

# Chiltern District Welsh Society

## Summer Newsletter 2020



### Chairman's Report

I hope that you and your families are all keeping safe and well.

The current pandemic has been difficult for many of our members, especially for those of us of a mature vintage.

Covid-19 has meant that the Society has had to cancel many of the events from the 2020 programme after a very successful 2019.

So far, we have had to cancel planned trips to see Jesus College, Oxford and Christ Church Cathedral, the June trip to South Wales, the Summer Lunch and we have had to postpone our AGM.

However, let's look back at the last year, and celebrate what did happen.

Starting with last year's AGM, with entertainer and magician Bertie Pearce, ably assisted by Kay, Ann and Gwen.

In June many of us joined Jonathan Pegler's travels around Oswestry, covering visits to stately homes, castles, a canal 200 feet above ground and a petrified forest, over 300 million years old.

In July Di and Alan Longshaw were our generous hosts for the summer lunch, splendidly catered by 'To Dine For'.

August saw our golfers fight it out at Oaklands Park Golf Club. Thanks to Chris Thomas and Pam Britton for organizing the event.

In September we had our trip to Slimbridge, arranged by Peter Day, who happens to be Chairman of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust. We were lucky enough to be among the first visitors to see Peter Scott's house after it had been re-opened.

In October, Rob Britton arranged for us to play skittles at Oaklands Park, and Pat Chapman surprised everyone with her prowess at the game.

Di and Colin Thomas hosted our Christmas Drinks party, and this time the weather didn't keep people away as it did in 2017. 'To Dine For' provided us with a steady supply of

canapes and the wine was sufficient to lubricate voices for the carol singing (*see the full report below*).

At least we were able to celebrate our 20th St David's Day in style with our Life President, Ann Evans, arranging both a grand celebratory cake and the wonderful harpist, Glain Dafydd.

*David Powell*

*Chairman*

### AGM

Due to the lockdown, this year we will hold a postponed Annual General Meeting by video conference (4pm on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July).

Many of you will have already used Zoom to stay in touch with family members or social groups, and this year we will attempt to hold our AGM using this method.

Of course, it won't be the same – no chance to meet up with old friends, no meal and no singing! However, it will be the opportunity for the Committee to bring everyone up to date with our finances and membership and for our members to ask questions of the committee.

For those of us unfamiliar with the technology, we will hold a couple of practise sessions just before the event so that everyone has a chance to be more comfortable with the arrangement (and so that the committee can practise too!)

### Treasurer

As you may know, Peter and Pat Chapman are moving to Wales shortly, and, as a consequence, we shall be looking for a new Member of the Committee to take over from Peter as Treasurer.

The role does not call for a high level of financial acumen, merely being able to use a spreadsheet and bank electronically.

I know from past experience that asking for members to volunteer is difficult as our members tend to be shy retiring types. So, if you think you know of anyone else in the

Society (who is not already on the committee) with some basic numerate skills please forward me their names in the strictest confidence – your anonymity will be assured.

### Xmas Drinks

At 12:30 on 8th December, we all gathered at Colin and Di Thomas's house in Gerrards Cross for our annual Xmas Drinks and carol



singing. We last visited the Thomas's for Christmas in 2017, when the snow prevented many

from attending. Luckily, this year was a completely different story, with bright winter sunshine. Only a few people couldn't make it, being struck down by winter bugs and not able to attend.

After a glass of wine, Gwyndaf John was at hand to hand out sticky name badges – either as an aide de memoire when greeting people,



or to remind us who we were. Our caterers, 'To Dine For' were excellent

and a constant stream of canapés and drinks were served as we circulated, chatted and caught up with old friends. Many used this opportunity to distribute Christmas cards – a



chance to circulate and save on postage!

Chairman, David Powell, thanked everyone for attending and

especially our hosts, Di & Colin as this was the third CDWS event they'd held over the last few years. He then handed over to Jonathan Pegler at the piano for the Christmas carols.

This year Jonathan had produced new carol sheets, which were much appreciated and the entire room joined in for some of our favourites.

The singing went on until mid-afternoon, when guests started drifting away, thanking our hosts and making it home before dark.

Thanks again to Colin, Di, our caterers and the organisers.

### 24<sup>th</sup> January Quiz Evening

At home our Quiz Night is usually on a Monday – Mastermind, Only Connect followed by University Challenge, but at the end of January we venture out on a Friday evening to Coleshill to take part in the CDWS Quiz Evening.

Chairs and tables were arranged early and we were supposed to divide ourselves up into six tables of six, then choose a name for our team. There was some confusion over this

with teams varying in size from 5 to 8.

Jonathan had prepared 5 rounds of questions, but first we were given the two 'Table Rounds' to solve. The first was to name the subject of 20 or so autobiographies, and the second was



to identify pictures of seascapes – in the fog, in the snow, battered by gales and otherwise disguised.

The main rounds had topics varying from geography to nurses, and this year Jonathan must have had pity on us, as all the teams seemed to get more questions correct than wrong.

Halfway through we had a welcome break as the Fish and Chips arrived and were swiftly dispatched.



Our usual glamorous assistant was absent this year, but Peter Chapman stepped into the breach – collecting the papers in and checking scoring as well as participating in the winning team, The Chiltern Hundreds. It was a close fought fight and we finished after 10pm.

Thanks to Jonathan for devising and hosting the questions.

## St David's Day Dinner

This year we celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the Society's inaugural event, at which the founding members had sat down for a special St David's Day dinner. After we'd taken our seats Ann Evans recalled that first



meal she'd arranged for a small group of friends who shared a Welsh heritage. Ralph Broomby reminisced that at the time he was doubtful the idea of a Welsh Society would take root. But it had grown and thrived. He congratulated our Life President and founder, and also the members of the Society on its continuing vitality.



We welcomed three visitors, of whom David & Glenys Evans have become our latest members.

The event followed our established pattern with the 65 diners enjoying a sparkling drink as they gathered at Harewood Downs Golf Club. The special anniversary cake was on show and much admired. A plentiful display of daffodils decorated the tables.

The venue and their new chef did not disappoint. The most popular menu choices of Lamb Shank and Poached Pear drew



particular compliments. The Sea Trout was excellent. Known locally as "Sewin", this

fish was a regular seasonal catch from the River Taf in West Wales where I grew up. This year, for the first time ever, any Sewin and Salmon caught by the local anglers have to be returned to the river. So, my choice was flavoured with a touch of nostalgia.

As the meal drew to a close our chairman, David Powell, rose to speak. He thanked the staff and all who had helped organise the



event, and then introduced Glain Dafydd, the accomplished young harpist who provided our entertainment.

Originally from Bangor, Glain's

resume showed that she had studied in Paris and won various international awards, as well as graduating with distinction from her postgraduate studies at the Royal Academy of Music. Unsurprisingly therefore her repertoire for the evening was varied, and every piece beautifully played. The music she played on the evening comprised:

La Source (Hasselmans); Impromptu Caprice (Pierné); Merch Megan; Llety'r bugail; Ar hyd y nos; Sun Dance (Mathias); Suite BWV (J.S.Bach); Au Matin (Tournier)



After her performance Glain was presented with a bouquet of flowers by Irene Powell, and the formal dinner was closed with a heartfelt rendering of Hen Wlad fy Nhadau.



Of course, the evening would not have been complete without our traditional sing-song, so John Breese took his place at the piano. Despite his very topical

concern that an assemblage giving full voice might risk spreading viruses, Barrie Reece could not resist once John started to play Calon Lan and he was soon joining in with gusto.

It was a most enjoyable evening, and we now look forward to next year's Dinner at which we will be joined by a special speaker and renowned Welshman, Rowan Williams.

*Gwynnaf John*

## **MEMBERSHIP**

New members are always welcome.

Please contact our Membership Secretary,

Ann Lawrence on:

01494 727207 or  
[tisael2@gmail.com](mailto:tisael2@gmail.com)

Our Website has even more pictures and descriptions:

[www.chilternwelsh.org](http://www.chilternwelsh.org)

## **2020 Programme**

### **22<sup>nd</sup> July Virtual AGM**

We will hold a virtual version of our AGM at 4pm on 22<sup>nd</sup> July. Invitations and instructions will be sent out shortly. We will also hold a practice session for those not familiar with Zoom.

### **4<sup>th</sup> September Golf Day**

At Oakland Park Golf Club, Chalfont St Giles. Social distancing rules will be adhered to.

### **October Local Walk**

Details to be confirmed

### **6<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Drinks**

Ralph and Margaret Broomby have kindly offered to host the event at their home in Chesham Bois. We hope to be able to hold this popular event subject to social distancing rules at the time.

## **2021 Provisional Programme**

Please note that all events will be subject to change, depending on the pandemic situation.

### **January Quiz Evening**

Prepare yourselves for another taxing quiz at Coleshill.

### **26<sup>th</sup> February St David's Day Dinner**

This year we are privileged to have as our speaker Rowan Williams, Baron Williams of Oystermouth who has previously held the posts of Archbishop of Canterbury, Bishop of Monmouth, Archbishop of Wales, Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge. He is also an author, poet and translator of Welsh poetry.

### **Spring Picnic**

Details tba

### **May AGM**

At Coleshill Hall, celebrating our 21st year.

### **June Welsh Trip**

Jonathan will re-organise 2020's cancelled excursion to see sights based around Cardiff.

### **July Summer Lunch**

### **August Golf Day**

### **October – Skittles Evening**

### **December Christmas Drinks**