



# Y GADWYN

(The Link)

*News of the Toronto Welsh Community*

**Mis Rhagfyr**

**December Edition**

**2013**

## Neges y Gweinidog From the Dewi Sant Church Pulpit

Greetings! Cyfarchion!

It is a pleasure to be settling into the position of minister to Dewi Sant Welsh United church.

I am feeling remarkably at ease, much of which I attribute to the generous and warm welcome I have received. It is a pleasure to be with you here in the cultural and spiritual center of your Welsh life.

There is much for me to learn and I have no doubt that it will all become clear as I get more experience with your regular services and special occasions.

My plan over the next year is to become familiar with your gatherings and practises. I look forward to meeting more of you during Advent and Christmas celebrations.

This Christmas season, we will have services each Sunday at 11am.

On Dec 1st it will be a White Gift Sunday, an opportunity to donate food items to the food bank.

On Dec 8th it will be a Blue Christmas Service, an opportunity to acknowledge that Christmas brings sadness to those experiencing loss.

December 15th is our Youth service, a lively pageant of music and story!

Dec 22nd is a service of music and lessons.

At 8pm on Christmas Eve we celebrate with a candlelight communion service.

Additionally, on Dec 1st at 7pm, we will have a Welsh Service of Lessons and Carols at 7pm.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me. I love to visit and I am keen to learn more about the ways in which the congregation of Dewi Sant Welsh United Church engages with the wider community and mission of the United Church of Canada.

As I attempt to learn some Welsh, I close with,

Diolch, thank you

Parchedig Reverend Anne Hepburn  
Bendithion, Blessings









Our grandfather, Captain John Roberts, was Llandudno Piermaster fifty years, from the latter 1800s. He was followed by our uncle, Captain Tom Roberts, Llandudno Piermaster twenty-five years. Captain John Roberts served in the Canadian Armed Forces, and rests in peace in our grandfather's grave. My brother, Captain Michael Roberts, served in the Canadian Air Force, flew all over the world for Air Canada, and now trains their pilots. I, happily, still teach Voice/Speech, and love to sing in various concerts and churches. Wales will always be home.

**Jeanette Roberts.**

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### **Congratulations to Anna Dunets**

Anna received the University of Toronto, Faculty of Engineering, Hall of Distinction award November 1. The award is for alumni selected by their peers for their lifelong accomplishments. The award consists of a photo and plaque installed in a hall in the Sandford Fleming Building at the University of Toronto. While the displays are rotated, Anna's should be there for a while! Part of the text on the plaque states:

*For Anna, civil engineering has always been a calling that gives her an opportunity to help solve problems where the need is great. It began when she was a U of T undergraduate and spent several summers building homes in remote First Nation communities in northern Alberta and British Columbia. It continued as she honed her civil engineering skills on projects in northern Manitoba and Lesotho, Africa. Anna also uses her infrastructure expertise in a variety of volunteer activities. As part of a medical team working in Uganda, she has been concentrating on water, sanitation and related upgrades for a new clinic and maternity ward.*

**Our congratulations go to Anna on being awarded such an honour.**

**Joan Lloyd**

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### **Senghenydd, October 14, 1913**

Every Welsh person is aware of the terrible tragedy that occurred at 8.10 AM in the Universal Pit, Senghenydd, on October 14, 1913. It retains the dubious reputation of being the worst explosion in Welsh mining history.

Where is Senghenydd? Just four miles north of Caerffili- best known for its castle and cheese. In October I arrived in Wales just one day too late to participate in the commemorative ceremonies. However I was very moved to watch on television a special programme produced by the children of a local Welsh school - "Cofio Senghenydd" (Remembering Senghenydd). The school had worked for many months on various projects relating to the explosion, resulting in an in depth understanding of the tragedy-both factual and emotional.

A visitor to that part of Wales today realizes that he/she is in the heart of industrial Wales. However, the children informed us that 200 years previously there were just fields - and sheep! In 1891 the pit was opened and Senghenydd became a village overnight. The Industrial Revolution had an enormous effect on the area in a very short period of time, with hundreds flocking here from the countryside searching for work - no different from other areas in Britain at that time.

The main difference was that the quality of coal from the Welsh mines was famous throughout the world, and Senghenydd alone produced half a million tons of coal annually.

The Science teacher at Ysgol Cwm Rhymni (Rhymni Valley Welsh School) taught the children to experiment with the deadly methane gas. However, the thrill of being able to create mini explosions in the lab, under the supervision of their teacher, is "small potatoes" in relation to the enormous explosion that October morning at 8.10 AM. The children proceeded to explain how canaries were





Make a Mari Lwyd - with or without a horse's skull. Finding a horse's skull is nearly impossible!!! However, it may be possible to improvise with polystyrene or cardboard instead. There are kits even here in Toronto. Stick on false ears, plug big shiny glass marbles into the eye sockets and give the head a mane of ribbons. Stick the head on to a broom handle, hold on to it and wrap a white sheet - just long enough to reach the ground - around yourself so the head sticks out at the top. Hold on to the broom handle and clack the Mari Llwyd's jaw against the top of the skull as you go from door to door, visiting your friends this Christmas and New Year.

**Wassail** - before mulled wine and punch, there was this

This is a tradition that went hand-in-hand with Mari Lwyd and other Christmas get-togethers. Just as we drink mulled wine and punch at Christmas and New Year parties nowadays, a Welsh Christmas at the turn of the century involved drinking from the wassail bowl.

These bowls were often elaborate, ornate and many-handled. The bowl was filled with fruit, sugar, spices and topped up with warm beer. As it was passed around, the drinkers would make a wish for a successful year's farming and a bumper crop at harvest time.

Although the wassail bowl has been a tradition in Wales for many years, its origins are not uniquely Welsh. According to reader Sasha Clarskson, "The word derives from the Anglo-Saxon "Waes Hael!" ('wax hale' in slightly more modern language). It means be or grow healthy, and started as a toast at yule in pagan times, becoming the name for the drink that was toasted and then, even later, singing at yule/Christmas hoping to be rewarded by that drink or by other favours."

**Calennig** - trick or treat, Welsh style

Was trick or treat invented in Wales? Well, for centuries here in Wales, something very similar has been going on. Not at Hallowe'en, but on New Year's Day. Ever heard of calennig?

From dawn until noon on New Year's Day, all around Wales, groups of young boys would go from door to door, carrying three-legged totems, chanting rhymes, splashing people with water and asking for calennig - gifts of small change.

Make your own calennig - on Twelfth Night - Take three short sticks - as long as lollipop sticks - and stick them into the bottom of an apple, as if they were stool legs. Now pepper the apple all round, hedgehog-style, with cloves, almonds, corn ears, etc. Stick a sprig of holly and a candle in the top of the calennig. Come New Year's Day, you'll be ready to play your part in making sure this ancient Welsh tradition doesn't die out.

**Hunting the wren**

On Twelfth Night in Wales, groups of men would go out Hunting the Wren. The tiny bird would be caged in a wooden box and carried from door to door. Householders would pay for the privilege of peeping at the poor wren in the box.

\*\*\*\*\* Next year there will be a quiz to see how many of you have read and inwardly digested all these facts!!!

**Myfanwy**

**Church Bazaar 2013 report**

On November 9, 2013 we held our annual Church Bazaar, Rummage Sale and Bake Sale. I am extremely pleased to report that we made a profit of \$3,700.

To me, this is the most labour intensive event that we deal with at our Church. It is a whole lot of work, and I want to thank each and every one of you that worked so hard to accomplish this great outcome. Thank you

**Arleigh Quesnelle**

### Advent Service.

The Advent service this year was very well received. Thanks go to Mabel Hasting for arranging the programme and to the Rev. Anne for serving the Communion.

As usual there was a very tasty reception down stairs. Thank you ladies.

**Myfanwy**

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### Dewi Sant Christmas Dinner.( Saint David's Society and ladies of the Church.)

A Christmas dinner was held in the church hall, with a visit from old Saint Nick himself. I think that he knew that there was a sumptuous repast at the tables. Roast turkey and many trimmings. Thanks to **Arleigh** for organizing the dinner and overseeing the preparations. Thank you all those who participated in the cooking and serving. Everything was delicious. Diolch Peter Lloyd Jones for emceeing!

Reverend Anne and Mr. Hepburn experienced a little of our Welsh fun, for the first time.

Sherly Clay Newell had prepared entertainment, which she "topped" by singing "The Holy City."

Everyone went home with Full tummies, smiles on their faces and "carols in their hearts.

**Myfanwy.**

### Thank you Diolch yn fawr.

Our thanks, as a congregation go to **Arleigh Quesnelle** and **Reg Trodd.**

These two have kept Dewi Sant ticking over recent times.

Arleigh has worked in the church office tirelessly for months. We had no minister and no secretary. Reg has taken up the slack and has done whatever needed to be done around the property. Diolch yn fawr iawn. It has been much appreciated.

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### Christmas Song

Above the weary waiting world,  
Asleep in chill despair,  
There breaks the sound of joyous bells  
Upon the frosted air.  
And o'er the humblest rooftop, lo  
A star is dancing in the snow.

What makes the yellow star to dance  
Upon the brink of night?  
What makes the breaking dawn to glow  
So magically bright,--  
And all the earth to be renewed  
With infinite beatitude?

The singing bells the throbbing star,  
The sun beam on the snow  
And the awakening heart that leaps  
New ecstasy to know,--  
They are all dancing in the morn  
Because a little child is born

By Bill Carmen

**Meryl Davies.**

This is an appeal to **ALL of you**. We would like to send Y Gadwyn electronically wherever possible. As you know the postage costs go up and up. If you are friends of Dewi Sant, non members, etc. we welcome you to enjoy Y Gadwyn, but ask if you would be kind enough to make an annual donation to help us defray costs

WE are thrilled that Y Gadwyn goes around the world. You would be surprised to know this. Friends send their copies, or electronic copies to other friends and relatives. It keeps Dewi Sant visible. Sometimes we are "quoted", in other church periodicals, if an article is interesting enough

Please send your email information to the church. [info@dewisant.com](mailto:info@dewisant.com)

Also, very important. If you do NOT want Y Gadwyn anymore, please let us know

### **Gadwyn Donors**

**Brian and Joan Hughes, Sybil Pugh, Elizabeth Hodge, Maureen&Ceiri Jones, Myra Cullimore, Steve Stephens, Dr Alan & Susan Trenhaile, Barbara Sharpe, Albert &Doreeta Lusk, Laverne Horner, Ray & Mary Batten.**

**Sincere thanks. Your contributions are gratefully received.**

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**Cofiwch am y mab bychan a gafodd ei eni ym Mhethlehem. Mab Duw, Ceidwad y byd. Boed y bychan yn eich calon bob dydd o'ch bywyd.**

**Bendith arnoch y tymor sanctaidd hwn.**

**Enjoy the season, and remember that the reason is Jesus Christ. Keep him in your hearts. Have a safe, blessed Christmas and New Year Myfanwy**

***Articles for the next Gadwyn should be submitted to me by Jan 24<sup>th</sup> 2014.***

**Please join us for our Christmas Eve Service at Dewi Sant at 8 pm.**