

Springtime greetings from your Gulf Coast St. David's Welsh Society May, 2021



PICNIC: Sunday, May 23, 1

p.m. Now that we have had our vaccinations and feel more confident about gathering, we are planning a picnic on Sunday, May 23, at 1 p.m. at Bee Ridge Park, Wilkinson Road at Lockwood Ridge Rd., east of Swift and south of Bee Ridge Rd. There is ample parking, covered picnic pavilion with attached restrooms, playground and covered basketball court. If you are more comfortable in lawn chairs, bring what you need. The Park Department requires masks according to CDC rules for those not fully vaccinated. Please bring your own family's picnic and beverages. We need to know how many song books and nametags to bring, so let us know if you are coming by contacting Meg Larrabee by email: [meglarrabee@hotmail.com](mailto:meglarrabee@hotmail.com), or text or leave a voice message: 703-581-2713.

DYLAN DAY: MAY 14: 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).

The Sarasota Welsh  
"The Prayer of Eli



have been learning to sing  
"Jenkins" from *Under*

*Milkwood* by Dylan Thomas at our sing-alongs, so May 14th is your day to practice it:

**"THE PRAYER OF ELI JENKINS"**

Every morning when I wake, Dear Lord, a little prayer I make.  
Oh please to keep thy loving eye... on all poor creatures born to die.  
And every evening at sundown, I ask a blessing on the town.  
For whether we last the night or no, I'm sure it's always .... touch and go.  
We are not wholly bad or good, who live our lives under Milkwood.  
And thou, I know, will be the first....to see our best side, not our worst.  
O let us see another day. Bless us all... this night, I pray.  
And to the sun, we all will bow... and say "good night" ....but just for now

.....

**May 31: Memorial Day at Arcadia:**

The annual service planned by the Arcadia Rotary Club remembering and honoring the 28 World War II British cadets who died during air training and buried there, will again be held on Monday May 31st at the British plot in the Oak Street Cemetery, Arcadia, beginning at 10 a.m. Please let me know if you plan to attend and if you can present the Welsh Society wreath. Directions: SR 70 into Arcadia, making a left turn on N. Lee Avenue. Turn right on W. Whidden Street and then left on the continuation of N. Lee Avenue which bends into Levines Avenue. You will see signs on the roadside placed by the Rotary Club. Here were our representatives in 2019:



**Pam, Muriel, Ronnie, Don, Bill, Amy, Bob, Meryl**

**Special Anniversary Wishes**

**June 2: Dor and Bob Brown will celebrate 55 years!**

**June 9: Maureen and Phil Jones will celebrate 65 years!**

*Pen-blwydd Priodas*



**WELSH FESTIVAL SEPTEMBER 2-5 CHANGE OF VENUE ANNOUNCEMENT:**

**North American Festival of Wales Moves to Utica, NY**

"It has been a long 14 months and we are all ready to take a step toward normal. This message is to update you on plans for the 2021 North American Festival of Wales. We realize the COVID situation is ever-evolving and, for the first time, it looks like we are on the right side of this fight. The board of the Welsh North American Association feels strongly that the best course of action for the organization is to take a small step forward and hold an in-person event in September for those who are comfortable attending.

We realized several months ago that our biggest obstacle was the U.S.-Canada border closure. Unfortunately, we just learned that it has been extended another month. As a result, we are unable to move forward with planning an in-person event in Ottawa. We plan to return to Ottawa in 2025. We have decided to relocate the 2021 festival to Utica, New York. Utica has strong Welsh roots and the 'National Gymanfa Ganu' has been held there many times in the past, most recently in 1996.

Plans are under way and we ask that you bear with us as we navigate these new times. We assure you that in every stage of the planning we will follow guidelines from the CDC and New York State Department of Health. If you feel comfortable, we hope you will join us as we continue to preserve and promote our Welsh heritage.

Hotel booking will be available early May and we are working to get a tentative schedule out as soon as possible. We anticipate the event will start on Thursday, September 2, and end on Sunday, September 5. At this time, we do not plan to run auxiliary tours. However, Utica and the surrounding area have a lot to offer if you plan to extend your stay and explore on your own. We want to eliminate as many variables as possible before opening registration, and therefore aim to do so by July 1.

As always, please reach out to me with questions and I will do my best to assist; wnaahq@gmail.com.

Key Dates:

May 4: Hotel reservations available

July 1: Registration opens

September 2: Festival starts

**Megan Williams**  
**Executive Secretary**  
**On Behalf of the WNAA Board of Trustees"**

Submitted by Don



Hughes:

Thank you to John and Mona Garrison for arranging our four zoom meetings over the past quarantine season! We sang Welsh songs in the fall in place of our picnic, sang Christmas music in December, held our Annual Meeting in January with our storyteller Anna Bedford delighting us with another Welsh fairy tale, and celebrated St. David's Day March 1 with singing, marking our Welsh origins on a big map and hearing Rev. Dr. Budd Friend-Jones' enjoyable talk. Perhaps our traditional restaurant brunches can resume soon if our May 23 picnic is a success, followed by our Annual Picnic October 24, 2021.

The Board of the Gulf Coast St. David's Welsh Society: Amy Ferrell, John and Mona Garrison, Meg Larrabee, Maureen and Phil Jones, Pam Edmunds, Don Hughes, Muriel Patram, Bob Griffiths, Susan Lewis, Meryl and Bill Fell, Sandra and David Rees

If you have friends who would like to be on our mailing list, or if you no longer wish to receive communications from the Gulf Coast St. David's Welsh Society, please let us know.

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