

Cullingworth and the group, with Matthew Coons accompanying, are much appreciated. Other members have also been generous with their time, volunteering to assist with the various aspects of the worship service, including the all-important post - service refreshments. We have other inspiring sermons in store for you - so do join us for the monthly Welsh language service; see the weekly e-blast or call the office (416 485-7583) for details.

CROESO CYNNES I'R GWASANAETH AR Y SUL CYNTAF O'R MIS AM 7 O'R GLOCH.

Nêst Pritchard

NONAGENARIAN SERIES CONTINUES: GRETL AND VINCENT DAVIES

In this edition of Y Gadwyn, we are delighted to feature a nonagenarian couple, Margarethe (Gretl) and Vincent Davies. Gretl, born in 1925, and Vincent in 1923 will next year be celebrating their 70th wedding anniversary. What a prodigious milestone!! Vincent was born in the village of Pontllanfraith, Monmouthshire where his family owned the Star Bakery. After completing his schooling, he went into apprenticeship and eventually became a registered mechanic. Vincent joined the British Army at the age of 19 (during World War II), and served in North Africa, Italy and finally Austria (where he met Gretl in 1945).

Gretl was born in Graz, Austria. She attended school there and then went on to commercial college. She found employment in an office but after the war, times were very difficult indeed. The invasion of the Russian forces at the end of the war meant fleeing Graz and moving to west Austria (Gretl made the trip on her bike.....300 miles while her family went by horse and cart). Once the British had secured the city, order was restored and families were able to return to their homes. Luckily, Gretl was able to get a job in the Dodge truck plant grinding valves. Fate would have it that Vincent was in charge of that particular area in the plant and the rest is history. Although there could be no communication between them outside the compound, Vincent made his way back to Wales in 1946 and in the next year, Gretl joined him and they were married in 1947.

The next ten years were spent in Wales first in Pontllanfraith and then in Barry where the family had opened another bakery. All three children (2 boys and a girl) were born during this time. Vincent's sister with her family emigrated to Canada in 1956 and one year later, persuaded Vincent and Gretl to come with their family to start a new life here. They settled in Port Hope and they remained there for 16 years until moving into Toronto. Two of the children were attending the University of Toronto. In fact, one of their sons obtained his PhD in Mechanical Engineering there obviously having similar interests as his dad. Sadly they lost their other son to cancer in 2012. Over the years, the family has grown to include 8 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren. Vincent learned of Dewi Sant through Harold Woodey whom he knew through the legion. At first, he attended the church on his own enjoying being involved in a Welsh community. Gradually Gretl joined him in the congregation and now they attend the services on a regular basis.

Over the years, Vincent regularly studied at night school in areas that were of interest to him vocationally. Gretl meanwhile played a mean game of tennis (even being her club champion) and 20 years ago took up oil painting. You may have seen some of her paintings at the Dewi Sant auctions. Their life together has been a full and gratifying one.

with MacMillan's books such as *Paris 1919: the Treaty of Versailles and History's People*. She is a Canadian historian and professor at the University of Oxford, where she is Warden of St Antony's College. She is former provost of Trinity College and professor of history at the University of Toronto and previously at Ryerson University. Most of you will also know that she is the great-granddaughter of former British Prime Minister David Lloyd George who was Welsh. A few representatives from Dewi Sant, being both Welsh and history buffs, attended the event. This is an interesting quote from one of her books and good for discussion in this church community newspaper:

"In a secular world, which is what most of us in Europe and North America live in, history takes on the role of showing us good and evil, virtues and vices. Religion no longer plays as important a part as it once did in setting moral standards and transmitting values. . . .History with a capital H is being called in to fill the void. It restores a sense not necessarily of a divine being but of something above and beyond human beings. It is our authority: it can vindicate us and judge us, and damn those who oppose us."

Margaret MacMillan, The Uses and Abuses of History

One of the Dewi Sant group, Olwen Dunets, spoke with Margaret after the lecture, to tell her that as a baby (around 1920) she sat on Margaret's great-grandmother's knee. This happened when Margaret (Owen) Lloyd George came with her farm manager from their home in Llanystumdwy to the farm Olwen's father was managing in Llangwnadl (all in the Llyn Peninsula) in order to buy a bull. While the manager and Olwen's father were out looking at the animal, her mother and Margaret Owen had tea, with Olwen bouncing on her knee. Nest Pritchard also spoke with Margaret and introduced us as a members of Dewi Sant Welsh United Church. Margaret said she still regrets that she did not learn to speak Welsh.

How did this Welsh family arrive in Canada? Margaret's mother, Lyn Carey Evans, travelled with some schoolmates to Canada in August 1939 for a graduation present. Her grandfather (Lloyd George) assured her that talk of war was exaggerated, but a month later, Neville Chamberlain declared war against Germany and Lyn found herself stranded in Sault Ste. Marie. Family friends came to the rescue, arranging for her to stay at the women's residence at the University of Toronto's Trinity College. She married Canadian Robert MacMillan who became a professor of medicine and co-founder of the world's first coronary care unit at Toronto General Hospital. They had five children, all of whom became accomplished professionals including Margaret and Ann, a CBC bureau chief based in London, now retired but whom many of us will recall from *The National*.

Lyn became an early environmental activist. Their farm was in the Oak Ridges Moraine, which happened to be on the 8-per-cent of the moraine where development was allowed. So the MacMillans decided to donate their land to the Nature Conservancy of Canada in 2003. At that time the land, worth \$12-million, was one of the largest conservation donations in Canadian history. Through her activism and her generous donation of land on the Oak Ridges Moraine, she helped create Ontario's modern greenbelt. In 1990, the Niagara Escarpment was recognized as a UNESCO World Biosphere reserve. Lyn died on Aug. 8, 2016 at her farm in Vaughan. She was 94.

A tremendous Welsh-Canadian family.

WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU ARE A SHEEPDOG WITH HIRAETH?

A homesick sheepdog made a remarkable 240-mile journey home to his birthplace in Wales after escaping from his new home in England. Four-year-old working dog Pero is thought to



One of the songs which the Merched Dewi sang was *Mimosa (Mae'r awel yn ein harwain)* which tells of the departure of an intrepid group of Welsh folk from their beloved homeland of Wales with poignant farewells to mom and dad and all that they hold dear in their country as they venture across the vast expanse of ocean to their intended destination of Patagonia. The year, 2016, marked the sesquicentennial celebration of the voyage of the *Mimosa* and the subsequent settlement of the hardy Welsh pioneers in that area. The words were written by a prominent Welsh bard Tudur Dylan Jones and the music was composed by Robat Arwyn. Robat Arwyn brought his choir to the Ontario Welsh Festival in Niagara Falls in April 2015 and Merched Dewi performed one of his pieces, *Atgof O'r Ser*, then. Possibly as a result of their brilliant rendition, Robat sent them the still unpublished *Mimosa* and they were the first in North America to perform it in Ottawa at their St. David's Luncheon in March and again in Ottawa at the Noson Lawen. The words to the song will be featured in a future Gadwyn.

Editor

AWR Y PLANT

It's always a bit of touch and go as to whether we succeed in attracting enough children to hold the annual Children's Hour. We are totally dependent on parent/grandparents bring the children to the Festival. We need not have worried this year as Mary Muckle, harp teacher in Ottawa, brought several of her students to entertain us. Because the theme "harpist" presented itself, we decided to present and act out the legend of Llyn Tegid (Bala Lake). There were three main characters - the harpist, whom we named Osian, the evil king and the magical bird who warned both the king and the harpist that revenge would come (dial a ddaw). Fortunately the bird saved the harpist from the ensuing revenge - i.e. a flood. Thank you actors. Greatly appreciated.

In addition to being entertained by the Ottawa young harpists we were also delighted by Kyle Cordys performance at the piano. Kyle is Betty Cullingworth's nephew so music is in his DNA! "Natur y cyw yn y cawl?" We are certain he has a very promising future. Let's hope he doesn't allow his beloved ice-hockey to interfere with piano practice time!

Attending Awr y Plant for the first time were Megan William's two young sons, Dafydd and Dylan. Dafydd had an attack of nerves so was too shy to perform but luckily Dylan had no such qualms and thrilled us with his version of "Jac y Do". Haydn, grandson of Wendy Kearns, had come prepared with a list of his best jokes/riddles which he'd been trying out on his grandmother the entire drive from Burlington to Ottawa! Little Morgan Evans had an attack of shyness too and had to have her mother sing along with her. Kyle closed this very enjoyable morning with a dirty joke: A white horse rolled in the mud!! Time to call it a day, we decided.

Hefina Phillips

BANQUET AND THE GOLD AWARD 2016

The winner of the Gold Award, Roy Morris of Ottawa, needs no introduction to attendees of the Ontario Welsh Festival. How many times have we enjoyed Roy's direction both "officially" and at Afterglows (including at this OGGA)? Roy served on the Board of the Ontario Welsh Festival (OGGA) for many years and was President from 1999-2000. Of course he was invited to conduct the national in Cincinnati. Roy then served as president of that organization from 2006-2008. Roy has given his time and talents to promote Wales, the Welsh and our culture here in North America. He is truly worthy of this great honour.



Alison Lawson presenting Roy Morris with the Gold Award.

CONCERT

The Saturday evening concert featuring Côrddydd and the Three Welsh Tenors was a feast of music! Many attendees felt this was the best concert performance ever given at the Festival/OGGA. At least 800 people attended this, so the Welsh heritage was on display to many “ordinary” Ottawans.

The choir sang some old, but mostly new pieces (at least new to the Editor). These were for example *O Magnum Mysterium* by Morten Lauridsen, *Spotless Rose* by Paul Mealor, *Water Night* by Eric Whitacre and the standout *Gad i'r Ddaer Droï (Let the River Run)* by Carly Simon. The Three Welsh Tenors included *Ave Maria*, *Largo al Factotum* (Aled Hall solo), *O Sole Mio*, *Caruso*, *Bugail Aberdyfi* (Rhys Meirion solo) and several hits from musicals. The two groups performed together on *Y Tangnefeddwyr* and finished together with *Dros Gymru'n Gwlad*. If you missed this concert you can hear some examples of both groups on their websites and also their own reflections on the weekend - (www.cordydd.com and www.facebook.com/Tri-Tenor-Cymru-The-Three-Welsh-Tenors) and on YouTube. The choir was so thrilled by the reaction of the audience to their performance that they had to take a “selfie” which is shown below.



From the www.facebook.com/ontario.welsh.festival posted by Penri Williams of Cordydd “Cyngerdd Ottawa 23 Ebrill 2016. Noson anhygoel yn ôl Huw - perfformiad perffaith a standing ovation efo dros fil o bobol.”

The concert was further enhanced by being held in the Dominion Chalmers United Church, a magnificent old church with excellent acoustics which makes it one of the most sought after classical concert venues in Ottawa. The next picture was taken while the choir was practicing and gives an idea of the size and style of the church. There is a fascinating history to this building which is well described on their website - www.dc-church.org. The church was built in 1912 by a Presbyterian congregation for a total cost of \$105,000. The architect was Mr. Alex Hutchison of Montreal, who had designed several churches and other buildings in Montreal. He described the new church thus: “The building is designed after the Romanesque Architecture of Southern France adapted to modern requirements.” The Editor, and perhaps others, wondered

during the Concert and the Gymanfa Ganu how all of those pews could have once been filled by a congregation. In the history of the church one finds this sentence –

*April 10, 1955 - Easter Sunday – A congregation of **1,700** had attended the Easter Morning service in Chalmers United Church sanctuary and there were about **400** children in the Sunday School Hall.*

Imagine 1,700 members in 1955! What happened to those 400 children in Sunday school - where are they now? The congregation of the church is now less than 100 and the church has been converted for use as a concert venue. They are also considering building housing and daycare facilities on their parking lot.



GYMANFA GANU

On Sunday, there were the usual two sessions of the Gymanfa Ganu with the conducting being shared by the two conductors of Cŵrddydd, Huw Foulkes in the morning and Steffan Jones in the afternoon. Alan Thomas was, as usual, working wonders on the organ. The ministers participating included the Rev. James Murray of Dominion-Chalmers, Rev. Elwyn Hughes and Rev. Anne Hepburn. During intervals both the choir and the tenors performed again to the delight of the audience.

UPCOMING EVENTS

LUNCH BUNCH

The 2016 spring session of "Lunch Bunch" ends with the 7th June - Summer Celebration. This will also be the end of the Lunch Bunch unless some special person/persons step forward. Lynette and Gaynor are retiring after many years of leadership, lunches and laughs. I am sure all those who have enjoyed the Lunch Bunch would like to thank both of them for the creativity and love they poured into this programme.

