants brought new skills to the American coal, steel and slate industries.

Welsh steelworkers even built the steel roof structure of the White House!

One of the memorial stones on the Washington Monument is inscribed with "Fy iaith, fy ngwlad, fy nghenedl, Wales – Cymru am byth" – My language, my land, my nation, Wales – Wales forever."

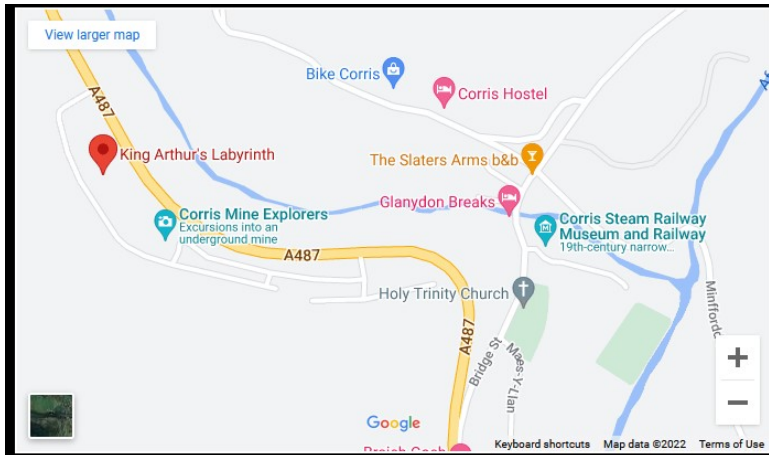
Quiz from Wellington, NZ's Welsh Society newsletter:



Which Railway?

Clue: King Arthur's Labyrinth is 'round the bend'

(The answer is on the map)
Snowdonia, Mid-Wales



The underground attraction of King Arthur's Labyrinth in southern Snowdonia starts from the Corris Craft Centre on the border of Mid Wales and North Wales.

KING ARTHUR'S LABYRINTH: Have you been there? It sounds like fun. Here's a summary from their website:

"King Arthur's Labyrinth is an underground storytelling adventure for the whole family in Corris, where Mid Wales meets North Wales. Barmouth, Tywyn, Machynlleth and Aberdyfi are nearby. Come and discover Wales underground where we sail you through a magical waterfall into the mountains of Southern Snowdonia and to a mysterious land of legends and storytelling. Being underground, this is a great day out on a wet day in Mid Wales and a great day out on a hot day in Mid Wales as the caverns, are really cool.

Enter into a mythical world filled with dragons, colossal giants, fierce battles and the legendary King Arthur. Ancient legends from Wales unfold with dramatic scenes, light and sound as you walk through the Labyrinth guided by your hooded Dark Age Boatman."

MEMORIAL DAY, May 30: 10 a.m. memorial program at Arcadia, Florida, commemorating the WWII British air cadets who lost their lives while in Florida at flight training, including 3 young Welshmen: Alfred Thomas Lloyd, Thomas John Parry, Mervyn Hugh Ernest Thomas. Respond to this email if you want to car-pool. The British and Scottish clubs from the Gulf Coast also will be in attendance. The annual memorial service is coordinated by the Rotary Club of Arcadia.

North American Festival of Wales September 1-4, 2022:

Join us to preserve and promote Welsh Heritage in North America

- Eschoir returns for the Grand Concert
- Welsh Tenor Dafydd Jones
- Edward Morus Jones will receive the NAWF Heritage Medallion
- Extensive Seminar line-up
- Cinema from Wales
- Theatre production~Alice Paul
- Tours return; including a chance to visit the Welsh Tract
- Join us as we celebrate the Urdd's centenary, 1922-2022
- the 90th National Gymanfa Ganu

Headquarters hotel is the Doubletree by Hilton, Philadelphia City Center
Room rates only \$129. Festival registration opened March 1

<http://festivalofwales.org/nafov-accommodations.html>

If you wish to add friends to our mailing list or be removed from Welsh Society mailings, respond to Sarasotawelsh@gmail.com.

Your Welsh Society Board:

Amy Ferrell, Vice-President and Past President; Dr John Garrison, Secretary and Song Leader; Meg Larrabee, Treasurer, Maureen and Phil Jones, Corresponding Secretaries; Don Hughes, Founder, Past President and Lifetime Trustee; David and Sandra Rees, Trustees and Past Presidents, Scholarship; Meryl Fell, Trustee and Past President; Bob Griffiths, Chaplain; Mona Garrison, Webmaster; Jeffrey Jones, Facebook Administrator; Susan Lewis, Banquet Accompanist; and Dr. Jim and Jackie Fountaine, Past President and Secretary and active volunteers

\$10 dues for 2022 may be sent to The Gulf Coast St. David's Welsh Society, P.O. Box 19343, Sarasota, FL 34276,
or join / rejoin in person at the picnic.

SARASOTAWELSH.COM, SarasotaWelsh@gmail.com