



Y Ddolen



Linking the Puget Sound Welsh Community

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Gaeaf-Winter 2012

Y Ddolen/ The Link is a quarterly newsletter for the Puget Sound Welsh Association



Saint David's Day Celebration

featuring the Three Welsh Tenors

Rhys Meirion *Aled Hall* *Alun Rhys-Jenkins*

A reading by

Rhidian Lawrence

Hosted by Welsh Soprano and Harpist

Nerys Jones



Saturday March 3rd at 2p.m.

Lake City Presbyterian Church
3841 NE 123rd Street, Seattle 98125

Contact (206)696-1222 or events@PugetSoundWelsh.org

Admission to the concert and refreshments are by free-will offering.
A \$10.00 suggested donation is requested and greatly appreciated to
support this and future events.

www.PugetSoundWelsh.org

Three Welsh Tenors

Three Welsh tenors, yet surprisingly different voices which complement each other perfectly. With a programme comprising of operatic classics, hymns, old Welsh songs and medleys, they have something to appeal to all tastes and to suit every occasion.

The Three Welsh Tenors, Rhys Meirion, Aled Hall and Alun Rhys-Jenkins, first came together to sing as a trio for the Celtfest extravaganza in Cardiff as part of a spectacular line up of stars to entertain rugby fans prior to a Wales vs New Zealand match. They blew the audience away with their energetic and entertaining programme which allowed each of their unique personalities to shine through.

“The Three Welsh Tenors lifted the roof off the CIA at Celtfest in a performance which was both full of passion and class. As promoters of Celtfest, we felt extremely proud to have hosted a performance which has the potential to become an International success beyond Celtfest and Wales!!” (Celtfest promoter)

All three are professional tenors, with solo careers in their own rights. Rhys Meirion has sung most of the leading romantic tenor roles whilst on principal contract at English National Opera and has also appeared with Frankfurt Opera, West Australia Opera, Opera Australia and the Hong Kong Festival. His duet album with Bryn Terfel “Benedictus” was nominated for a Classical Brit Award in 2006.

Aled Hall is a frequent performer for Welsh National Opera and has made over 150 appearances at the Royal Albert Hall, London in concerts and operas promoted by Raymond Gubbay. Further afield he has sung at Aix en Provence Festival, Wexford Festival, Tokyo, Salzburg and in Baden Baden.

Like Rhys Meirion, Alun Rhys-Jenkins’ initial career was in teaching but after winning the Towyn Roberts Scholarship, he turned professional, joining Welsh National Opera in 2005. After singing numerous roles for the company he began a freelance career in 2009 and has since worked for Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Scottish Opera and ENO. He also made his European concert debut singing Carmina Burana with the Barcelona Symphony Orchestra conducted by Carlo Rizzi.

Recent highlights include the BBC Proms in the Park from Swansea, a concert at Rhosygilwen Mansion in West Wales, performing the National Anthem before a Wales Football International at the Liberty Stadium, Swansea and concerts at Sherborne Abbey and the Aberdovey Festival. Upcoming plans include the opening concert at the National Eisteddfod of Wales and performances at the Milford Haven and Ludlow Festivals. Their debut album will be released this summer on the SAIN

To all Puget Sound Welsh Association members:

This year for St David’s Day celebrations we have organized a very special program, which is a must attend event. For the first time The Three Welsh Tenors will perform for us. The biography of the three tenors is on page two and clearly they are at the top of the tree (in tenor terms) in Wales. To entice The Three Tenors to perform for us is an amazing coup and it deserves our full Welsh support. Where else can you hear the best in Wales for a suggested donation of \$10. This would cost over \$40 anywhere else. The tenors are coming from Los Angeles specifically for the day to entertain us. Straight after our concert they will travel back ready for a performance the next day.

The three tenors are Rhys Meirion, Aled Hall and Alun Rhys Jenkins, with Caradog Williams (a top class pianist) as accompanist. Hosting our St. David’s day event will be Nerys Jones of Seattle, our own international singing celebrity who will contribute her own musical selection and will I am sure join with the tenors to sing some favorites.

What a way to celebrate the patron Saint of Wales, St. David. This will be a concert to remember! Arrive early to get the best seats. **Alan Upshall**



St. David of Wales...known to the Welsh as 'Dewi, the water drinker, was the son of Welsh royalty. His mother was Non daughter of a Menevia Chieftain and his father was Sandde, Prince of Powys. David was educated at the monastery of Hen Fynyw, tutored by Paulinus (who was later canonized). Early in his schooling it became evident by his powerful and charismatic speaking that he could gather and hold the congregations. He founded 12

monasteries including the one at Menevia, later called St. Davids. He was named Archbishop of Wales in 550.

Each stage and miracle in his life, were marked by the appearance of springs or fresh water pools around his feet. It is said that the Welsh emblem of the leek, spoken of in Shakespeare's Henry V, was first credited to David, who in serving the Welsh soldiers preparing for battle with the Saxons, encouraged them to wear a leek in their head gear to separate them from the enemy during the fight. David died March 1st 589 A.D. about one hundred years old. Drinking only water, David was a vegetarian all of his life.

He was canonized in 1120 A.D. by Pope Callactus II after which he was declared Patron Saint of Wales. You can visit his shrine and Church at St. Davids Cathedral in Wales. He is best remembered for the words, 'Do the little things you have seen me do...' (Gwnewch y pethau bychain....) by most Welsh school children who celebrate this March 1st.

From: www.historicuk.com and Gwynfor Evans, Land Of My Fathers

Rhys ap Gruffudd:

(The Lord Rhys)-1132-1197

Rhys ap Gruffudd or the Lord Rhys was the last of the rulers of Deheubarth to enjoy a wide degree of power. He reclaimed for Wales the lands of Ceredigion, Emlyn, and Cantref which had previously been captured by the English Norman Lords of the March. Such was Rhys' success that Henry II eventually conceded that it was simpler to appoint 'The Lord Rhys' as 'justiciar' of South Wales than to fight him. During his reign Lord Rhys established the first eisteddfod in Wales, a cultural gathering for music poetry and prose. After his death, Lord Rhys' sons were unable to hold on to the lands he had freed for a new independent Wales in the twelfth century.

Further reading: www.100welshheroes.com

A History of Wales by Dr. John Davies

Land of my Fathers by Gwynfor Evans

The North American Welsh Choir's Last Tour:

October 25th to November 7th, 2011

For ten days at the end of October and the beginning of November this year, the North American Welsh Choir (NAWC), toured in New Zealand. There were about 25 choristers and an equal number of non-singers who were traveling along. Four folks from the Pacific Northwest were along: Ellen Weber, chorister, Amy Perkins, former chorister with her husband Dwight, and Elizabeth Goldyn.

The trip began in Auckland, in the North Island, where the choir arrived to find no hot water due to a city-wide gas leak. We then moved on to Waitomo Cathedral Cave where the New Zealand Diva, Kiri Te Kanawa had once sung, and the choir was privileged to sing in the same spot. What an amazing sound, and experience! Next into small boats to go through the Glowworm Grotto where the glowworms above us in the dark looked like thousands of twinkling stars at night.

Arriving at Rotorua, there was a dinner and visit to Te Puia, the Maori Arts and Crafts Institute. Following dinner was a night walk to the Geothermal Valley and geysers, where the choir sang a song in the dark for the guides. The following day another visit in the daytime allowed a better look at the thermal pools and then a walk into the Kiwi House to see New Zealand's native bird. The afternoon choir concert at St. Luke's Church included a Maori school girl trio.

Sadly, when we left Rotorua we had to stop at a hospital to leave Elizabeth Goldyn who was diagnosed with pneumonia. She was never able to rejoin the tour, which was a great disappointment to her. She stayed many days in the hospital, some of that time in I.C.U. When she did fly to L.A. she had heart issues on the airplane and had to stay again in I.C.U. and a hospital room in L.A. before she could return home to Tacoma in early November.

The choir traveled on to the Missions Estate Winery in Hawkes Bay and sang out by the sheep in the field, an area used for large outdoor concerts during the summer for many famous artists, including Kiri Te Kanawa. She did have a large audience, but the NAWC just had the tour group and the sheep to hear them. In Wellington, the capitol City of New Zealand, which is at the

southern tip of the north island, there was an evening joint concert at the Opera House with The Wellington Male Voice Choir. Afterwards a great time was had at the Welsh Dragon Bar, with great eats including Welsh cakes!

A plane flight took us to ChristChurch to view the terrible earthquake damage there. Then on to scenic Lake Tekapo, where we went to the top of Mt Cook to the observatory and saw a great many stars including the southern cross. It was amazing to see the moon through the telescope and even get to take photos of it there. Onward to Dunedin, a city founded by the Scots, and an evening concert in St. Paul's Cathedral.

Finally the bus took us to Queenstown, the last stop on the choir tour. The final concert by the North Welsh American Choir took place on Saturday night, on November 5th, in St. Peter's Church to a very enthusiastic audience. There were many sad faces at the end, feeling sorrow to see this fine choir close down.

The last day in New Zealand, about half of the tour group took advantage of a "Lord of the Rings" tour which drove us outside of Queenstown to Glenorchy. While the scenery in all of New Zealand was wonderful, the scenes on this tour were outstanding and it was greatly enjoyed. Those on the tour sang for the guides out in the woods.

That night the very last choir activity was held. We were all taken by steamboat to a sheep farm where we had dinner and then watched Meg the sheep dog bring in the sheep. Afterwards we watched a sheep being sheared. The scenery was amazing on the boat trip to the farm, and then on the way back we sang with the pianist from their songbook, adding a few Welsh tunes which confused some of the other travelers!

Returning to the hotel that night, we all met in the hotel dining room for final speeches, for recognition and awards, and final sad goodbyes. It was very hard to accept that it would be the last time the North American Welsh Choir would be together.

Amy Perkins

South Sound Night Out of Hwyl:

Sunday, February 19, 2012, 6pm Elmer's Restaurant, 7427 South Hosmer Street Tacoma, WA 98408 235.473.0855

Sunday, March 18, 2012 6pm Elmer's Restaurant, see address above.

Sunday April 29, 2012 6pm The Ram Restaurant & Brewery 10019 59th Avenue Lakewood, WA 98496 253.584.3191

Sunday, May 20, 2012 6pm Elmer's Restaurant, see address above.

Please RSVP to reserve your seat with us 24hrs prior: southsound@pugetsoundwelsh.org , If you don't see any familiar faces, ask the host/ess for the "Welsh Association" or "Welsh Group" - but we always wear RED and/or GREEN!

The Seattle Welsh Womens Club

Friday, February 10th 2012, 11:30 to 2:30 at the Lake Hills Library. Contact Carol Jones: dkcrjones@earthlink.net.

St. David's Day Dinner, Vancouver BC

The annual St. David's Day Dinner will be held on Saturday, March 3rd at the Cambrian Hall. Doors will open at 6 pm and dinner will be served at 7 pm. The event will be catered by Jordan's and the menu will include:

Leek Soup, Roast Beef, Chicken, Hot Seasonable Vegetables. Delicious Deserts, Fruit Plate, Coffee, Tea and Bread Rolls and Butter. Entertainment will be provided by Celtic

Harpist, Patricia Sereno

Please reserve early. Tickets at \$40 each can be obtained from Gaynor Evans at 604-271-3134 or fgevens@telus.net

Victoria Welsh Society, St. David's Day

Please join us in celebrating St. David's Day at the Gorge Vale Golf Club on February 25, 2012. Details can be found on website.

www.victoriawelshsociety.org

PUGET SOUND WELSH ASSOCIATION (PSWA) MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE JANUARY 1ST. PSWA is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization (501c(3)).

Contributions may be tax-deductible. Your membership dues include a subscription to PSWA's newsletter, *Y Ddolen*. If you move, please let us know your new address as soon as possible - the Post Office does not forward bulk mail. For memberships outside the US or Canada, please add \$5 for a 1-year membership, \$50 for a life membership. *Diolch yn fawr iawn* / thank you very much! PLEASE MAIL THIS FORM AND YOUR PAYMENT TO PSWA, P.O. Box 27725, SEATTLE, WA 98165.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone (day) _____

Phone (evening) _____

Email _____

PSWA T-Shirts: \$15.00 +\$3.00 P&H per t-shirt (indicate how many & size)

___MED___LG___XLG

CD: Band Y Ddraig Goch, Traditional Welsh Folk music of Wales: \$12.00 +\$3.00 P&H

MEMBERSHIPS Amount

1 year single (\$10) _____

1 year family (\$15) _____

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