

Chiltern District Welsh Society

Summer Newsletter 2017



Chairman's Report

Welcome to our Summer Newsletter.

First of all, thanks to all the contributors who amusingly capture the fun and friendship at our events. Additionally, I want to thank members who have generously opened their home or garden: Alan and Diana Longshaw for hosting the Christmas Drinks and Ernest Morris, the Summer Lunch. A very special thank you to Steve Rowsell who secured Huw Edwards as our guest speaker at the St David's Day Dinner - quite a coup! Finally, on behalf of the committee, thank you all for co-operating with our "pay before play" system, which has greatly improved the fairness and accuracy of allocating tickets for events.

I am pleased to report that we have now put in place a Public Liability Policy, which brings us in line with other Societies. This is not a substitute for members' own insurances and it is expected that functions in private homes will, as before, be covered on the householder's insurance.

The society continues to thrive. Our finances remain in rude health, thanks to the careful management of our treasurer, Graham Beavan. Membership remains steady; however, we were all very sad to lose Ieuan Longhurst, who had been a very supportive member for many years.

To our delight, Rob Britton has joined the committee. I'm sure we will enjoy and benefit from his great experience and wisdom.

There is much to look forward to in our programme: the Golf Day, a Portsmouth day trip, the Christmas Drinks. A Stratford theatre trip is being planned and also a future Welsh wine and cheese tasting evening – but please do not hesitate to suggest any ideas you would like to see included in the programme.

My best wishes to everyone.

Mwynhewch yr haf. Enjoy the Summer

Kay Day

Xmas Drinks

On a bright, beautiful December morning we gathered for our yearly Christmas drinks.



We were warmly greeted by our Chairman Kay Day and our hosts Di and Alan Longshaw at their home in Chalfont St Peter.

A warming glass of wine enjoyed with delicious canapes prepared for by 'To Dine

For'. As usual the atmosphere was convivial, guests chattering together - Christmas preparations - activities with friends and families.

Some had attended the London Male Voice choir at the Albert Hall, others to the Christmas concert at Jewin chapel where Huw Edwards was the host. You can imagine our excitement at learning that Huw will be our guest speaker at the next St David's Day Dinner.

With warm sunshine, the conservatory doors were opened, guests spilled out into the garden and admired the beautiful coy carp in the garden pond.

Later, before it was time to leave Jonathan Pegler organised the carol signing, unaccompanied this time but the pure Welsh voices were a delight to hear.

Kay thanked all that had made this event so enjoyable and as we left we picked up our copy of the newsletter.

Liz Seely

20th January Quiz Night

On the evening of the inauguration of President Donald Trump, members of the CDWS had better things to do – Quiz Night! Everyone braved the cold and gathered around 7pm and settled in tables of 6 or 7, six teams altogether.



This year Jonathan's lovely assistant was his wife Jayne.

Subjects for the five rounds included Water, the Year 2016

and Entertainment. The most difficult questions were on one of the table rounds, consisting of pictures of islands off the coast of Wales, which we had to try to identify.

Halfway through the evening we stopped for supper, provided by Ann Tennant and her ladies.

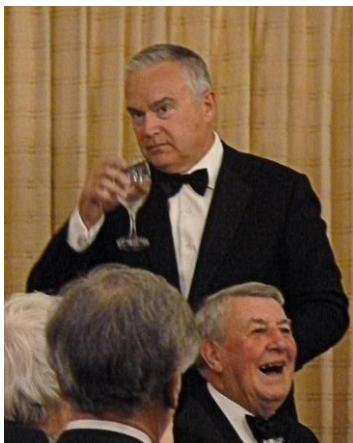
At the end of the evening, with our heads reeling, Graham Beavan's team were the clear leaders and stepped up to accept their prizes.

Thanks to Jonathan and Jayne for devising and conducting the quiz.

David Powell

25th February St David's Day Dinner

Seventy-seven members of CDWS celebrated an early St David's Day at the Harewood Downs Gold Club on 25th



February. The flag and bunting was up to welcome the guest of honour, Huw Edwards, the BBC journalist, newsreader and spare-time organist.

The excellent meal, which was very efficiently served, had a Welsh flavour with creamed leeks and lamb for the main course, Bara Brith for dessert and, the tour de force,

home-made Welsh cakes to finish, courtesy of Jean Owen.

Mr Edwards sang for his supper with an after-dinner speech which was humorous, informative and delivered mainly in English but, in honour of the occasion, also interspersed with Welsh.

The evening ended with Kay Day, who was presiding as chair of CDWS, thanking Steve Rowsell for inviting Huw as guest speaker, and then followed a hearty rendering of the National Anthem

Elan Preston-Whyte

5th May AGM

We all gathered at Coleshill Village Hall at 7pm on Friday 5th May, for our 2017 AGM.

Chairman, Kay Day, called us to order at 7:30 and we went through the 'official' business of the evening. Kay recounted some of the trips and events of the past year and mentioned some of the planned events for the rest of the year.



Membership is now at 129 and Jonathan Pegler (standing in for Treasurer Graham Beavan) reported that our bank balance

has been managed down to the target figure through subsidising some of the events.

All committee members were willing to stand again and were duly re-elected, and Kay agreed to continue as chair for an additional third year. Jonathan, on behalf of the members, thanked Kay for her leadership and presented her with a bouquet. We are happy to announce that Rob Britton has also agreed to join the committee.

After the AGM, we enjoyed an excellent supper supplied by Ann Tennant's team, we settled down to an evening of Magic.

Mike Smith was introduced as a holder of the Silver Star award which is the highest achievement given by the Inner Circle and its House of Magic, which is in a secret location.



Mike produced a red ball, which in turn appeared and disappeared. With his jacket sleeves rolled the ball was either in his hand, in his pocket, or simply turning into a piece of fruit. Card tricks are a staple diet for magicians and Mike was no exception and had us all marvelling at

his sleight of hand.

Mike then produced three lengths of rope, duly inspected by a member of the audience, that they were quite ordinary and were of different lengths. Mike then proceeded to manipulate the lengths into one long one, then two long and one short, then into a complete circle and so on. He then turned his craft to fool us with various dice tricks. Just when we thought that we had 'seen through' the deception, we were surprised, yet again, by another turn of events.

Next came a hair-raising feat with paper cups, placed over numbered small blocks. One block held a vicious large spike. As each member called out, at random, a number, Mike slammed his hand down smashing the cups. The last number, obviously the one with the spike, was the number not called out. We all held our breath.

Mike then announced that he was also a psychological magician and a mind reader. Producing a book, he asked two members to pick out, from any page, a letter, which they were asked to tell him. They were then asked to pick from the book a word starting with that letter of more than five words, but to keep it secret. Mike proceeded to guess the correct words. It was all very spooky.

The evening ended with Mike seemingly swallowing, with great ease, a fully blown up balloon under our intent gaze. It was an evening of high drama thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Kerry Birbeck

May Spring Walk



The Hambleden valley was the perfect location for the Society's Spring walk on May 9th. It shows England at its very best with the idyllic villages of Fingest, Skirmett and Turville, beautiful rolling countryside and quaint pubs.

Sixteen members met at The Frog at Skirmett at 10 o'clock on a dry but quite chilly morning.



As a large herd of deer grazed in the distance we were glad to get going.

The walk took us across the valley, up a gentle slope through Adam's Wood, passing a field of rare breed sheep and lambs. Even those of us with an agricultural background were unsure of the exact breed!

We were in luck as there was still a fine display of bluebells scattered amongst the trees. When we emerged from the wood we

were greeted by marvellous views taking in the villages of Fingest and Turville below us. Turville is often used for filming episodes of Midsomer Murders and The Vicar of Dibley is set in the local church.

The valley and surrounding hills are a haven for wildlife and flora and one of the highlights of our walk was Janet enthraling us with her knowledge of the local wild flowers. As well as naming the myriad of tiny hedgerow flowers, which many of us had not even noticed, she educated us on the subtle differences between different species. Who knew there were so many species of buttercup! We all gave her our full attention suspecting there might be a quiz when we returned to the pub!



Even though we were given the option of following a shorter route we were all made of sterner stuff and completed the full distance of Gwyndaf's 3-4 mile walk, returning to Skirmett via Fingest and its

ancient church. This is a Grade 1 listed building with a tower dating from the early 12th century. Surrounding the church is a cluster of medieval and Georgian houses and cottages.

We were all looking forward to our lunch at The Frog and we were not disappointed. The food was excellent and it was difficult to resist those tempting desserts!

Our thanks to Gwyndaf and Janet for organising such an enjoyable and interesting Spring walk.

Gwyneth Herrington

MEMBERSHIP

New members are always welcome.

Please contact our Membership Secretary,

Ann Lawrence on:

01494 727207 or

membership@chilternwelsh.com

Our Website has even more pictures and descriptions:

www.chilternwelsh.org

2017 Programme

19th June 5-day trip to Tenby

Jonathan Pegler is this year organising a coach trip to places of interest in South Wales based in and around Tenby.

2nd July Summer Lunch

This year the Summer Lunch will be kindly hosted by Ernest Morris in Amersham.

1st September Golf Day

Rob & Pam Britton and Chris Thomas will organise our Annual Golf Day at Oakland Park. Non-players are very welcome to join for lunch.

14th September Portsmouth Trip

Coach trip to see the Mary Rose, Nelson's Victory and other sights.

October/November

Theatre Trip – tbc

10th December Christmas Drinks

Di & Colin Thomas have kindly offered to host the 2017 event at their home in Gerrards Cross.