

Chiltern District Welsh Society

Summer Newsletter 2019



Xmas Drinks

What a difference in the weather this year! Last year a sudden snowfall prevented many from attending our Christmas event, but in 2018 the weather was mild enough to enjoy the garden, and about 55 people arrived instead of the 20 or so who were able to brave the snow last year.

Committee members were on parking duty, and on arrival, Kay Day gave out name tags to make conversation easier.

Bill & Sue Jones were excellent hosts, and attendees were plied with canapés and drinks.

Rob Britton announced that Peter Lawrence had just celebrated his 90th birthday by not only swimming his goal of 90 lengths over a week for charity, but actually swimming 100 lengths! Rob ran a raffle to support Peter's charity which raised another £200.



Afterwards Jonathan Pegler played the organ and Bill Jones led the singing of some favourite Christmas carols.

In place of the usual gifts to the hosts, Bill & Sue had requested a donation to the Woodland Trust to plant trees in Parc Mawr, Conway. Bill described the ecological background and benefits of the scheme, and, at the end of the afternoon, sufficient funds had been raised for six trees to be dedicated in the name of Chiltern District Welsh Society. We all left at about 4pm. Many thanks to Bill & Sue Jones for being such welcoming hosts and to 'To Dine For' for the delicious canapés and attentive service.

25th January Quiz Evening

Thirty-six members of the Society attended the 2019 Quiz Evening and we arranged ourselves into tables of six for a 7:30 start.

Jonathan set the quiz and delivered it with help from his lovely (?) assistant Graham Beavan. This was a relief to many as Graham's team has often won the quiz in prior years.

We started at 7:30 and each table had first to devise a name for its team, these included The Commoners and Y Ffrinda.

Jonathan's fiendish questions were set in 6 rounds with titles such as 'Name that Advert' and 'Cities with 2 names'.

After the first two rounds Fish & Chips were delivered from the Three Households Fish & Chip shop which were prompt, hot and tasty.

At the end of the evening, the winning team, The Commoners, were revealed to be a team comprising of Gwyndaf & Janet John, David & Irene Powell & Rose Edwards. Two Committee members in the winning team? They denied any inside knowledge, but one never knows.

David Powell thanked Jonathan for all the work that he had put into organising the quiz

1st March St David's Dinner



And here we had the appearance of our own Rumpole of the Bailey in the form of Welshman, His Honour,

Judge Tudor Wyn Owen FRAeS, now retired, He was educated at Aberdare Boys' Grammar School and King's College London (LLB). He was called to the bar at Gray's Inn in 1974 and gained an excellent reputation in Aviation Law and Crime. He is a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society, Freeman of the

City of London and Liveryman and past master of the Worshipful Company of Pilots. He served as a Recorder on the South Eastern Circuit from 1991 to 2007.

As a true Welshman, his anecdotes of his experiences as a pilot, his knowledge of technical jargon, his ready wit and delightful humour in accounts of his dealings with miscreants as a Judge were a delight to the ear. His experiences with juries, his acknowledgement of learning most from cases which arrived at a wrong decision (in his estimation) were delivered with the rapidity of a Spitfire Browning Machine gun! He was very much thanked for his attendance and his ability to engage his audience in a most delightful and informative way!

His address, of course came at the end of the Dinner that started with a convivial reception at the excellent venue of the Harewood Downs Golf Club where national flags were prominently displayed. The sumptuous 3 course meal (finished with Coffee and Mints) was well sampled and enjoyed by all present where Mains were chosen from Lamb Rump, Roasted Salmon Fillet and Confit Duck Leg, Wine was in full flow, and conversations raged at each of the tables! (If ever you want to know how a social occasion is progressing, listen to the music of the conversations!!). No-one seemed to share any grief for the English who had been so roundly conquered by the Welsh Rugby Team in the International at the Millennium Stadium the previous week (poor dabs!)



Just before people were ready to depart, Pianist John Breeze struck up on the keyboard in true Canu o'r Galon ("singing from the heart"!!) vein with Calon Lân as a starter and then we progressed meritoriously through the usual classic full bodied and blooded

Welsh Songs and Hymns that always adorn our functions, using "song sheets" provided by Gwyndaf, and augmented by the sonorous tones of a melodic Tudor Judge. We finally ended up with a great rendering of Delilah! (I

seem to remember the ground actually shaking in parts of the voluminous dramatic delivery done in *fortississimo*(FFF)!!!)



A marvellous convivial occasion that was enjoyed by everyone and we look forward to ...yn dathlu Dydd Gŵyl

Dewi eto y flwyddyn nesaf mewn arddull debyg! (...celebrating St Davids Day again next year in similar style!). Well done, David, Mr Chairman and to Kay & Gwyndaf for organising such a successful event.

Barrie Reece

1st May Spring Walk

This year Gwyndaf added a visit to a local church to our Spring Walk.

We all met at the Red Lion pub in Little Missenden at 10:00 to order our lunches for later. Then 22 walkers set off on a 3 mile walk in the hills around the village.

We started off following the River Misbourne and in the first field we passed we saw a curious collection of animals – pot-bellied Vietnamese pigs, funny looking sheep that turned out to be goats and a magnificent turkey displaying for his harem of females.

In the next field we discovered an archaeological party surveying the field. They explained that they had detected signs of very old buildings (possibly Roman) close to the river and were tracing out the shape of the building with a view to a future dig.



We then followed the South Bucks Way footpath up the hill with wild flowers on either side. Janet John pointed out

some of the flowers, and when we reached the top of the hill, she introduced us to the flowers and explained their common names. From here we were able to admire the views across the Misbourne Valley.

The weather continued to be fine as we turned back towards the village pub, chatting and getting to know other members of the society. We arrived back at the Red Lion just before 12:00. There we were met by others who had come for the church tour, and there were over 30 of us when we sat down to lunch.



The food proved to be very good, with a wide choice from sandwiches to belly pork and sea bass. We

also had time to sample the beer and watch the carp in a pond in the back garden.

About 2pm we walked the hundred yards or so to the village church, The Church of St John the Baptist, where we were met by the vicar, the Reverend John Simpson, who treated us to a guided tour of the church and told us that the original church dates back to Saxon times (about 975 AD). It was then added to by the Normans and by successive villagers over the centuries. The original Saxon church is very visible and you can see where the exterior walls and windows were.

The highlight of the visit was to see the medieval paintings on the church walls. There are a number of pictures on various walls, but the main ones on the north wall of



the church show St Christopher and cartoons of St Catherine showing scenes from her life. The paintings have recently been restored after receiving a grant from the heritage fund. During the restoration even more fragments of paintings were found on other walls around the church, dating from the 13th century and through to the reigns of Elizabeth and William and Mary.

The vicar made an excellent and enthusiastic tour guide, pointing out so many features of this old church that might otherwise have been missed.

Many thanks to Gwyndaf and Janet John for organising such a fun and educational day.

17th May AGM

A good turnout of over fifty members set the scene for an informative, interesting and illusionary evening.

Our Chairman, David Powell got off to a good start (this being his first year as Chairman and hence his first chairing of the AGM) by welcoming us all. In particular Thelma and John Lusher who had travelled all the way from the New Forest. The reports for the year were encouraging; membership strong at one hundred and sixteen with finances in good shape. Two new members of the committee have volunteered their services – Merle Davies and Peter Chapman and there has been strong support for all the events over the year. Particular thanks were directed towards Graham Bevan on his retirement after a long tenure as Treasurer.

Jonathan Pegler had briefly taken on the role of Treasurer to fill the gap and so he presented the Accounts for the year. Under his watch the magnificent sum of £20 had been dealt with. Peter Chapman has now stepped into Graham's shoes.

The formal part of the evening was, as ever, well presented and short and was followed by



a meal. The caterer was Anne Tennant who clearly knows exactly what the members of the CDWS enjoy, and on this occasion was like a human dynamo. The rest of her team were

at an event catering for the mayor of Beaconsfield so Anne was chief cook and bottle washer and everything in between. Well done Anne! The choice of desserts was particularly appreciated. Bread and Butter pudding and custard, Chocolate mousse, cheese and biscuits, Fruit Pavlova and I spotted a fruit salad for someone dairy

intolerant. The gentlemen on our table made a bee-line for the Bread and Butter pudding, and then when Anne explained that she really didn't want to take anything home, they were happily also tucking into Pavlova. No doubt belts were loosened.



After the meal came the entertainment. This year it was the place of Bertie Pearce whose web site says that he "...brings wonder and laughter to your event". We were not

disappointed on either count. The theme was "Now you See it-Now you Don't, The Art of Visual Deception". This was a whistle-stop tour through Surrealism, Trompe L'oeil, Ambiguous Imagery, Optical Art and Camouflage. Fascinating, thought provoking, puzzling, entertaining, amusing and all delivered at a pace that kept you on your toes, engaged and surprised. A particular ripple of amusement occurred when Bertie said that in America artists had used illusionary methods to paint potholes on the road which appeared to be 3D in order to reduce speeding. Here in Buckinghamshire we have no need for artists' illusions. We have the real thing.



Interspersed with the artistic journey were a number of magical moments. Ably assisted by our very own Ann Lawrence, Kay Day and Gwen Hill, Bertie performed mysterious and

inexplicable tricks. Ann, Kay and Gwen have clearly been sworn into secrecy as they were reluctant to share any explanations afterwards. Perhaps they could be prevailed upon at a future event to offer magical entertainment?

The evening closed at 10 pm everyone having been well entertained and well fed. Thank you to all.

MEMBERSHIP

New members are always welcome.

Please contact our Membership Secretary,

Ann Lawrence on:

01494 727207 or

tisael2@gmail.com

Our Website has even more pictures and descriptions:

www.chilternwelsh.org

2019 Programme

1st July Summer Lunch

This year Alan and Diana Longshaw have kindly offered to host the Summer Lunch at their home in Gerrards Cross.

30th August Golf Day

At Oaklands Park Golf Club, Chalfont St Giles. Non-players are very welcome to join for lunch.

12th September Slimbridge Coach Trip

A chance to see Peter Scott's newly reopened house and his paintings at the Wildfowl & Wetland Trust's Slimbridge Reserve and to explore the Wetlands Centre, watch otters being fed and with a talk about re-introducing cranes into the country.

25th October Skittles Evening

Oakland Park Golf Club – 6.30 for 7pm. Including a buffet meal and finishing around 10-10.30. No, we don't know how to play either, but we will be shown – sounds like great fun!

8th December Christmas Drinks

Colin & Di Thomas have offered to host the event at their home in Gerrards Cross as a return visit.

Fingers crossed that the weather is better than in 2017!