



### Message from the WNAA President



*WNAA President  
Jeanne Jones  
Jindra*

Annwyl Members and Friends of WNAA,

Although we are already into February, I wish you all Blwyddyn Newydd dda 2024! This is our first edition of HWYL since our successful NAFOW in Lincoln, NB, in 2023, and we are now planning for Pittsburgh!

To give you a little background, Pittsburgh has been our venue city three times in past years, in 1965 and 1989 under the old name of the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association, and in 2009 under the WNAA. It is a perfect city for our festival, with so much rich Welsh history and a convenient location. Our venue hotel is the Westin Pittsburgh, large enough to accommodate the large attendance we expect.

Planning our events has become exciting, to say the least, as we continue to attract outstanding entertainers and speakers from Wales and from our venue areas. This year we have two Welsh choirs who have worked together - Dunvant and Brecon choirs. Wednesday evening we have the play 'Call Mr. Robeson,' an award-winning monodrama by Tayo Aluko. Welsh musician and composer Mal Pope is returning as our headliner -sure to delight all with his wit and humor as he did in Alexandria. From North Wales we welcome singer-composer Mared Williams, professionally known as Mared. Our partnership with the Urdd continues in hosting a group of their talented young singers. Read in this edition of the newsletter the seminar speakers planned for you, offering a wide variety of topics from medieval Welsh history, the American Order of Ivorites and the different markers of Welsh identity.

How can you help WNAA? Your attendance is critical for us to continue offering superb programming, along with your financial support. Become a program sponsor, join WNAA with a yearly or lifetime membership, and encourage your local Welsh society to join the Affiliated Welsh Organizations (AWO). Finally, your support of our Legacy Society will assist us in growing our endowment for a strong foundation.

Reach out to us through our website, <http://festivalofwales.org> to see how you can become involved. Executive Secretary Megan Williams is always ready to assist in any way. As I enter my last year as President of this wonderful organization, I hope you will join us in Pittsburgh 2024!

Jeanne Jones Jindra  
President, Welsh North American Association

### 2024 North American Festival of Wales

Registration is now open for the 2024 North American Festival of Wales in Pittsburgh PA, August 28 through September 1, 2024.

Register through: [www.nafow.org](http://www.nafow.org)

The festival hotel is the The Westin Pittsburgh, 1000 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh PA 15222.

Festival rates:

Rooms: \$139+ tax per night  
Parking: \$25.00 per day

Call now to book your room: 1-412-281-3700  
option 2. Group name: North American Festival of Wales.



*The Westin Pittsburgh, 1000 Penn Avenue,  
Pittsburgh PA*

The festival hotel is located 25 minutes from Pittsburgh International Airport; there is a PRT public transit bus (28X) from the airport with a stop one block from the hotel. Taxi/Uber transportation from Pittsburgh International to the hotel is typically \$40.00-\$45.00. The Pittsburgh Amtrak station (also known as Union Station) is directly across the street from the hotel, as is the Greyhound Station and Megabus stop.

### 2024 Festival Book Advertisements

Now is the time to submit your ad for the NAFOW program book to promote your Welsh organization or business.

What a great way to get the word out! Full, half and quarter page ad sizes are available. A limited number can also be printed in full color so reserve your color ad now.

On the [festivalofwales.org](http://festivalofwales.org) website, click on ABOUT THE FESTIVAL and choose ADVERTISE AT NAFOW. Fill out your ad information online, or mail in the advertising form. The deadline for placing a festival book advertisement is August 1, 2024.



**FYI from IHQ**



*WNAA Executive Secretary Megan Williams*

I never can believe how quickly a year passes, but here we are, getting ready to open registration for another North American Festival of Wales. For those of you who were in Lincoln, you know what a truly remarkable festival it was, from start to finish. I always worry when that happens, because the pressure is on for the next year. With that said, I am so excited for the incredible line-up we have for Pittsburgh, it will be different than Lincoln but just as good!

We are starting events early with a not to be missed theatre production, telling the story of Paul Robeson. We are using the theatre at the August Wilson African American Cultural Center for our events on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday evening. It couldn't be more convenient, directly across the street from the headquarters hotel. Our musical line-up is phenomenal and varied. We are excited to introduce a new element to our program, our keynote speaker series, this year featuring Mal Pope as he celebrates 50 years with the BBC and brings us along with him a journey from Elton John to Fireman Sam.

Please save the dates, make your hotel reservation and be prepared to be amazed by fun, fellowship and a super impressive program!

Hwyl am y tro, Megan Williams—Executive Secretary



*At the conclusion of the second National Gymanfa Ganu session in Lincoln, Nebraska, the flag was passed to the Pittsburgh hosts for 2024 NAFOW. Pittsburghers brought their Terrible Towels to provide a welcome wave.*

**WNAA BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2023-2024**

- President: Jeanne Jones Jindra, Ohio
- Vice President: Dilys Rana, Illinois
- Secretary: Jan Jones Batty, Wisconsin
- Treasurer: Dr. David R. Allen, New York
- Past President: David Matthews, Alberta
- Systems Coordinator: Gerri Baker Parry, Oregon

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

Dr. Megan Williams, PO Box 1054, Trumansburg, NY 14886  
Phone 607-279-7402

**US EAST**

- Gwen Giffin Carter, Florida
- Joseph G. Corbin, Wisconsin
- Hywel M. Davies, Delaware
- Diane Owen, Virginia
- Margaret Pemberton, New Jersey
- Ian Samways, Pennsylvania
- Betsy Teti, Pennsylvania
- Jack Williams, Pennsylvania

- Mary Lynne Evans, Washington
- Stephen B. Glynn, Missouri
- Karen Wojahn, Minnesota

**CANADA**

- Betty Cullingworth, Ontario
- Myfanwy Davies, Ontario
- Pat Morris, British Columbia
- Elaine Westlake, Alberta
- Lezlie Wood, Ontario

**US WEST**

- Susan Evans Atchison, Kansas
- Wynrhys Coghlan, Pennsylvania
- Gwenith Closs-Colgrove, Nebraska

**WALES**

- Dan Rowbotham, Ohio

Website: [festivalofwales.org](http://festivalofwales.org)

**WNAA MISSION**

The Welsh North American Association strives to preserve, develop and promote our Welsh cultural heritage and traditions, including the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu, and to do all things necessary and appropriate to accomplish these goals.

**Sponsors Wanted**

To continue to bring top-tier talent from Wales and present a quality Welsh festival, we need your help! We are looking for sponsors for the 2024 North American Festival of Wales.

We have an extensive and exciting program lined up for Pittsburgh and are looking for sponsors ranging from \$250-\$2,500. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor and would like to know what opportunities are available, please contact Megan Williams: [wnaahq@gmail.com](mailto:wnaahq@gmail.com).

WNAA, PO Box 1054, Trumansburg, NY 14886



**Annual General Meeting**

The next AGM will be held next August in Pittsburgh PA in conjunction with the 2024 North American Festival of Wales.

HWYL is published in the fall, winter and spring by the Welsh North American Association.

Editor: Jan Jones Batty

Direct comments or inquiries to:  
[editor@theWNAA.org](mailto:editor@theWNAA.org)

## Welcome to NAFOW 2024

Submitted by Jessica Davies



The St. David's Society of Pittsburgh is excited to welcome the North American Festival of Wales, returning for the first time since 2009. We have many exciting and unique opportunities planned to make your 2024 Labor Day weekend one of the best yet.

Pittsburgh's Welsh heritage has a long and prominent history, and is still going strong today – from early iron and steel-making processes and a long history of coal mining, to our present-day Welsh language classes that are helping to keep the language alive, strengthening our legacy links, and fostering the flourishing interest in Welsh culture.

We're very excited to welcome talent such as 2021 Albwm Cymraeg y Flwyddyn (Welsh Album of the Year) Mared, the 2023 Osbourne Roberts winner Llinos Haf Jones, the always-popular Mal Pope, the combined forces of the Duvant and Brecon mens' choirs, and a theatrical production about Amy Dillwyn of Swansea, one of the first female industrialists in Britain and, indeed, the world.

We hope you'll make it a long weekend with us. There is a Wednesday evening one-man show about Paul Robeson, the famous baritone, actor, and activist, who once said, "There is no place in the world I like more than Wales."

Thursday tours include a visit to the University of Pittsburgh

Nationality Rooms, including the Welsh Room, the design of which is based on Capel Penrhiw, which is now preserved at Sain Ffagan (St. Fagan's) open air museum in Cardiff.

The Monday tour is a unique opportunity to view two Frank Lloyd Wright houses in one afternoon, one of those, of course, arguably the most famous private home in the world: Fallingwater. The other, Kentuck Knob, though less well-known, is no less a masterpiece. Both exemplify Wright's credo that a building should enhance rather than eclipse its natural surroundings.

Our base for the weekend is the Westin William Penn, a prime location with excellent travel links – both the Amtrak and Greyhound stations are immediately across the street, and the flyer bus from Pittsburgh International Airport has a stop one block away, as does Megabus.



*View of the Grant Street Transportation Center from a hotel window*

Penn Avenue, which runs on the north side of the hotel, has numerous popular restaurants. Pittsburgh's famous market area, the Strip District, is a short walk.

The Saturday evening concert will be held in the August Wilson Center, also just across the street from the Westin. Hotel reservations are now open.

NOTE: Jessica's Co-Chair is Betsy Teti and her Vice Chair is Ian Samways.

## Hotel 101

Part of the fun of the festival is discovering a new city and host hotel and all its features. Frequent NAFOW attendees can all tell a tale or two about their NAFOW travel adventures.

There are a couple things to note for NAFOW 2024.

**Hotel Address:** If you are driving to Pittsburgh, make a special note of the hotel location and address and ZIP code—1000 Penn Avenue and 15222.

If you use your in-screen navigation system, it is better to enter your destination as "The Westin Pittsburgh" if you don't have the option of entering a ZIP code.

Board member Jan Batty and her husband entered the address and soon discovered that there were two 1000 Penn Avenues—the wrong one landing them in a residential area nowhere near the hotel.

**Hotel Elevators:** In the interest of challenging Welsh-weary NAFOW attendees, The Westin Pittsburgh has new, smart (smarter than a human, for sure) elevator controls.



After you select your elevator floor outside the elevator doors, the system picks the fastest, most convenient elevator for you. In this example, the traveler chose Floor 10 and the elevator system assigned them to Elevator D.

However, after you are inside the elevator, you cannot change your mind and select another floor. You must step outside the elevator and start your selection process anew.

This means you cannot jump on the elevator with a friend from a different floor and choose your destination from inside the elevator. It takes a little getting used to!

## We Need Your NAFOW Registration Software Feedback

New 2024 WNAA database and software is now in use.

It should make the registration and notification process easier and more efficient. As with other databases it helps us track membership and communication and NAFOW registration.

Please provide your feedback about using the system for registration. Was it easy to use? Do you have any suggestions for additions or changes? We look forward to hearing from you.

Please direct your comments to [wnaahq@gmail.com](mailto:wnaahq@gmail.com). Diolch yn fawr!



## Wednesday Evening Special Event—'Call Mr. Robeson'

Paul Robeson is a great and famous actor, singer and civil rights campaigner.

When over the years he gets progressively too radical and outspoken for the establishment's liking, he is branded a traitor to his country, harassed, and denied opportunities to perform or travel.

Just as physical, emotional and mental stress threaten to push him over the fine line between genius and madness, he is summoned to appear before the House Committee on Un-American Activities to give the most difficult and important performance of his career.

This roller-coaster journey through Robeson's remarkable and eventful life highlights how his pioneering and heroic (but largely forgotten) political activism led many to describe him as the forerunner of the civil rights movement.

It features much fiery oratory and some of his famous songs, including a dramatic rendition of Ol' Man River.

**TAYO ALUKO** Actor, Writer, Singer

Nigerian-born Tayo Aluko is based in Liverpool. While a self-employed architect, he premiered his one-man play CALL MR. ROBESON at the 2007 Edinburgh Fringe. He has since become a full time performer, taking the play to places as distant as the North West Territories of Canada, Jamaica, Nigerian, Australia and New Zealand. One highlight was a performance at New York's Carnegie Hall in February 2012. As writer-on-attachment with the Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse theatres, he developed another one-man play, JUST AN ORDINARY LAWYER which has also toured nationally and internationally. His audio-visual play, PAUL ROBESON'S LOVE SONG, written and recorded during lockdown with actors in Canada and USA, is now streaming online on Africa Theatre to Your Home.

*Turn to [festivalofwales.org](http://festivalofwales.org) to read more about his latest productions based on the writings of African American Langston Hughes, and the life, music and African roots of the British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor; his vocal performances; his development of a film on the history of West Africa; and many, many published writings; as well as his projects currently in the works.*



## Mal Pope Joins Weekend Line-up

Mal Pope was born in Brynhyfryd, Swansea, Wales, into a family of teachers. He began learning to play the guitar at age seven and was soon writing songs.

In the early 1970s Pope sent a tape of songs to BBC Radio 1 presenter John Peel who invited Pope to perform at the BBC. The session resulted in a recording contract with Elton John's record label, The Rocket Record Company.

Whilst studying at Christ's College, Cambridge, he spent much of his holidays recording in London. After leaving Cambridge, Pope moved to London and signed to Harvey Goldsmith's management company AMP. He signed a record deal with Larry Page, wrote songs for Cliff Richard and The Hollies, duetted with Bonnie Tyler and Aled Jones, and toured with Art Garfunkel and Belinda Carlisle.

Pope hosted The Mal Pope Show, a late-night music chat show for HTV, in the 1990s, with the show winning a Welsh BAFTA award in 1995. He went on to host a late-night talk show on HTV called Heaven's Sound, which won an award at the New York Film and Television Awards in 2001.

Mal also makes for an incredible guest, able to regale audiences with stories of Christmas parties and games of Subbuteo with

Elton John, of how his sound has been influenced by the soulfulness of the Deep South, befriending the man who invited Dr. Martin Luther King to Memphis in 1968, and how he came to sing one of the most iconic TV themes of all time, 'Fireman Sam.'

Mal is celebrating his Golden Anniversary with events from October 2023 through October 2024. To celebrate the 50th anniversary of his first BBC Radio 1 session, MPH Records is releasing six songs recorded by the 13-year-old Maldwyn Pope in 1973 which all featured on his first Radio One Session.

Mal says 'It's a special anniversary but while I like visiting the past I don't want to live there. It will be great to share so many wonderful stories over the coming months, but my real focus is on creating new music.'



*Mal will perform as part of the Opening Concert and give the 'Key Note speech' on Friday afternoon*

## NAFOW 2024 Pittsburgh Welcomes Two Welsh Male Voice Choirs

It is said that there is nothing better than a Welsh male voice choir. Well there is—two Welsh male voice choirs!

### Côr Meibion Aberhonddu / Brecon Male Choir

A small choir of some 40 voices drawn from the rolling hills and valleys in the heart of the Brecon Beacons.



### Côr Meibion Dyfnant / Duvant Male Choir

The oldest continuously singing Welsh Choir with 129 years of unbroken history, directed by Jonathan Rogers.



## Welsh Solo Talent for NAFOW 2024

**Mared** is an actor and musician from Llanefydd in North Wales. Having studied music at the University of Leeds, she went on to follow her passion for theatre with an MA at The Royal Academy of Music, leading to her covering Eponine in the West End’s reworked production of 'Les Miserables' in 2019-2022. During the COVID pandemic, Mared joined the *Welsh of the West End* group that has performed in concerts in many venues, including the Royal Albert Hall.

In 2021 Mared’s debut bilingual folk/pop album, ‘Y Drefn,’ was awarded Welsh Album of The Year. Since then she has performed her original music with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, at Sony Hall in New York and, with her band, to sold-out shows across London and Wales.

Mared played the role of Clara in the European Premiere of Mark Blitzstein’s ‘No For An Answer’ at the Arcola Theatre in Dalston Junction. Mared was part of the ‘Branwen: Dadeni’ journey from early development stages in 2021, and played Branwen in the powerful story at Wales Millennium Centre and across Wales.



## 2024 National Gymanfa Ganu

The 92nd National Gymanfa Ganu will be held at the First English Evangelical Lutheran Church, conducted by Jon Rogers, Musical Director of the Duvant Male Choir, and accompanied by David Enlow. The church is located at 615 Grant Street.



Organist **David Enlow**, who is also a teacher and conductor, is based in New York, and is active in concert and church music in North America and Europe. David has taught church music, service playing, improvisation, and organ repertoire master classes for local, regional, and national events of the American Guild of Organists (AGO), the Royal Canadian College of Organists, and at the Juilliard School, from which he received two degrees.

David serves as Assistant Conductor and repetiteur to the Clarion Choir and has appeared in most all of New York’s major concert halls as an accompanist at the piano with choruses, solo singers, and in performances of chamber music. In early music, David is also organist of the Clarion Music Society, and appears with various groups at the organ, harpsichord, and fortepiano.

He has been one of the NAFOW accompanists since 2012, playing previously in Columbus, Rochester, Alexandria and Philadelphia.

We will profile **Jon Rogers** in our next issue.



## NAFOW Seminars

### That isn't how it's supposed to end: rewriting the history of medieval Wales

This talk begins with how it was and then imagines how it could have been. It places the ambush and murder of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd within the context of Welsh history, traces its origins and consequences, and then asks what if? What would the world have been like had Llywelyn lived?



With over a million books sold to date, **Sarah Woodbury** is the author of more than forty novels, all set in medieval Wales. While her ancestry is Welsh, she only visited Wales for the first time at university. She has been in love with the country, language, and people ever since. She even convinced her husband to give all four of their children Welsh names.

### Amy Dillwyn, a Renaissance Woman of Wales Subject to change

Introducing Amy Dillwyn--the world's first woman industrialist. A true renaissance woman, Amy Dillwyn worked for suffrage, campaigned for workers' rights (despite owning the factory!), penned novels still in print, composed music, and, well-educated, was fluent in several languages. Born into wealthy 1845 Swansea society, Amy Dillwyn chafed against Victorian restrictions on women. She was ahead of her time in challenging gender norms by living as she pleased and exploring LGBTQ themes in her novels. She made a strong impact on her own times and serves as an inspiration to the present.



A Pittsburgh area native of Welsh descent and a lawyer, **Taylor Williams** holds a J.D. in law, a B.S. in Education and an M.A. in Writing and Editing, as well as an M.A. in Theatre Arts. Taylor's theatre work includes classical training at the Royal National Theatre, London, and residence at Theatr

Horzycy in Toruń, Poland. A member of Actors' Equity, Taylor has performed over the years in regional theatre productions, and she interprets Alice Paul, the suffrage leader, lawyer, and author of the Equal Rights Amendment in educational programs throughout the country for The American Historical Theatre.

### Singing the Hymns of Caradog Roberts

Following up with the interest from the 2023 Lincoln presentation on Welsh composer Caradog Roberts, in this session the primary focus will be to sing some of his hymns, beyond Rachie and In Memoriam, that are found in our hymnal. The session will start with a brief overview biography of Caradog Roberts by the presenter. Then information gathered about individual hymns will be shared before singing each song for greater context and appreciation. A conductor and piano accompanist will assist with the singing. Music will be provided.



**Michael Hieber** is a retired emeriti faculty from Miami University (Ohio). He has been a regular participant at various cymanfoedd canu across the U.S. since 2001 and at NAFOW since 2006. Learning about and singing hymns is one of his passions and starting with the March/April 2022 issue, he began writing a regular article for Ninnau called Notes on a Hymn Page. At the 2023 Lincoln NAFOW, he presented a seminar entitled: Rachie and Composer Caradog Roberts.

### Music, memory, and markers of Welsh identity in North America today

This presentation shares the results of a recent study conducted online from 2020-2022 among Welsh-descended North Americans. The results offer insights into the structure of Welsh cultural identity and the session will compare this new data with interview data from past festivals (2009-2013) and ongoing research in Wales. This presentation facilitates a discussion of contemporary Welshness on this side of the pond.



**Jennifer Johnstone**, Ph.D., has taught music history and culture for the past two decades at various colleges and universities. She holds degrees in piano performance and musicology-ethnomusicology. She studied among community choirs in North Wales 2008-2009 and has been researching Welsh culture ever since. Her academic work has been published by the American Bandmasters Association, the Polynesian Society, the Canadian Society for Traditional Music, and the Association of College and Research Libraries. Outside of work, Jennifer plays keyboards in a band ([harmonystarband.com](http://harmonystarband.com)) and loves gardening, walking, traveling, and spending time with her nieces and nephew.

### Annie Hughes Griffiths: peace petitioner - and much more!

Annie Hughes Griffiths (1873-1942) has recently come into prominence as the presenter of a peace petition from the women of Wales to those of the USA in 1924. Although largely forgotten for generations, her contribution to Welsh life was significant, not least as a folk-song collector. Descended from leading figures in the Methodist Revival, many members of her family have been influential in Welsh cultural, political and religious life. Annie herself moved in very influential circles both in her native Cardiganshire and during her many years in London, and the diary she kept in America in 1924 reflects this.



Until his retirement, Professor Emeritus **E. Wyn James** lectured on Welsh literature and culture of the modern period in the School of Welsh at Cardiff University. He was also co-Director of the University's Centre for Welsh American Studies. Among his specialist research interests are popular poetry

## NAFOW Seminars (continued)

(including hymns, ballads and folk songs), religion and identity, gender studies, the anti-slavery movement, and the Welsh diaspora in Patagonia. Professor James is a Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales, of the Welsh Hymn Society, and of the International Ballad Commission. In 2012 he was a Fulbright Scholar and Visiting Fellow at Harvard University.

### 'A remarkable bird is the pelican': reading an Elizabethan buccaneering ballad

One of the most potent symbols in Christian iconography is 'the pelican in her piety', feeding her young with blood pecked from her own breast – a symbol which Elizabeth I adopted for herself. Composed in 1595, the Welsh ballad examined in this paper is couched as a dialogue between a Welshman on a buccaneering voyage to the Caribbean, and a pelican which offers to fly home to Britain with news of the crew's adventures. The poem is a lively record of an historical voyage to the New World in the late 16th century, and reveals some interesting aspects of the poet's ethnic and political identity.



Before her retirement Professor **Christine James** was Head of the Department of Welsh at Swansea University. Her research interests focus primarily on the literature of late medieval and early modern Wales, but she has also published on the modern period. She won the Crown at the 2005 National Eisteddfod, and her first volume of poetry, *rhwng y llinellau* (2013), won the Welsh Book of the Year Competition in the category for Welsh-language poetry in 2014. She was Archdruid of Wales 2013–16, the first female to hold that post, and is currently the Gorsedd Recorder.

### The flooding of Cwm Tryweryn and its Political and Cultural Legacy

The seminar addresses Liverpool's controversial flooding of the Tryweryn Valley in North Wales in the 1960s to increase the city's water supply and the resulting impact that the construction of the reservoir, Llyn Celyn, had on those directly affected and for Wales in terms of the nation's subsequent political and cultural identity. The address will also include a comprehensive reference to the construction of the Kinzua Dam in Pennsylvania and New York in the 1960s and its ramifications on the indigenous Seneca Nation.

### Tryweryn, the Investiture and Welsh Militancy

The seminar addresses the militant campaign by Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru which Wales and the border region with England witnessed in the 1960s; John Jenkins' reasons for orchestrating the unprecedented action in the name of Welsh

resistance and the protest's political and cultural repercussions.



**Dr. Wyn Thomas** works freelance in academia, the media and as a respected musician and songwriter, releasing the album, 'Orion's Belt' in 2022. Wyn's three literary titles are considered essential reading for anyone with an interest in Welsh history and the recent political history of the United Kingdom. They are: 'John Jenkins: The Reluctant Revolutionary?' (y Lolfa, 2019); 'Hands Off Wales: Nationhood and Militancy' (republished by y Lolfa, 2022) and 'Tryweryn: A New Dawn?' (y Lolfa, 2023).

### The American Order of True Ivorites

For more than a century, the American Order of True Ivorites played a significant cultural role in Welsh life in the United States. Established to provide assistance to Welsh immigrants and support Welsh cultural activities, by the 1890s the order had thousands of members across the United States. Its legacy continues in the Order of Ivorites award presented by the North America Wales Foundation. Drawing on archival materials and reports in Welsh-American newspapers such as *Y Drych*, Robert Humphries will discuss the history of the American Order of True Ivorites, some of its leading figures, and its continuing significance today.

### The History of the American Gorsedd, 1913-1941

Established at the Pittsburgh International Eisteddfod in 1913, the American Gorsedd was an attempt by Welsh-Americans to recreate the bardic pageantry of their native country on American shores. In this seminar, Robert Humphries will discuss the origins of the American Gorsedd and some of the prominent figures who helped establish it, including David Lloyd George and Rev. T.C. Edwards (Cynonfardd). The presentation will also consider the role of the American Gorsedd in Welsh-American life, the reasons for its decline, and its enduring legacy, which includes the creation of a historic marker at the site of the organization's headquarters in Pittsburgh.



**Robert Humphries** is director of the Great Plains Welsh Heritage Centre and the Archive for Welsh America, both located in Wymore, Nebraska. A native of Newport, Wales, he holds an MA in Celtic Studies from the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David. He has presented his research on Welsh-American history at academic conferences in Wales and North America, and at previous NAFOWs. A regular contributor to *Ninnau*, he also wrote and co-produced the mini-documentary film, *Pobl y Paith/People of the Prairie: The Welsh in Nebraska*. He lives in Spring Green, Wisconsin with his wife Jenafer and son, Rhys.

## Silent Auction

An annual highlight of the festival is the NAFOW silent auction. If you have "like new" Welsh items (or antiques) and want to find a good home for them, consider donating them. Consider items that will fit in someone's suitcase for the journey home. Popular auction items are books, household décor, framed art, Welsh woolens and more. Estimated value of each item should be at least \$10.00. Download a donation form from the [festivalofwales.org](http://festivalofwales.org) website and fill one out for each item donated.

## New WNAA Board Members

The WNAA welcomes four new board members.



**Dan Rowbotham** is originally from Llangeitho in Ceredigion, Wales but now lives in Rio Grande, OH where he works as the Director of the Madog Center for Welsh Studies at the University of Rio Grande/Rio Grande Community College. He is a graduate of the University of Rio Grande, graduating with his M.Ed at the end of his tenure as Davis Intern at the Madog Center in 2019. He also earned a BA in performing arts from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David in Carmarthen. Dan is an ex-president of the Urdd and received the prestigious Mered memorial award at the National Eisteddfod in 2016.



**Wynrhys Coghlan** I was born on the Gower Peninsula in Wales, and spent my childhood in Swansea. The majority of the Gower Peninsula has been English speaking since the Norman Conquest. They had their own dialect until the twentieth century. My father's family, Bowens and Lewis, were Gower people. My mother and her family,

Morgans and Lewis, were from Ynysforfan in the Swansea Valley. They were Welsh speaking as much as the Industrialization of South Wales allowed. If anyone is wondering, my name is a compilation of two boys' names, Wynford and Rhys. I now have a lovely granddaughter with the same name.

I attended Mynyddbach Multilateral School in Swansea followed by Cardiff College of Education. In 1980 we emigrated to Montreal and in 1984 moved to the Main Line outside Philadelphia. I was introduced to the Welsh Society by a member, who coincidentally was from my hometown. I have been a steward of the Welsh Society of Philadelphia since 2002 and was Treasurer of the Society from 2003 until 2023, with a small gap of a few years. I am now Chairperson of the Society's Scholarship Fund.

I take great pleasure in the Gymanfa Ganu as it reminds me so much of my mother, Averil, who loved to sing and would participate most weekends in any Gymanfa at the various churches and chapels near her home.

I was delighted to be asked to join the WNAA and look forward to all the events of the next three years.



Following in the footsteps of her parents, **Susan Evans Atchison** has a love for her Welsh heritage, culture, and her ancestral home country of Wales. In 1982 Susan visited Wales for the first time with her family, and she attended her first gymanfa ganu in 1991 in Kansas City. She attended Welsh Heritage Week for many years, including two trips to Wales and a 10-day course at Nant Gwtheyrn. She also

participated in the North American Welsh Choir for several years.

Locally, Susan is involved with the St. David's Society of Kansas and has been on the board for 20 plus years. When living in the Kansas City area, she was a member of the St. David's Society of Kansas City. She also helps her mom and cousins host a Welsh Tea every year.

Susan has attended 15 NAFOW events, allowing her to travel with her parents and introduce her husband Rob and son Devan to this wonderful event and to visit some really neat places. Susan was a co-host for the 2023 NAFOW in Lincoln, Nebraska.

In 2019, Rob, Devan and Susan travelled to Wales. It was fun to share this wonderful country with them. We were able to see a cousin and some friends. All are ready to return.

Susan and her husband Rob Atchison live in Arvon, Kansas overlooking Melvern Lake. Between them they have five children and two grandsons.

Together with the Arvon Historic Preservation Society, they have worked to restore and preserve the Arvon School (1872), Calvinistic Methodist Church (1883) and the Arvon Township Hall (1918) in this Welsh community. All these buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places. The organization also promotes local history and Welsh heritage and culture to the state of Kansas and beyond. Susan was honored to receive the WeKan award from the Kansas Sampler Foundation for "Keeping Arvon Alive."

Susan and Rob manage a hunting business, cattle business and manage farm property. In her free time Susan likes to read, cross-stitch and scrapbook.

Susan earned a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education/music and a Master's degree in Early Childhood Special Education. She taught at various levels for ten years before taking on her duties as mother and domestic engineer.

Susan looks forward to working with the WNAA board and planning future NAFOWs.



**Ian Samways.** You're not imagining things! I'm very happy to "rejoin" the WNAA Board as a full voting member, but the territory indeed is pretty familiar and I'm greatly enthused to continue working with a truly all-star cast of fellow members as we shape the next few Festivals on the horizon!

Born and raised in Pittsburgh (with a bit of Welsh heritage admittedly dwarfed by the English and Scottish sides but also greatly influenced by Welsh godparents...), I attended hardly any Welsh events of note until 2009, when NAFOW last stopped by Pittsburgh for a truly amazing weekend where I made quite a few new friends and acquaintances, and haven't looked back ever since! I've served on the Board of St. David's Society of Pittsburgh since that same year, including as President from 2012-2015, and was very proud to join the WNAA Board as a Trustee in 2012 (in Scranton) and then serve as your President from 2015-2017. *(cont'd pg. 9)*

## City of Steel Highlight

### Thursday Tour



Start the day off by hopping on Explorer, the world's first green passenger riverboat, as you explore Pittsburgh's Three Rivers. An excursion on Explorer offers unparalleled

opportunities to become immersed in Pittsburgh's rich history while being surrounded by its natural beauty.

Enjoy a picnic lunch and end the day with a visit to the Heinz History Center.



Your visit to the museum begins with a guided tour of Pittsburgh's "people museum;" the History Center preserves and interprets the history



of Western Pennsylvanians through six floors of interactive exhibitions that feature iconic artifacts like the TV set from "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" and the world's oldest jeep, as well as the Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum.

Depart 9:00 a.m., return 3:00 p.m.

Cost \$80 per person, includes lunch and transportation.

## A Day out with Frank Lloyd Wright

### Monday Tour

Set off from Pittsburgh and head to Bear Run, Pennsylvania where you will visit Frank Lloyd Wright's Masterpiece, Fallingwater.



Fallingwater Visitor Center

The property was designed for the Kaufmanns, a prominent Pittsburgh family known for their distinctive sense of style and taste. The genius of architect Frank Lloyd Wright to physically and spiritually embrace the natural world is captured in the daring and innovative



architecture set among the forest landscape of Bear Run and would lay the foundation for Fallingwater—one of the greatest architectural triumphs of the 20th century.

Enjoy lunch on site before departing for your second stop, Kentuck Knob.

Both dramatic and serene, Kentuck Knob is situated just below the crest of a great hill and appears almost part of the hill itself. An organic floor plan, cantilevered overhangs, and great expanses of glass effortlessly integrate the interior of the house with its surrounding landscape. On a tour of Kentuck Knob, you will learn about the Hagan family, Frank Lloyd Wright, and the architect's vision for the house.

Depart 8:30 a.m., return 5:30 p.m., some accommodations can be made for limited mobility.

Cost: \$140 per person, includes lunch and gratuities.

## Cwrs Cymraeg

If you plan to brush up on your Welsh language skills, Cwrs Cymraeg, the week-long immersion class sponsored by Cymdeithas Madog, is coming to Edgewood College in Madison, Wisconsin, July 21-27, 2024. Scholarships are available.

Additional activities include Wednesday field trip, pub/quiz night, twmpath dawns, choir, movie night, churning of the bard and much more. For information and registration: [www.madog.org](http://www.madog.org) or [speakwelsh.org](http://speakwelsh.org); contact: [secretary@madog.org](mailto:secretary@madog.org).



## New WNAA Board Members (continued)

**Ian Samways** (cont'd) As leaving was never the easiest prospect, I traded in my Trustee/Officer "hat" for that of "Board Assistant" in 2019 (in Milwaukee) and since then have enjoyed continuing to chair the NAFOW Eisteddfod Committee and encouraging dozens of people to bring out their best in singing, recitation, visual arts and (poetry and music) composition in maintaining a highly esteemed, cornerstone tradition of Welsh culture. As Vice-Chair of the Local Venue Committee for Pittsburgh in 2024, I'm "psyched" to help welcome everyone back here in a matter of months (among quite a few hillsides!) and hope it inspires YOU, as apparently it can, to deepen your own involvement in promoting Wales and every amazing dimension of its language and culture in North America... and perhaps soon become a WNAA Trustee yourself!

## Affiliated Welsh Organizations

### Welsh Club of the Milwaukee Area

The club began in 1952 as The Welsh Women's Club of Milwaukee. Since then we have broadened our scope and changed our name to include everyone. In 2007 we took on the responsibilities of the St. David's Society of Waukesha and in 2017 we established ourselves as a 501(c)3 corporation. Over the years, our outreach has been broad. Club and community members have been generous in sharing their talents planning and volunteering for events, and presenting programs.

Pre-COVID, we met five times a year for lunch, a short business meeting and a program. We are back on our feet after those years—missing each other and not being able to plan gatherings. For 2024, we are hosting a St. David's Day luncheon and a picnic in August. More to come for 2025!

For many years, the club has set up a Welsh booth at the Milwaukee Highland Games, Wisconsin Highland Games and the Holiday Folk Fair International and enjoyed sharing our Welsh culture with all who stop by. Find us at [milwaukeewelshclub.org](http://milwaukeewelshclub.org).



2023 Welsh booth at Folk Fair. Merritt Ratajczyk, Joe Whitmore, Camden Phillips, Alice Whitmore, Alice Lundstrom

## AWO Meeting at 2023 NAFOW

An Affiliated Welsh Organizations (AWO) meeting was held during the busy NAFOW schedule in Lincoln, Nebraska. It seems there wasn't enough time for everyone to report on the activities of their groups!

Ten people attended the meeting which was moderated by WNAA Executive Secretary Megan Williams and WNAA Board member Elaine Westlake. Megan asked that everyone answer the questions: "What was one of the things that worked for your society this year and one thing that was disappointing?" Although some answers were provided, enthusiastic attendees also shared other aspects of their society's activities.

It is important to hold this meeting, as it gives representatives from various groups a way to meet and discuss their activities. The WNAA will be looking into ideas for next year, and how to give everyone who attends the opportunity and time to share their news and brainstorm. Many thanks to WNAA Board Member Elaine Westlake for providing information for this article, and Megan Williams for moderating this year's meeting.

## Welsh Heritage Week Goes to Wales in 2024

Welsh Heritage Week 2023 was held at Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA. There was a special pre-WHW group trip to Gettysburg.

In the introductions of staff and students the first night we reconnected with "seasoned" returnees, greeted newcomers of all generations, and met our Welsh staff, including some of their children. This year we had enough kids to have a veritable dosbarth plant, a classroom of kids which also included kids-at-heart adults. Rhian Hughes, prifathrawes, led the Welsh tutors. The week's activities included dancing, singing, canu telyn, language, literature, pub sing, noson lawen, staff concert and eisteddfod.

In 2024 WHW is headed to Nant Gwrtheyrn in Wales! Dates are Sunday, July 28 through Sunday August 4, with arrival in Manchester, England. After WHW, there is an optional tour starting August 4 through August 11. To enroll and participate, visit [welshheritageweek.org](http://welshheritageweek.org) and download the PDF.

To learn more about WHW, contact Beth Landmesser, 570-815-7689 or [hwyl@ptd.net](mailto:hwyl@ptd.net). You can also follow Welsh Heritage Week on Facebook.



2023 Welsh Heritage Week—  
Dress like you're Welsh!

## Notes to Affiliated Welsh Organizations

- If you would like us to profile your Welsh organization in an upcoming issue of HWYL, contact: [editor@theWNAA.org](mailto:editor@theWNAA.org).
- If you wish to promote NAFOW 2023 to your group, you can copy a poster and download a press release PDF from our website. Point to ABOUT THE FESTIVAL and choose Press Kit.
- VERY IMPORTANT: Check the AFFILIATED WELSH ORG'S link on our website ([festivalofwales.org](http://festivalofwales.org)) and make sure your AWO information is up to date.

## 2023 NAFOW Eisteddfod Wrap-Up

Much fun was had at NAFOW in Lincoln, Nebraska. Here are a few highlights.

Photos courtesy of Beth Landmesser

### Limerick Contest Results

1st Place: Iwan Kellett

2nd Place: (tie) Dilys Rana and Paula Evans

4th Place: Jessica Richards-Palmquist

#### 1st Place Limerick by Iwan Kellett:

An American travelling through Wales  
Was driving his car down the vales.

He turned by the tree,

Went straight in the sea

'Cause the Sat Nav\* was set onto "Whales."

\*Sat Nav – Satellite Navigation

#### 2nd Place Limerick by Paula Evans:

There once was a lady from Symore  
Who said, "There is one thing I abhor.

It is the Welsh double "L"

And as far as I can tell

That its spittle could start a big war!"

#### 2nd Place Limerick by Dilys Rana:

An American travelling through Wales  
Was in awe of her mountains and vales,  
But was struck most of all

In a country so small –

Could there really be two Gareth Bales\*!

\*Gareth Bale is a former Welsh soccer player.

### Eisteddfod Competition Winners

Congratulations to our 2023 Eisteddfod winners.

Visual Arts: 1 - Kristin Fuller (NY), "Love Spoons, Daffodils and Dragons Oh My!" (Welsh-themed quilt); 2 - Carol Christianson (MN), "Our Welsh/Norwegian Family" (quilted wall hanging); 3 - Kay Gavin (MN), "Celtic Roots" (diamond dot painting)

Welsh Language Recitation: 1 - Jessica Skye Davies (PA); 2 - Hywel Davies (DE); 3 - Iwan Kellett (Cymru)

English Language Recitation: 1 (tie) - Catherine Morris (MN), Morgan Wise (NE); 3 - Iwan Kellett (Cymru)

Hymn Singing: 1 - John Owen (MD); 2 - Steve Glynn (IL); 3 - Joe Corbin (WI)

Solo Voice / Semi-Professional (Welsh North America Prize & scholarship to compete at next year's Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru): Amelia Gil-Figueroa (VA)

Poetry Composition Welsh Language - David Llewelyn Williams Grand Prize winner: Stan Morton (Rhuthun, Cymru), "Angladd Goedwigol yng Nghymru"

Poetry Composition English Language - David Llewelyn Williams Grand Prize winner: Adele Evershed (Wilton, CT)\*, "Hiraeth (Something Lost in the Translation)" \* - winner for the second year in a row



*Left: Iwan Kellett, Nancy Wright, Ann Griffiths, Jessica Skye Davies, Ifor ap Glyn, Hwyl Davies, Valerie Jones*

Also... a huge diolch yn fawr iawn to all our contributors!

Stage Composition adjudicators: Ifor ap Glyn, Ann Griffiths, Mari Davies (recitation); Pred Owen Griffiths, Danny Proud, Robat Arwyn, Lisa Dafydd, Rhys M Jones (singing). Piano accompanist (singing competitions): Steven J. Jensen, Karen Wojahn. Visual Arts adjudicators: You all! "The people"! Poetry Composition adjudicators: Menna Elfyn, Eurig Salisbury (Welsh); Robert Dayton, Pat Edwards (English).

Eisteddfod Committee members (& helpers): Ian K. Samways (Chair), David Matthews, Danny Proud, Karen Wojahn, Megan Williams, Jeanne Jindra, Gerri Baker Parry, Evans Paschal.

Prize sponsors: Welsh Gymanfa Ganu Association of Wisconsin, WNAA Eisteddfod Committee, St. David's Society of Minnesota, Huw Christopher, Ian K. Samways, Robert Dayton, Patricia Morris, Calgary Welsh Society

## 2023 NAFOW Quilt Raffle

Jan Slater of Appleton, Wisconsin won the Welsh quilt in the raffle in Lincoln.

The quilt was created by master quilter Connie Backus-Yoder of Lincoln NE. Connie has made over 80 quilts, all one of a kind and all made by hand. Backus-Yoder taught herself to sew, creating her own patterns, doing things her way. And, in her own way, she drifted into art quilts around 2004, especially after being featured in a national online gallery of The Episcopal Church and the Visual Arts.

At the request of close friend Gwenith Closs-Colgrove, Connie made this quilt based on Wales' mountains, green valleys and the legend of the red dragon.





WELSH NORTH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
 INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS  
 PO Box 1054, Trumansburg, NY 14886



**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



North American Festival of Wales  
 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
 August 28-September 1, 2024

The Westin Pittsburgh  
 Room Rate: \$139

Featuring special guests Mal Pope, Mared, Urdd Singers,  
 Dunvant & Brecon Choirs, plus the Wednesday evening  
 production of "Call Mr. Robeson."



## Contact List Cleanup



Postage and printing costs continue to rise! If you or someone you know had a change of address, or you know someone who should be removed from our list, let us know.

We would also like your email address. HWYL's first issue of the year is printed for those wishing mail delivery, and subsequent issues are sent via email only. Also, we send occasional email updates.

Please let us know if you would prefer to receive your newsletter exclusively by email. Direct corrections to our mailing address (above) or to: [editor@theWNAA.org](mailto:editor@theWNAA.org)