

# Chiltern District Welsh Society

## Summer Newsletter 2015



### Chairman's Report

It is with great delight that I write this introduction to our Summer Newsletter – the first since taking over as Chair of the Society in May.

To follow the calm and capable Jonathan will be no easy task, but my aim (and hope!) is for there to be no discernible difference other than the fact that I am a woman!

Jonathan has been an excellent Chairman. I want to thank him, not just for the wonderful trips he so meticulously organises, but also for his commitment in every way to our Society. His continued support as Vice-Chair will be much appreciated.

I would also like to thank all the members of the Committee. We are indeed very lucky to have such a friendly, fun team of people, who are always so efficient and professional, their hard work evident in the success of events and the obvious enjoyment of members.

Since Ann Evans our President founded CDWS in 2000 with a small group of friends, the Society has successfully grown to a current membership of over 120. However, the ethos remains the same: a warm, happy and welcoming Society, not stuffy, not serious – just a jolly crowd enjoying the common bond of “yr hen Wlad” in the midst of beautiful Bucks. How special.



We continue to offer a wide range of events each year and aim to have something for everyone. However, we would love to hear from you if you have any exciting new ideas or suggestions (within reason!). If there can be a Welsh link, all the better.

My thanks go to all who have contributed to this Newsletter, and to members who have hosted or helped with events.

Our forthcoming programme can be found at the back, and includes some firm favourites: the Golf Day; the Christmas drinks, and our annual trip which promises to be a wonderful few days in the Brecon Beacons. Also the new: a musical treat at The Young Welsh Singer of the Year Competition; and a visit to Broadcasting House and Fuller's Brewery – surely a winning combination.

Please do join us. I would like to meet all of you!

Dymuniadau gorau

Best wishes

Kay Day

## Christmas Drinks - 7th December 2014

Our Christmas Drinks event is always very popular and 2014 had the best attendance ever, with well over 50 people attending our yuletide event.

This year Colin & Di Thomas entertained us at their lovely home in Gerrards Cross.



A fee of £5 was charged on the door and Ann Tennant provided us with some delicious canapes to accompany a choice of wines and soft drinks.



We concluded in the late afternoon singing carols and some of our favourite Welsh songs.

## Quiz Evening – Friday 23rd January

The annual Welsh Society Quiz evening took place at the Coleshill Village Hall on Friday 23rd January.

Jonathan Pegler set the quiz and acted as inquisitor, assisted by Gwyndaf John and making good use of the Society's new Epson projector

Approximately 37 members attended, split into 6 teams of 5 to 7 each with names such as 'Brains of Swansea', 'The Chancers', 'Opreys', 'Ynys Môn' 'The Double Crossers' and 'The Travellers'.



Jonathan's rounds concerned various topics such as Peers of the Realm – no that should read Piers of the Realm, the unintelligible assigning of aircraft registration letters, events that happened on the 23rd of January





(such as the end of the battle of Rourke's Drift), and rounds on Wales (of course), Science, Art and Political figures.

Halfway through the evening, with 3 teams battling for 1st place, we paused for a change to our usual fish and chip supper – Ann Lawrence provided us with delicious quiche and salad, finished off with tea and Welsh cakes, generously provided by Jean Owen.

As the evening progressed the Travellers team, comprising Chris and Hazel Thomas, Kerry and Frank Birbeck and Graham and Anthea Beavan, began to increase their lead, and by the end of the evening their lead was unassailable.



The winning team – The Travellers

Our thanks go to Jonathan for the quiz, Gwyndaf for keeping score, Ann Lawrence for arranging the hall and providing the food, Jean Owen for the Welsh cakes and the team of Ann Lawrence, Anne Evans and Anthea Beavan for supervising the food.

We all look forward to a return match in the next round, in January 2016.

## St David's Day Dinner - Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March

Our annual Dinner to celebrate our patron saint was held at the Gerrards Cross Golf Club.

We all met at about 6:30pm, with a few stragglers coming in a few minutes late, flushed with the news that Wales had defeated France in the Six Nations 20-13 in Paris.



Chairman Jonathan Pegler and President Ann Evans

We were greeted with a glass of bubbly, which gave us time to chat to old friends, catch up on news and find out where we'd be sitting.

Over 70 people attended, a very good turnout and we filed into the dining room at about 7:15 to find our places among the 8 tables.

Our President, Ann Evans said grace and we sat down to dinner.

The menu was a little different this year with a choice of Ham Hock Terrine, Stuffed Mushrooms, Welsh Cawl and Salmon en croute, then Crème Brulee, Welsh Cake Bread and Butter pudding followed by Coffee and mints. The food and service were excellent, as usual at the Golf Club.

Jonathan introduced our guest speaker, the Right Honourable David Jones, MP for Clwyd West and until last year, Secretary of State for Wales.



David Jones gave us an entertaining talk, starting by telling stories about his hero, Winston Churchill. Entering parliament had been David's ambition since he was a child. His Ministerial and parliamentary career had led to travels around the world, giving rise to some unexpected experiences and amusing anecdotes for his appreciative audience. He finished his speech by saying how proud he was of his Welsh antecedents and revealing his passion for keeping the United Kingdom together.

He mentioned that, with the election coming up he was looking forward to the canvassing, especially as it gave the opportunity of going out and meeting people outside the political circle.

Rob Britton, who himself had been a parliamentary candidate, gave our thanks for such an entertaining and enlightening talk and we then all sang the Welsh National anthem, Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau.

Later, we gathered around the piano with our song sheets to sing along whilst John Breese played many of our old favourites.



Comments about the evening included Muriel Knight "A very successful evening with an interesting and entertaining speech" and Frank Birbeck said "Good food, good company, nice wine – I've never had a bad evening with the Welsh Society".

Our thanks go to the staff at the Golf Club and to Gwyn and Jean Owen for arranging the evening.

### Theatre Evening – Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March

The Complete History of Comedy (abridged)

On Tuesday, 24th March, 20 members of the Chiltern District Welsh Society met at the Wycombe Swan for our annual cultural trip to the theatre.



We all met in the bar at 7pm to collect tickets and chat, before taking our seats at 7:30.

This year's event was to see the Reduced Shakespeare Company's latest work, The Complete History of Comedy (abridged).

The Complete Shakespeare Company is not quite as highbrow as our usual shows. Three American comics ran through the history of comedy from cavemen to the present day in a non-stop series of quick change sketches, gags and monologues which succeeded in breaking most taboos and taking as their subjects a mixture of scatological, sexual and xenophobic settings. They were very fair and tried to offend everyone equally, even the Welsh – very funny.



Ralph Broomby was press-ganged onto the stage (not very reluctantly) to take part in an improvised sketch and demonstrate his ability to provide sound effects to the action



provided by the comics.

The show was very fast paced and finished at 9:30. As we made our way out, the cast were at the door to say farewell.

Overall, there were mixed reviews about the entertainment, with most thinking that the show was witty, clever and amusing, whilst others were unmoved.

### AGM – Friday 8th May

Jonathan Pegler welcomed everyone to the meeting, including 10 new members.

The Press coverage has been excellent this year, and the society is thriving with healthy finances. Jonathan continued and reviewed the various events throughout the year.

Jonathan hinted that there may be a “Special Speaker” at the 2017 St. David’s Day event. He also thanked all the Committee for their hard work & support throughout his period as Chairman.

Graham presented the Accounts up to 15th March 2015. Membership is now up to 127, an all time record. We have a healthy balance despite the higher costs of printing, primarily associated with the larger newsletters and also expenditure on a new hi tech projector.

After his two years as Chairman, Jonathan is stepping down and Kay Day was nominated as the next Chairman with Jean Owen taking over as Minutes Secretary.





Kay Day welcomed everyone in both English and Welsh and proposed Jonathan Pegler as vice Chairman (this was enthusiastically received by all).

Our President, Ann Evans, thanked Jonathan for his two years hard work & presented him with a thank you gift.

Ann also reported that Mike Stythe, who has been an active member of the Society for many years, organising walks and holidays, can no longer attend meetings and other activities due to ill health reasons. Ann suggested we make Mike an Honorary Member and this was applauded by the whole assembly.

The formal business being completed the members enjoyed a lovely supper prepared by Ann Tennant.



Chicken Curry & Rice or Beef Stew, followed by a wide choice of desserts including profiteroles, rhubarb fool, raspberry brulee, ginger meringue, white chocolate cake and cheese and biscuits.



An excellent entertainment was provided by 2 leading tenors, members of the London Welsh Male Voice choir: Geraint Lewis and David Jones.

We concluded the evening with our two tenors leading everyone in some communal singing accompanied by David Jones at the piano and everyone joining in with gusto.

## Tring Reservoirs Walk, Marsworth: Thursday 18th June 2015

Ladies Day at Ascot, AND Chiltern-Welsh Walkers Day at Tring. What an exciting day!

The weather was kind to everyone- glorious sunshine & a light breeze. All the walkers arrived on time which facilitated a prompt start to the adventure. The English countryside was at its best and showed off the skills of the canal builders of the 1790's. The canal age & associated engineering skills was quite something.



Did you know – “*The Grand Union canal is essentially composed of no fewer than 8 separate canals, and was built to link London, Birmingham, Nottingham & Leicester. The most important part of this network of watery highways was the Grand Junction Canal. It was started in 1793 to create a short cut between Brentford – West London to Braunston – Northamptonshire. The Grand Union was the first to be constructed with 14 foot ‘wide locks’, enabling boats to be side by side in locks.*” So there, - look you!

Jonathan Pegler had planned our walk to illustrate the picturesque boat houses of the canal dwellers. Towpaths are a wonderful way to explore all kinds of behaviour. We were given an insight into the domestic bliss of many a family – but only if we pressed our noses right up to the windows on the narrow boats!

We did not need to be quite as invasive to spy true nature. Many a greylag goose with young, coots galore - not always in the water, elegant swans and even crested grebes – though no elaborate mating displays, and of course the inevitable Canadian geese and their young.



I think all the walkers took the opportunity to get to know their fellow Society members – so a very sociable occasion. We met many anglers with ‘poles,’ not fishing rods, - all busy projecting bait into the blue yonder; we never saw a single fish!



Over lunch in the garden of the Red Lion there was much guessing of how far we had walked. Anne Thomas recorded that she had completed 10,500 paces – so no more calorie burning required this week.

General consensus was – “we have ambled some 4 ½ miles.”

It was a most enjoyable morning, and lunch, in very good company, the Chiltern Ale proving a most welcoming thirst quencher and further proof of the talents of our brewing artisans.

Gwyn Owen

## 2015 Programme

### **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> July - Summer Lunch**

This will be held at the home of Peter & Kay Day (our new Chairman) in Chesham Bois.

### **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August - Golf Day**

To be held at Oakland Park Golf Club, Three Households, Chalfont St Giles.

As in previous years, the day is intended to offer a sociable game of golf in the morning followed by an even more sociable lunch to which non-playing members are very welcome.

### **14-18<sup>th</sup> September - Brecon Trip**

So far 33 members have booked. Jonathan has planned what looks like an outstanding itinerary.

### **Friday 16<sup>th</sup> October - New Broadcasting House**

This will be a visit to the BBC's new studios in central London, followed by a tour of the Fullers Brewery. A coach will be booked for the day. The numbers are limited to 45 & the cost will be £30 per head. Application forms for this trip will be sent out in August

### **November – Young Welsh Singer of the Year Competition**

A coach trip will be organised to London to see the Young Welsh Singer of the Year Competition. Details to be confirmed.

### **13<sup>th</sup> December - Christmas Drinks**

This ever popular event will be held at at Dilys and Bill Dover's home in Gerrards Cross.

## 2016 Provisional Programme

### **January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016 - Quiz Night.**

This will be held at the Coleshill Village Hall. Jonathan will organise the Quiz, and there will be a supper as usual.

### **Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March - St David's Day Dinner**

Just as we have over the last few years, this will be held at Gerrards Cross Golf Club. This year Celine Forest, who won the Welsh Singers Competition, will be the soloist accompanied by Iain Leddingham on the piano.

### **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2016 - AGM**

With supper and entertainment provided by Mary Medicott, at Coleshill Village Hall.

Other possible events (all to be confirmed):

### **Spring Walk**

### **Cambridge Trip :**

A guided tour around the colleges of Cambridge and hopefully some punting.

### **June Summer Lunch 2016**

See the latest programme at:

<http://www.chilternwelsh.org/>

## **MEMBERSHIP**

New members are always welcome.

Please contact our Membership Secretary, Ann Lawrence on:

01494 727207 or

[membership@chilternwelsh.com](mailto:membership@chilternwelsh.com)