

Chiltern District Welsh Society

Autumn Newsletter 2007.



The society has continued to promote a number of activities during the last few months. Reports on these follow:

Chairman's Report.

The summer seems to have flown by and our activities during the recent months a distant memory.

The following reports have brought back the enjoyment of those events.

Our thanks again to Pat and John Whitworth for hosting the Summer Lunch. What an asset the gazebos were!

The International Eisteddfod at Llangollen was a great entertainment. The unexpected visit to hear the Fron Male Voice Choir rehearse was a welcome bonus.

We enjoyed a glorious sunny day of golf at Harewood Downs in September.

Thanks again to Ralph for the organisation.

We look forward to drinks with our President in December.

Bob Ford

Walking Holiday in the Brecon Beacons 22nd - 25th April.

Our intrepid walking group, fifteen this time, set off for Crickhowell on Sunday April 22nd. A simple journey you may think, but if you reach Oxford to discover that someone's rainproofs haven't been put in and that you have to return to Colehill and start again it does delay dinner.

On Monday we set off for Ystradfellte, again by a more circuitous route than expected, all ladies know that men never turn back when they've missed a turning, Bob Ford is no exception. The extra tour was, however, very interesting.

Once at our destination we donned waterproofs and by following rough paths and sometimes quite difficult steps visited four waterfalls. We got exceptionally wet

but enjoyed the misty scenery and the spectacular falls. I had not been to these since 1949, but the memory of them had remained with me and I was not disappointed.



Dinner at Manor Hotel - Crickhowell

Tuesday was to have been the day for climbing the Sugar Loaf, but some of us were more than a little tired; our leaders devised a different day. Joined now by Ann and Peter Lawrence, who had been at the London Marathon (finishing times not to hand), a little gentle shopping therapy in Crickhowell was indulged in by the ladies while the men examined the old bridge over the Usk and studied flood defence measures.

We then visited the Sugar Loaf Vineyard to sample the wines, Welsh cakes and coffee, after watching a huge St. Bernard nearly smother Miles Griffith with affection!

Hugh Griffith then led us to Llanthony Priory which is not on the road to anywhere but if you haven't been to see it and enjoyed its air of ancient tranquillity, do so some time. Going north from Llanthony the road runs in a valley parallel to and below Offa's Dyke Footpath (which goes along a high ridge) and eventually to Hay Bluff and its wonderful view.

On to Hay-on-Wye, where one must buy a book or two, have a coffee or an ice cream; then back to Crickhowell and out to dinner.

Wednesday was the day for the big one. First of all to the Mountain Centre for sustenance, coffee and Bara Brith, and then onto the Storey Arms. Kitted up, in Maldwyn's case in a spectacular red cape, we started up towards Corn Du and Pen y Fan. The sad story of Tommy Jones was related as we passed the obelisk; if you have tears to shed prepare to hear the tale of his death from one of us. The path got ever steeper and mistier as we approached Corn Du. However, all made it, had a rest, and from there Pen y Fan was a stroll - followed by a chorus of Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau at the top.

Down by a more direct but less steep route to the main road. A helicopter then appeared and entertained us with some practice rescues.

On Thursday morning we all went our various ways. Our thanks go to Bob Ford and Hugh Griffith for their organisation and leadership which gave us a memorable few days.

Chris Thomas.



Top of Pen-y-Fan

A.G.M. 11th May at Coleshill Village Hall.

54 members attended and there were a number of apologies for absence. The Chairman Bob Ford welcomed everyone and then gave a brief outline of the events that had taken place during the past year,

before conducting the business of the evening.

Of the committee, Ralph Broomby had decided to stand down. Bob Ford paid tribute to his valuable contribution to the Society over the years. Ralph promised his continued support in the years ahead.

Eryl Morris had agreed to take his place, this was put to the meeting and approved.

Ann Lawrence, the Membership Secretary, reported that membership had exceeded 100 by the St. David's Day Dinner, and now stood at 103.

Eileen Mitchell reported on the healthy state of the Society's finances.

This put everyone in a good mood for the Buffet Supper, ably arranged by the ladies. The evening finished off with a light hearted rendering of readings, by members, from Dylan Thomas's Under Milk Wood.

Maldwyn Pugh

Visit to Llangollen International Eisteddfod 10th – 13th July.

A group of 9 members, and an interloper from the Oslo Welsh Society, gathered in the Chainbridge Hotel in Llangollen during the evening of the 10th. Visits to the Eisteddfod were planned for Wednesday and Thursday. During the days, members attended different competitions as they wished, meeting up in the evening for a meal.

Tickets had been pre-booked for the Wednesday evening concert in the Pavilion, which was hosted by Terry Waite, the Eisteddfod President. It started off with the assembly on stage of representatives of each of the 57 competing nations together with their national flag, followed by performances from some of the competitors present. This was a great success and enjoyed by all.

On the Thursday, those who were lucky enough to be in the Pavilion for the various competitions saw Welsh Clog dancers win the Gold Medal in their category, after a brilliant performance against strong opposition.

In the evening we went to watch a rehearsal of the Fron Male Voice Choir.

We were warmly welcomed, and came away at the interval in the rehearsal, in time for a final group evening meal back at the hotel.

Fine food, convivial company, very good service and reasonable weather made the visit a memorable one for all.

Maldwyn Pugh



Dinner at Chain Bridge Hotel - Llangollen

Summer Lunch 12th August.

The Society's Summer Lunch this year was very kindly hosted by Pat and John Whitworth at their beautiful home 'Tara', in Little Chalfont.

Just under 60 members arrived on the Sunday to a fabulous garden, full of blooming flowers, despite our very wet summer! The gazebos looked very attractive indeed and provided shelter from one rather heavy shower! However, the weather was kind and we all enjoyed catching up with fellow members in the beautiful sunshine.

We were treated to a sumptuous luncheon of cold meats, mouth-watering salads and extremely tempting desserts, provided by caterers from Hazlemere. Thank you to the ladies of the committee for arranging the excellent catering.

Bob Ford, congratulated Val & David Bevan on their Ruby Wedding Anniversary and plans were discussed about a possible visit to the catering college at Aylesbury in the autumn.



Summer Lunch

Many thanks to Pat and John Whitworth for hosting this popular event. It was a truly memorable afternoon, full of laughter, good conversation and great food in absolutely beautiful surroundings and enjoyed by all.

'.....Diolch yn fawr iawn am brynhawn bendigedig. Rydyn ni yn edrych ymlaen yn barod am y cinio haf blwyddyn nesaf....!'

Anne Browne



Summer Lunch

Golf Day 7th September.

Ralph arranged a wonderful sunny day for this year's golf at Harewood Downs. Teams of four were each made up of three males and one female. A great lunch was enjoyed by the players who were joined by other society members.

Margaret Broomby, Gwyndaf John, Dennis Scourfield and Chris Thomas made up the winning team. It was noted that no-one reached the green for 'nearest the pin'! Thanks to Ralph for organizing a very enjoyable event and we look forward to next year's competition.

Bob Ford

Welsh Themed Dinner at Aylesbury College 24th October.

A total of 26 members and their guests enjoyed a convivial meal at Hardings Restaurant which is in the grounds of Aylesbury College.

The restaurant provides opportunities for students to prepare, cook and serve exceptional meals to customers at very modest prices, complimented by a comprehensive range of fine wines and alcoholic beverages. It is situated in a prime position on the ground floor of this new college building.

We enjoyed a very good meal which included Welsh lamb and the obligatory Welsh cakes.

The meal was excellent value in a very pleasant venue with convenient parking. This combined with excellent company and lively conversation made it a most pleasant evening. Hopefully one that can be repeated in future years.

Eryl Morris



Dinner at Aylesbury College



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Forthcoming events.

- Christmas drinks on the 9th December 2007 at The Tuft.
- St. David's Day Dinner on the 1st March 2008 at Gerrards Cross Golf Club.
- A walking holiday in Snowdonia, led by Mike & Cecily Stythe, is being planned for the second half of April 2008.
- A.G.M. at Coleshill Village Hall on the 9th May 2008.
- Summer Lunch at Eryl Morris's on the 6th July 2008.
- A Golfing Day will be organised in September 2008.
- The Night of a Thousand Voices Concert at the Albert Hall should be in early October 2008.

Details of these events will be advised as they become available.