



Dragon Speak

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the newsletter of the Welsh Society of Portland

Our mission: The Welsh Society of Portland develops, and perpetuates Welsh heritage, culture, and music in Oregon. We strive to sustain: pride in being Welsh, support for learning about Wales, the Welsh language, and exploration of Welsh-American issues by our members and for others in the community.

MAY 4th MEETING Doris Cruickshank gave us a personal and fact-filled account of her two walking trips along the coast and inland in Pembrokeshire. Her photos showed beautiful views, the trekking through Oregon-like damp woods, historical sites, and most important ... the delicious food served at the end of the day's walk. Thanks so much for presenting for us!!



As far as we know, no current WSOP members were in this meeting!

In addition to the Annual Meeting, we will have a Welsh singing session. Claudia Zahorcak will be selecting both Welsh hymns and secular songs.

What a great way to join in such a strong tradition!

Our June 1st meeting will be the ANNUAL MEETING of the Welsh Society of Portland. There will be a brief report by Megs Lloyd-Patton summarizing the past year and our current status.

Current members will vote on changes in the Bylaws, and also for Vice President, Treasurer, and two Directors (old 'Trustee' position). The persons now in these positions are: John Evans, Vice President; Janet Figini, Treasurer; Betty Pierce, Director; and Claudia Zahorcak. These 4 are willing to serve for another term. Members in good standing can be nominated from the floor.



Leeks of Interest ...

true tidbits about Wales and Welsh-America



Ancient Oak Falls in High Winds

A fierce storm on the night of April 17-18 brought down an ancient oak that had shaded the Ceiriog Valley since the year 802. The Pontfadog Oak (near Llangollen) was recently covered in heavy snow, and has now blown over in high winds. The oak is said to

have been the rallying point for Welsh prince Owain Gwynned's army, which defeated England's King Henry II in 1157. The tree was spared eight years later when Henry had his men cut down the Ceiriog woods. Its massive trunk, which grew to 42 feet in girth, had been largely hollowed out by decay. "It was always a working tree, pollarded or pruned for its wood. It was part of the community. People built houses from it, cooked from it. That's why it lived so long - it always had a role," said Moray Simpson, tree officer for Wrexham county borough council. After the tourists had left from seeing the fallen tree, about 30 locals from the valley gathered. "It was like a wake. We raised a glass to it," said Dianne Coakley-Williams, whose family heard the nighttime final crack.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2013/apr/28/pontfadog-oak-revered-loved-mourned>

Clint Eastwood considers one of his favorite 1940's classic movies to be *How Green Was My Valley* (about the hard life of a Welsh mining family at beginning of the 20th century) *Parade* magazine 4/29/2012

Did you know that an important segment of Welsh American migration followed the **tinplate-production industry**? America's 1890 McKinley Tariff raised prices of imported tinplate, throwing the Welsh industry into chaos, and drawing hundreds of workers from Wales to its new tinplate industry, centered in Philadelphia and Ohio. Welsh immigrants then developed into leaders in the business, monopolized the industrial science, and dominated the field for several generations.

<http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Sr-Z/Welsh-Americans.html#b>



PAUL ROBESON and WELSH COAL MINERS

Paul Robeson (1898-1976) was one of the foremost African-Americans of the twentieth century. He was a world renowned singer and actor, and a leading civil rights activist.

Robeson's association with South Wales dates from 1928 when, while performing in *Show Boat* in London's East End, he met a group of unemployed coal miners who had walked to London to draw attention to the hardship and suffering endured by thousands of unemployed miners and their families in South Wales.

Robeson visited South Wales many times between 1929 and 1939, singing in various towns including Cardiff, Neath and Swansea. In 1938, he sang to the 7,000 people attending the Welsh International Brigades Memorial at Mountain Ash to commemorate the 33 Welshmen who had died in Spain. He told the audience, "I am here because I know that these fellows fought not only for me but for the whole world. It is my duty to be here."

Robeson's links with South Wales were reinforced when in 1939, he starred in *The Proud Valley*, a film about life in a mining community in the Rhondda.

Each year between 1952 and 1954, Robeson was invited to sing at the Miners' Eisteddfod in Porthcawl but he was unable to travel because his passport had been withdrawn by the US Government because of his outspoken leftwing and anti-racist views. In October 1957 however, Robeson was able to participate in the Eisteddfod by means of a transatlantic telephone link to a secret recording studio in New York. The South Wales miners added their voice and signatures to the international petitions that eventually forced the US Supreme Court to reinstate his passport in 1958.

At a reception given in his honor by the South Wales Area National Union of Mineworkers in 1958, he told the audience, "You have shaped my life - I have learnt a lot from you. I am part of the working class. Of all the films I have made the one I will preserve in *The Proud Valley*."

http://www.agor.org.uk/cwm/themes/Life/international_relations/paul_robeson.asp



In *The Proud Valley*, Robeson plays a wanderer who winds up in a small Welsh mining town - he becomes a miner and eventually the town's hero. And of course with his wonderful voice he joins the town's male choir. One of the film's highlights involves a national chorus competition in which the choir performs 'Deep River' with Robeson as the lead soloist. No surprise that they win the contest. The film is actually based on a real black coal miner from West Virginia who found himself working as a miner in a town in Wales.

<http://blogs.indiewire.com/shadowandact/paul-robeson-rarity-proud-valley-airing-on-tcm-this-thursday>



Real
colliers

Wales and Whales

how do you get two Whales in a car? Cross the Severn Bridge.

I noticed two large women by the bar. They both had strong accents so I asked, "Hey! are you two ladies from Scotland?"

...One of them screamed back at me, "It's Wales you stupid IDIOT!"

So, I immediately apologized and said, "Sorry, are you two whales from Scotland?"

That's all I remember...!

<http://www.bogley.com/forum/showthread.php?63047-Wales->

CHWARDDIADAU (Laughs)

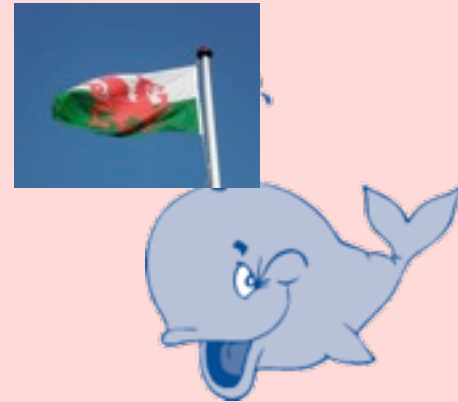


<http://images.google.com/search?hl=en&site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1422&bih=872&q=cartoon+Whales>



<http://images.google.com/search?hl=en&site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1422&bih=872&q=thinkin+g+of+wales+again+Captain+Ahab&o>

Morgan was seated in the movie theater to see *How Green Was My Valley*. He noticed a whale sitting next to him. "Are you a whale?" asked Morgan. "Yes." "What are you doing at the movies?" asked Morgan. The whale replied, "Well, I liked the book."



Happy Birthday to WSOP'ers born in JUNE !!

Penblwydd Hapus i chi! May your day be full of good friends and family, and good cheer!

Diane Root June 6
 KarenAlice Jones June 10
 Gwen Newborg June 13



if we missed you, we may not have your birthday on the list. Please call or email John Evans (see below)

Come to the Gymanfa Ganu !!

JUNE 23rd

a Gymanfa Ganu is a Welsh hymn-singing festival, and **Bryn Seion Welsh Church** has been carrying on the tradition since 1935. In addition to singing by the congregation, there are special music performances

1:45pm - 4:00pm

The *First session* of the Gymanfa Ganu
 Nerys Jones, director

4:00pm *Te Bach* (Welsh tea with Welsh cakes, savories, and beverages)

6:00 - 8:00pm

Second session of the Gymanfa Ganu



Come and Sing!

Information

- Jun 1 Annual Meeting**
- Jul 13 Picnic**
- Aug 3 Ceri Shaw - Welsh authors coming to Wordstock**
- Sep 7 To be announced**

- 12:30pm Business Meeting for all
- 1:00pm Refreshments
- 1:30pm Program

Unless noted, all meetings of WSOP are held at

**Kenilworth Presbyterian Church
 4028 SE 34th Ave. at Gladstone St.
 Portland, OR 97202**

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