

Chiltern District Welsh Society

Winter Newsletter 2017



Chairman's Report

How quickly this year has flown by. It seems no time at all since we were planning the 2017 events - which we sincerely hope you have all enjoyed. We are now finalising our programme for 2018. This will include all our favourites, with some interesting new ones – a trip to the Windsor Races, a day trip to Bristol, and hopefully an informative tasting evening of Welsh wine, beer and cheeses.

As always, I want to express sincere thanks to all of you who have kindly helped during the year, particularly to our host Ernest Morris for the Summer Lunch and to Colin and Di Thomas who will be hosting our much loved Christmas drinks.

Nadolig Llawen i chi a Blwyddyn Newydd Hapus.

Kay Day

19th June 5-day trip to Tenby

Monday:

We travelled by comfortable coach from the Chilterns to South Wales, en route Jonathan entertained us with interesting facts passing by Severn Tunnel Junction, Llanwern steelworks and other local landmarks. We arrived at Llanelli Wetland Centre where the temperature hit 31

degrees and we all enjoyed a lunch stop and walk around the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT). The flamingos and threatened wetland

birds were a treat to see at such close quarters including Nene goose and Laysan teal from Hawaii, and declining species swans and geese from Greenland, Bulgaria and Russia.

Fortunately, we had a wonderfully air-conditioned coach for those of us who found the temperature rising to 35°C a tad difficult!

Tuesday:

Our Blue Badge guide Marion Davies took us

on a fascinating walk around Tenby town. A blue plaque marked the house where 'close friends' Lord Nelson, Lady Hamilton and Sir Wm Hamilton visited, we were told that any impropriety had been denied by the party at the time!



A short trip by boat to Caldey Island during the afternoon was a highlight. Marion guided us around the beautiful Abbey and medieval



buildings. The island has been inhabited since Celtic times, although now

only 8 monks remain and they face difficulty in recruitment. We were so fortunate to be able to see and hear the monks singing and chanting (surprisingly in English rather than Latin). The Prior - Brother Gildas - a friend of Marion's, kindly spoke to us of the monastic life on Caldey, where they rise at 3.30am every day! As the Cistercian Order is a silent Order, at least 12 hours a day are spent without conversation whilst at prayer and work.

In the evening we all gathered for a group meal, kindly arranged by Jonathan, at The Moorings restaurant in Tenby which proved to be a great success.

Wednesday:

Marion took us to Picton Castle and its beautiful gardens, where we were privileged to have an exclusive guided tour from the



Director himself. A most interesting castle from the 19th century with visits to the Great Hall, White and Gold Room, Library and Lady

Philipps's bedroom, then to the Dining Room where the Queen and other members of the royal family were entertained in 2014.

Some of us ventured to the Secret Owl Garden, where we saw an amazing range of owls from distant shores and also a beautiful blue kookaburra from the Antipodes.



Our afternoon visit to St David's Cathedral was so informative, with Marion bringing everything to

life, with her knowledge and enthusiasm. St David's has been a place of worship, prayer and pilgrimage since the 12th century. The medieval Shrine of St David which was restored and then dedicated on St David's Day 2012 contains 5 colourful icons including those of St Patrick and St Andrew. A brief stop was made at Fishguard to view the Last Invasion Tapestry, depicting the French invasion of the UK at Fishguard and the Welsh coast. The belief is that the French were deceived into thinking they were facing a large British army of Redcoats, whereas the red and black movements they saw in the distance were actually local women dressed in traditional red shawls and large black hats!!

Thursday:



A wonderfully entertaining and informative visit to Carew Cheriton Control Tower. The talks given by the 'boys' with their camaraderie and humour, again brought to life the atmosphere of the RNAS station during WW1 and the later RAF station in WW2. The station was home to airships in WW1, then in 1939 Coastal Command squadrons were engaged on coastal patrol duties and bombing raids along the French coast. In 1942 the airfield also became a Technical Training Radio School until it was disbanded and closed in 1945. Most memorably, Reg now aged 91, recounted his service in the RAF followed by singing whilst wearing 'tin' hats in the reconstructed bomb shelter.

On our return to Tenby we made a visit to the Stackpole Estate at Bosherton to view the massive and abundant water lily lakes. An immense spectacle with the lakeside paths leading down to a magnificent beach and coastline.



Some of the party took advantage of an invitation by the Tenby Male Choir to attend one of their rehearsals. They were very impressive, and we learned

that they will be travelling to Oxford to perform with the Oxford Welsh Male Voice Choir in October. Ann Evans presented the choir with a donation and certificate.

Friday:



With our 5 days almost at an end, a last visit was made to the National Botanic Gardens of Wales at Llanarthne. The gardens setting is perfect; however, the temperature had

dropped and light rain was the order of the day!! We were treated to a Falconry display and most of us were able to wear a gauntlet and have a falcon or hawk land on our arm to snatch its food.



The gardens' Great Glasshouse, a dome shaped building at the centre designed

by Lord Norman Foster, is the largest (at 3,500 sq. metres) single-span glasshouse in the world. It houses plants from 6 areas of the world. Nearby the hot house contains spectacular exotic plants and beautiful butterflies from the tropics. The gardens and plants around the grounds were in full bloom and looked amazing.

We arrived back in Bucks around 5pm after a wonderfully varied and informative trip thanks to Jonathan. We look forward to next year!

*Report by Pamela & Lloyd Jones
Photographs by Barrie Reece*

2nd July Summer Lunch

Early on the morning of Sunday July 2nd a group of our stalwart men folk gathered at Ernest Morris's house in Amersham



to erect gazebos in his garden for the annual summer lunch.

The rest of us arrived around 12.30 on a beautiful, hot, sunny day. The ladies were in their prettiest summer dresses and the gentlemen in light shirts and trousers, as well as the odd pair of shorts.

There was much chat about the success of the Lions team against the All Blacks in New Zealand the previous day, and reminiscences about the very successful CDWS trip to Tenby organised by Jonathan Pegler.



Fifty of us mingled in the garden before being asked to collect our food provided by To

Dine For Catering company. A number of very helpful young assistants served the food - a selection of salads, new potatoes, cold beef and salmon en crouete with various relishes. We had brought our own wine and glasses but water was provided on each table and refreshed several times because of the high temperatures. Desserts were equally delicious with a choice of pear meringue and fruit tarts. Later, coffee, tea and chocolates were served at the table.

Before we all departed for home after a very pleasant three hours, our Chairman, Kay Day, thanked the catering company for the delicious lunch and reminded us of some of the upcoming events of the CDWS. Thanks were also given to Ernest for opening up his home and beautiful garden for us to use for this very popular and enjoyable summer event.



1st September Golf Day

On a beautiful sunny day, with just a hint of autumn in the air, nineteen eager golfers gathered at Oakland Park Golf Club for our annual Society Golf Day. We enjoyed delicious bacon baps and coffee as we were greeted by Pam and Chris, who had organised the day, and were given our teams and told the format of the competition.

The first intrepid trio teed off at 9:00am and, before long, we were all on our way trying to drive the ball straight enough to cling onto the fairways and thereafter negotiating the various hazards: - long grass, big trees, strategically placed bunkers and various areas of water.

Many of the holes were lined with wild flowers, which provided a stunning array of colours, a consolation to those of us whose shots were less than glorious.

After golf, hot and weary, we gathered on the patio for a welcome drink with non-playing members who were joining us for lunch providing a welcome opportunity to catch up with old friends.

A delicious lunch was served upstairs by the



efficient, friendly staff before Chris Thomas announced the day's winners:

Jane Morris, Colin Thomas and Tony Glyn-Jones won the team event.



Colin Thomas had the best net score with an impressive 40 points. Marilyn Evans won the Ladies' longest drive Huw Thomas won the Men's longest drive

Jane Morris was nearest the pin for the ladies John Rigelsford was nearest the pin for the men.

After the results, Rob Britten and Ralph Broomby paid tribute to Mike Stythe, a long-standing member of the Society who died earlier this year. Ralph told some wonderful stories of walking and climbing trips led by Mike in his beloved Snowdonia with members of the society, whose courage he tested to the full with some hair-raising feats. He will be greatly missed.

Many thanks to Pam Britten and Chris Thomas whose superb organisation greatly contributed to an extremely enjoyable day. I'm sure we are all looking forward to next year's event: let's hope the weather will be as kind, the lunch as delicious and, for some of us, the golf of a higher standard.

Pat Whitworth

14th September Portsmouth Trip

Unfortunately, our planned outing to Portsmouth had to be cancelled as we were unable to get enough members to fill the coach.

Theatre Trip – The Best Man

This year our theatre trip was to see Martin Shaw starring as William Russell, Presidential candidate in Gore Vidal's play 'The Best Man' at the Theatre Royal, Windsor.

The play is about two competing candidates for presidential nomination in a 1960's campaign. Martin Shaw plays William Russell, whose main opponent, Senator Cantwell (played by Jeff Fahey) is a ruthless political bruiser, using every dirty trick he can think of to gain nomination.

Jack Shepherd was very impressive as the ailing outgoing president, whose endorsement was needed by both candidates. The play started slowly but soon warmed up and got quite exciting with echoes of the antics played in a more recent real presidential election.

Many thanks to Kay for arranging the trip.

David Powell

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:

www.chilternwelsh.org

2018 Programme

Friday 26th January - Wine & Cheese evening at Coleshill Village Hall 7:30pm

Thursday 1st March - St David's Day Dinner Harewood Downs Golf Club with bass-baritone Meilir Jones

April/ May – Spring Walk
Details to confirmed

Friday 11th May – AGM & Supper with entertainment – Coleshill Village Hall 7 for 7:30pm

June 18th Trip to Aberystwyth
5-day coach trip to mid Wales

Sunday 1st July – Summer Lunch hosted by Peter & Pat Chapman in Gerrards Cross

Monday 6th August – Windsor Races evening meeting

Friday 31st August – Golf Day
Oakland Park Golf Club, non-players welcome

Thursday 20th September – Coach Trip to Bristol – details to be confirmed

Sunday 9th December – Xmas Drinks
Hosted by Bill & Sue Jones in Gerrards Cross