

# 50 YEARS of the WELSH SOCIETY in CHELMSFORD



## President's Foreword

When we moved to Chelmsford in 1962 I never dreamt that, fifty years on, I would have the privilege of being President of the Chelmsford and District Welsh Society during its Golden Jubilee Year. I am indeed extremely proud to be President of such an active Society which brings so much enjoyment, warmth and friendship to all its members.

I thank Eddie Alcock, our Society archivist, most sincerely, for compiling this booklet of the Society's history. I am sure that it will bring back lots of happy memories to so many people.

This is also an appropriate time for me, on behalf of our members, to thank the current Committee and all the other members who have willingly done so much to make this a successful and enjoyable year. I am personally grateful to each one of them for their support and I record a special "thank you" to my husband, Arthur, for his support and companionship, particularly during my year in office.

As we are celebrating fifty years of sustained activity we must not forget all those good people who have served the Society in the past and who are no longer with us. As we pause to think of them we acknowledge that we are deeply indebted to them.

We are coming to the end of a most successful year in which the contributions by some of our members and by all the visiting guests have been of the highest standard. The presence of Huw Edwards at our St David's Day Dinner made it particularly special.

This really has been a memorable year with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, Wales winning the Triple Crown and the Grand Slam, our "own" town of Chelmsford being made a City and the Society's Golden Jubilee.

Heddiw mae ein Cymdeithas yn hapus a bywiog, ac ein haelodau yn ffyddlon, gweithgar a chroesawgar. Gobeithio i'r sefyllfa yma barhau am flynddoedd lawer.

Diolch yn fawr  
Carys Williams  
President (2004/5 & 2011/12)

## Compiler's Foreword

We arrived in Harlow New Town (as it was then known) in November 1961 and within a month, Marie returned from the hairdresser's with the news that there was a Welsh Society in the town. Surprise! Surprise! I came away from the next AGM as the Society's Secretary.

My first memory of the Chelmsford and District Welsh Society is meeting Cyril Howells and Ken Davies in 1963 during the informal gathering that followed the Pendyrus Male Choir Concert. Cyril, in his generous way, expressed his gratitude that the Harlow Welsh Society had made it possible for him to hear such marvellous Welsh choral music so near to home. Ken was also grateful, but he was obviously already thinking ahead because he showed a deep interest in the economics of laying on a concert.

Sadly, the Harlow Welsh Society was wound up in the late 1980's.

In April 1991 Marie and I made our post-retirement move to Chelmsford and, in 1993, I succeeded Betty Hammond as the Society's Treasurer, also serving as President during 1995/6.

I am pleased to have been given the opportunity to put together this record of the events that have brought so much joy to Welsh exiles in Chelmsford during the past half century. However, it would not have been possible if the Secretaries, Press Officers and other members had not kept such meticulous records of the Society's activities from that first exploratory meeting onwards. In particular, my own special thanks are due to David Brown who, unseen and unheard, has collated and assembled all the past data into such a manageable form and has provided valuable technical assistance on the format of this booklet. Diolch yn fawr iawn, Dewi.

I offer a blanket apology to so many former members and current friends whose contributions have been immense but who have not been acknowledged in this booklet. The selection was difficult, but the overall task has been a most enjoyable one.

Eddie Alcock  
June 2012  
Honorary Vice-President

# CHELMSFORD & DISTRICT WELSH SOCIETY CYMDEITHAS GYMRAEG CHELMSFORD a€ CYLCH

## Chapter One

### THE FORMATION OF THE SOCIETY

#### Introduction

In 1798, five years after his previous visit, William Wordsworth returned to the “banks of the River Wye”. It was a “joyous” occasion and this is how, in his poem about “Tintern Abbey”, he stresses the time that had elapsed since his previous visit:-

“Five years have passed; five summers, with the *length*  
Of five *long* winters! And again I hear ....”

We are now in our fiftieth year since a group of Welsh exiles attended the meeting that marks the beginning of the Chelmsford and District Welsh Society. Two of the exiles - Janet Laycock (now Janet Wash) and Jean Davies who was there with her husband, Ken, – are still active members and Honorary Vice-Presidents of the Society and, if they were asked to comment on how quickly those intervening years have passed, they might express it as follows :-

“Fifty years have passed; fifty winters with the *speed*  
Of fifty *short* summers! Since .....”

#### The Formal Beginning

During the 1950's Margaret Dutton, a Mathematics teacher, invited a few of her Welsh friends to a St David's Day Party at her home. The party was a great success and, in the following years, similar parties were arranged with the friends taking it in turns to host in their own homes. In 1961 three teachers - Mervyn Jones, Nancy Evans and Ben Evans - put the following advertisement in the local paper with a view to seeing whether it might be possible to set up a more formal Welsh Society.

*Are you Welsh?  
If so attend a meeting at Kings Road School  
On March 1<sup>st</sup> 1961  
Croeso I Bob*

The response to the advertisement was overwhelming as, at that time, there was at least one Welsh teacher on the staff of virtually every school in Essex, and there were plenty of other “exiles” in the area who had transferred with their industries “from the valleys”. On that St David’s Day evening over one hundred people crowded into a classroom whose only furniture was junior school desks and chairs. It truly was “standing room only” and, it is reported, nearly everyone present volunteered to run the Society.

### **The Piloting Committee**

The fourteen people who were nominated to take the matter forward met on March 16<sup>th</sup> 1961. The minutes of that meeting (Appendix A) reveal that the committee consisted of ten men, two “Mesdames” (sic) and two Misses. One of the “Misses” was Janet Laycock who, as we have heard, is still a member of the Society. Three of the men were named “Thomas”, and they were the first of many members with that surname who were to have a major influence on the long life and the direction of the Society. Ben Evans was appointed Chairman, Mr G J Holiwell Secretary and Mr R Thomas became the first Treasurer.

A great debt is owed to those fourteen members. Firstly, they drafted a Constitution that recommended that membership of the new Society should “be open to all persons being either Welsh or of Welsh extraction or having Welsh connections”. Over the years it has been amended, and it now reads “Membership of the Society shall be open to all persons being Welsh or persons interested in Welsh activities”.

Secondly, they listed some of the activities that they thought should be provided for members. Amongst them were St David’s Day Celebrations, Cymanfa Ganu, Church Services and Welsh Learning Classes.

The need for the Society to be financially viable was not overlooked and they recommended an annual membership subscription of 2/6d (12.5p). Predictably, the arrangements for refreshments were to be left in the hands of Miss Harris and Miss Laycock.

## Chapter Two

### THE SOCIETY IN ACTION

#### The Monthly Meetings

The members of the first Committee clearly envisaged an active Society as evidenced by their suggestions of dramatic and choral groups, visits to Welsh functions and Welsh teaching classes. Today's members would agree that the main benefit of belonging to the Society is the opportunity to listen to high quality speakers and musicians, in the company of friends and with the added bonus of light refreshments. It helps that all of this comes at a very reasonable cost. The monthly meetings really are at the core of the Society.

During the past fifty years, members have converged on the Chelmsford Cathedral Chapter House on almost five hundred occasions, and the following is a familiar scene on the fourth Thursday of the month. Between 7 and 8-o'clock in the evening some sixty odd people can be seen parking their cars before deciding which of the two doors will, on this occasion, let them into the building for their evening of quality entertainment. Most will have made the short journey from their homes in Chelmsford, but several will have travelled ten miles or so from Billericay, Brentwood, Maldon, Roxwell or Writtle. Over the years some, like Carys Williams, the 2011/12 President, and Hilary Tucker, the 1982 President, will have faced the fifty mile round trip from Tillingham. Inside the room where the meeting will shortly take place, members take their seats amidst loads of chatter and laughter. The embraces and greetings in September take slightly longer because it is, after all, almost three months (Yes, as long as that!) since some of the members have met each other. During all of this, Derrick Thomas and Ron Jones (as did their predecessors) move stealthily around the room selling the raffle tickets, whose proceeds largely offset the costs of hiring the room. There are repeated requests for "One of each colour, please" and they are answered with "And that will be a pound, thank you." By 8-o'clock, when Carys (as did her predecessors) calls the meeting to order, everyone will have purchased a raffle ticket. Keith Byatt (as did his predecessors) then takes up his position at the piano to accompany the members in "Unwaith eto'n Nghymru Annwyl". This is the traditional opening to the meeting and, so that everyone can join in, the words are printed on each year's membership card. After the announcements of the latest births, deaths and, nowadays, golden wedding anniversaries the meeting is handed over to the evening's chief guest. After "the talk" light refreshments are served by the ladies and the raffle is drawn. It is pure coincidence that the Committee Members, or their spouses, regularly figure among the winners.



Ceri Haf Roberts



Comedian Tudur Owen



Ocean rower Elin Haf

It is not possible, in a publication of this size, to list the topics, let alone review the content, of five hundred meetings. However, the following summary of the 2011/12 Programme will serve to illustrate the variety and the quality of the contributions that earlier “year-groups” have enjoyed.

At the Croeso evening, in September, those present were “high” on “hiraeth” following Mike Price’s professional DVD presentation of the sights and the sounds of the 2011 National and International Eisteddfods including the winner of our sponsored competition (solo singer 12 to 16 years), Ceri Haf Roberts. Everyone agreed that that meeting alone was worth the annual membership fee. In October, Tudur Owen, a regular contributor on S4C, revealed the inside story of Anglesey’s Zoo. November found us rowing across the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans with Elin Haf and her colleagues. We shared in Elin’s excitement, exertion and pain from the blisters on her hands and “elsewhere”. The Committee’s Christmas performance of “Mama Mia”, under the direction of Enid Morris, was a great success, as were the contributions by so many members during January’s Noswaith o Adloniant Gymraeg.



The Committee’s performance  
of “Mama Mia”



Father Christmas  
(aka Derrick Thomas)  
With new member, Beth Taylor



Mike Logan Wood



Betty Williams



Ian King

Mike Logan Wood extended our knowledge of the tricks of the Auction rooms and, in March, Betty Williams told us, in confidence of course, about some of the major Parliamentary figures of the past twenty years. Betty took us from the “top of a hill” to Westminster but, sadly, she forestalled any embarrassing questions about the “Blair Babes” by the clever use of the guillotine. In April, Ian King prepared us for the Summer Trip to Beaumaris as he took us by narrow gauge train from Caernarvon to Portmadog.

A similar pattern and variety of topics had also applied to all the previous years. If there is one meeting of the past fifty years that appears to stand out above the rest it is “An Evening with Tommy Farr”. On February 22<sup>nd</sup> 1979, all those members who had purchased a 50p ticket met a legend. Tommy, as he insisted on being called, was born in Tonypany and became British, Empire and European Boxing Champion. He had two hundred and ninety six professional fights and had “gone fifteen rounds” with Joe Louis. He humorously, humbly and interestingly recounted a few of the many highlights of his career and, only after being prompted by his wife Betty, did he mention some of the stars he had met in Hollywood – Bing Crosby, George Raft, Luise Rainer, Clark Gable and Carole Lombard. After his talk, Tommy and his wife joined the audience in a sing-song. It was some seven years later that he passed away on the morning of St David’s Day in 1986.

The following are a sample of the interesting and amusing “non-musical” evenings that have been presented by individuals over the past fifty years. They all happen to be “talks” that have been given in the Cathedral Chapter House.

- (1972) Herbert Jones, Elocutionist, past Mayor of the Rhondda, provided entertainment with recitations tinged with pathos and humour
- (1975) Alan Jones prepared the ground for Elfed Owen’s contributions (see later) with his “Romp among the ancestral skeletons.”
- (1978) Mrs Pat Viles spoke on “Pianos I have known”, and amused with tales of shifting, collapsing and sticking keys and even pedals falling off.



- (1986 and May 1993) John Edwards, Author of “Wenglish” (Talk Tidy), spoke of a remarkable blend of Welsh and local patterns of English
- (1993 and 2003) During her first visit Linda Scoles, an American living in an East Anglian village, told of her links with the Bury St Edmunds Welsh Society. On her second visit she illustrated how we were “divided by a common language” with “gas” rather than “petrol”; “trunk” and not “boot”; “sidewalk” instead of “pavement” and “bonking” whose sole USA meaning related to the performance of motor engines.
- (1999) Rev Keith Lovell showed us many Essex Village Signs and, appropriately, concluded with the sign for Wivenhoe that has a rampant lion at its top.
- (1999) There was an accomplished talk on Jack the Ripper by Garry Egerton, an ex-Policeman. The relief at hearing that the murders were not, as sometimes reported, committed by the Prince of Wales was tangible. This meeting is also remembered because the ladies were given a night off and the refreshments were served by Frank Dutton, Harry Goodman, John Styles and Derrick Thomas.
- Edward Clack spoke about “Crop Marks from the Air” using his book for illustrations.
- (2000) Captain Gwilym Williams’ topic was “Nautical Nostalgia” and he spoke about the honour of bringing the mortal remains of Dylan Thomas home from America.
- (2001) John Rogers spoke about the life and work of a silversmith, and he recounted how he had been inspired by one of his Secondary School Teachers. The pupils thought that the teacher was English until the day when he hit his finger with a hammer and immediately broke out into fluent (unprintable) Welsh.
- (2003) Michael Chapman, one of the Dunmow Flicht judges, came seeking applications from Society couples. The criteria were no cross word “for twelve months and a day” combined with a special relationship and a story to tell. Members had plenty of the latter but.....
- (2005) We became experts on Swan Upping, courtesy of David Reed, and learnt that nowadays his task is to check the swans’ welfare and not their number.
- (2007) Mark Stacey of “Floggit” fame came to us and valued some members’ “precious” items.
- (2011) Mrs Pat Beddoe gave a moving presentation on the 1966 Aberfan Disaster in which 116 children and 28 adults lost their lives. She told how, at the time of the tragedy, several of the Aberfan women decided that a Concert that had been planned before the collapse of the tip should go ahead. This led to the formation of the “Aberfan Wives”; an

association that still provides much-needed therapy and companionship. They have raised lots of money for good causes. We were told how on the fortieth anniversary of the disaster the Group requested, and received, 26 tickets (not the usual two) for one of the Queen's Garden Parties.

There have, of course, also been many contributions that have been given by groups of performers and many of these have had a musical content. In order to accommodate their special requirements they have often been held in other venues than the Chapter House. These have included St John's Hospital Social Hall (since demolished), the Workshop Theatre (opposite the Prison) and Rainsford School.

- In January 1972, with a second performance in January 1973, there was colour, sound and movement in the Chapter House when a group of students representing six Central African countries entertained the Society with traditional songs and dances. The performers were students at Thurrock Technical College and the visit had been arranged by Miss Lynne Evans, a member of the Society and a lecturer at the College.
- In 1978 twenty children from Little Meadgate School, under the direction of Liz Armishaw (currently President -Elect and wife of twice-President Jim), played a collection of music on their recorders.
- In October 1983 an audience of eighty five were present to hear Mabsant on their first visit to Chelmsford. Siwsan George and Stewart Brown, a Welsh-speaking Glaswegian, presented an intriguing programme of Welsh song and melodies. Wit and droll humour spiced the evening's entertainment against musicianship of the highest standard. Guitar, concertina, whistle, recorder and spoons caused laughter and sadness
- Exactly ten years later, Mabsant stopped at Chelmsford on their way to an engagement at the Barbican and performed for us in St John's Hospital Social Hall. By that time, Steve Whitehead had joined the group; adding tenor and soprano saxophone and the clarinet to their accomplishments.
- (1984) The pupils from the South Ockendon Branwood School for the physically handicapped presented a Nativity Play.
- The venue for the April 1986 meeting was Christ Church Hall where the entertainment was provided by a very talented quintet from Wales. They had travelled widely in Europe and in North and South America and provided an evening of humour, traditional folk songs and instrumental numbers.
- In October 1990 the venue was again St John's Hall and the occasion was the second visit of the highly successful Nantgarw Dancers, a group that

had been formed in 1980. The audience enjoyed a varied programme of folk dance and music which was all performed in traditional costumes. The Group paid a third visit in 2008.



The Nantgarw Dancers in 2008

- The October 1994 meeting took the form of a Concert at the Workshop Theatre (opposite the Prison) given by Sian Wigley-Williams, a student at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Trebor Lloyd Evans, a bank manager with a rich voice, Tom Evans, a baritone who has won on seven occasions at the National Eisteddfod and Alan Vaughan Jones of the Welsh Water Board who appropriately sang Old Man River. They were accompanied by Eirian Owen, soon to return with the Godre'r Aran choir
- (2004) Robin Huw Bowen, the world famous triple harpist from Aberystwyth, fitted in a visit to Chelmsford in between a tour of the USA and a trip, on the following day, to Germany. He recounted how the triple harp had its origins in Italy, was once popular all over Europe but is now only played in Wales. For those who had not noticed he pointed out that the harp is played on the left shoulder and not on the right as with the concert harp. During the evening he played a selection of Welsh traditional folk songs.
- (2009) The twelve strong Phoenix Players of West Mersea gave a powerful performance of "Under Milk Wood", portraying the use of metaphor, metre and comic wit. On their return in 2010, they presented short stories from Dylan Thomas, but *the piece de resistance* was not one of his. It was "The Resurrection", a story by Rhys Davies, one of Dylan's contemporaries. The play is a splendid, highly amusing analysis of that great institution, the Welsh funeral.

- (1997) The Talog Dancers from Carmarthenshire performed on a Saturday evening in Rainsford School.
- In February 2001 and February 2002, the children of Rhosneigr School, Anglesey, gave a talented and versatile Concert. They were accompanied by their headteacher, Ruth and her husband, Bryn James who had played with Chuck Berry, Elton John and John Dafydd Iwan. Bryn had also been lead guitarist with the Spinners.

The Society is fortunate in that it always has a number of members who are gifted and, over the years, they have captivated the audience with talks on their hobbies, their professions or their private thoughts. These are some of the more formal, programmed items.

- (1977) Police Sergeant Trevor Davies gave a talk on his experiences as a dog handler. Trevor sadly died in his sleep within the year, aged 43.
- 1997 was a nautical year. In January, David Brown took us paddling around the Essex Coast. He started in North Essex and passed through Leigh-on-Sea which is the base of the “Cocklemen” whose interesting and amusing tales were told to us by Tony Meddle (not a member).
- (1998) In one of his many contributions, Cyril Howells spoke about Welsh rogues. He did not mention any women and, by prior agreement, did not include any committee members.
- Returning to the nautical theme, Arthur Williams rendered some tales of a Welsh Mariner. Within the Irish part of his account there was plenty of talk, but no sampling, of Guinness.
- (2004) Glyn Davies spoke on a range of topics, all beginning with the letter “H”. Glyn covered the social, economic and political history of the Welsh Nation under the headings of History, Hiraeth, Harmony, Hymns, HRH, Hardship, Heartache, Holy, Heroism, and Humour
- (2006) Elfed Owen outlined the work he had done “tracing his ancestors”, many of whom had emigrated to Patagonia. He illustrated the difficulties caused by the patronymic naming system that endured in Wales well into the 18<sup>th</sup> century. We learnt that, under that system, the children of a marriage took their father’s forename as their surname. At that time there were no fixed surnames. By 2008 when he gave his second instalment Elfed’s research had taken him back 29 generations.

In addition, the variety and quality of the in-house talent has always been fully utilised in the Annual Evening of Entertainment – *Noswaith o Adloniant*. January has become the month when the Committee does not need to invite visiting guests as there is sufficient in-house talent. The following are examples from the “earlier years”.

- (1974) Ann and John Dutton played a duet on Flute and Oboe; Hilary Tucker and Cyril Coleman played a piano duet and Glyn Jeffries did some penillion singing
- (1979) Margaret Dutton and Hilary Tucker played a medley of dance tunes on the piano and the Society's own Little Theatre Players gave a performance of the Comedy "Take my (coal) tip". The cast consisted of Menai Selby, Mair Goodman, Margaret Davies, Margaret Buxton, Cyril Howells and Gwyn Williams.

January 2011 was special in that, on the same evening, two members - Buddug Frank and Meinir Williams – both played their harps. There were solos from Ken and Jim; by popular demand Carys and Arthur sang a duet, Derrick interspersed his mouth organs' (NB. Not just one) recital with a few anecdotes and Ron, who is still (just about) "Ansome", amused everyone with the jokes he had carefully pre-tested on Jean. Brian, Eli Jenkins' senior understudy, sang a prayer and David left us in doubt as to whether he was actually present on the day that a Robin Reliant won the Grand Prix. Keith accompanied everyone in the hymn singing.

It would be wrong to leave this section without mentioning that in the 1980's the Society held its own Eisteddfods. In October 1985 there were six competitions – Male singing organised by Hilary Tucker; female singing (Glyn Jordan); instrumental playing, (Margaret Dutton); painting or drawing, (Cynthia Styles); needlework (Shelia Dunlevey); Cookery (Florence Howells); knitting (Betty Hammond) and Home Wine (Ron Maskell). There were clear instructions that all the volunteer judges for the Wine Tasting should form an orderly queue well before the meeting. Gill Ferguson, a past President, suggested that the competitors in the knitting competition should each knit a vest that could be sent to Ethiopia by Oxfam. That month's Newsletter advised that the vests had to contain another colour as well as white because, in Ethiopia, white on its own is associated with death. A Knitting pattern was made available.

Predictably, there have unfortunately been a couple of occasions when the programme has not gone exactly to plan. Certainly, 1968 got off to a very bad start. Gwynfor Evans, Welsh Nationalist MP, was to have been the guest at the January Meeting but had to cancel because of Parliamentary business. An "Any Questions" was quickly scheduled but even that did not go without a hitch. One of the panel, David Ellis-Williams who was the headmaster of Sandon Secondary School, was called away by the police because of a fire at the school in which two classrooms and the library were badly damaged. Arson was not suspected and fortunately all the books were saved. The members of the Panel serve as a witness to the contribution that teachers from Wales make to education in Essex – Mr David- Ellis Williams was from North Wales, the Chairman J Mervyn Jones

was headmaster of Kings Road School and the other Panel members were Aberdare-born Mrs Golledge, a teacher at Moulsham School and Pontarddulais-born Mrs Shirley Thomas, a former teacher. The other member of the Panel was Swansea-born Inspector George Manning of Billericay Police

The meetings have, as you would expect, contained some lighter moments.

- (1995) Tommy Atkinson spoke about Essex Characters and related the tale of the traveller who had a watch of which he was very proud. However, he couldn't tell the time and so, when asked what the time was, he would show it to the person and say "Look for yourself and then you'll know I'm not lying."
- We have also heard (i) the report of the break-in at the Local Council Offices when the results of the following month's election were stolen; (ii) about Will Quiet Wedding, so called because all his family wore plimsolls to his wedding, (iii) the advertisement for a "Gardener – Tenor Preferred" and (iv) the boy who told his parents that he had the part of the Welsh husband in the school play. His father's sympathetic response was "Never mind son, perhaps you'll get a speaking part next time."

### **St. David's Day Dinners**

The founding Committee's recommendation that there should be a St David's Day celebration was implemented at the first opportunity and, on Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup> 1962, 152 guests (NB 23 more than the number of paid-up members) assembled at the Lion and Lamb Hotel (now the site of Duke's Night Club) for a Dinner, followed by dancing until 1.00am to the Embassy Band. Dress was optional and each ticket cost 25/- (equivalent to £22 at 2011 prices). The menu was Cawl, Filets de Sole Mornay, Poulet en Cocotte Chasseur and Fruit Salad and Devonshire cream. There are reports that Harry Goodman, a Society member and a reputed fishmonger, confirmed the views of many that what was served was not actually "Filets de Sole". However, that was not allowed to spoil the occasion. The Accounts show "Loss incurred by St David's Day Dinner and Dance - £28.19.0". This was, however, more than matched by a separate item "Proceeds of St David's Day Raffle - £47.11.3".

The second Dinner was held at the Civic Centre and then, in 1964, the celebrations moved to the County Hotel where they have remained ever since. 2013 will therefore be the Society's 50<sup>th</sup> consecutive Dinner at the County Hotel.

Apart from the first, the Dinners have all been held on a Friday night – usually, on the Friday nearest to March 1<sup>st</sup>. In the event only six have fallen on St David's Day. Each Dinner concludes with the National Anthem. Until the end of the 1970's this was at 1am but subsequent Dinners have ended at midnight.

The Society is proud of its standing within the borough and is honoured that there has always been a civic presence at the Dinner and that, except for a couple of occasions, it has always been the Mayor who has attended and who has responded to the Toast, on behalf of the guests.

The 1962 Celebration took the conventional form of a Dinner followed by a Dance but, in 1963, the Civic Guest of Honour was Mrs Muriel Davies who was the Mayor of Chelmsford, as well as being a member of the Society. The other guest was a member of the Sadlers Wells Company and during a break in the dancing he sang a number of Welsh songs and anthems. This pattern was repeated in the following two years when a Society "trio" and then Elonwy Richards, a harpist, respectively entertained at 10.30pm

Following the 1993 Dinner members were asked to respond to the following:

*"The Committee is anxious to determine what format the membership would prefer for the St David's Day celebration. For many years the Society has held a Dinner and Dance at the County Hotel. Last year, because of dwindling support the dancing was replaced, at short notice, by musical entertainment.*

*If members wish to maintain our traditional celebration, greater support is needed. The Committee has requested that a survey of member opinion is conducted.*

*I should be grateful if you could complete the questionnaire and return it by 25<sup>th</sup> November 1993."*

Members voted overwhelmingly to retain the celebration but they expressed the wish that some form of entertainment be substituted for the dancing. The change was implemented immediately.

The "short notice" replacement, mentioned in the above Questionnaire, was Lynne Creasey, a Harpist. There then followed three years each with an individual artiste before a decade of "sing-a-longs" organised, successively, by Derrick Thomas, John Taylor and Arthur Williams. Since 2006, the Harp has been at the heart of the entertainment. Initially Rachel Bartells attended on her own but for the past three years she has been joined by her husband, Ken and his Flute. Rachel's eagerly awaited gems "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings" are now part of her performance.

The "County Call" has been a regular feature of the Dinner. During the short ceremony, the MC calls out the names of the Welsh counties, in sequence, and the diners rise to their feet when their own County is announced. There is a regular, distinctive pattern to the responses with "Sir Ddinbych" resulting in two, three or sometimes as many as four members standing and nervously waving to each other across the room. However, at the call of "Sir Morgannwg" there is a lot of movement and chatter as about half of those present rise from their seats to greet each other.

In 1994, following an assignment in Hong Kong, Derrick and Vera Thomas introduced the “Leek Ceremony” into the proceedings. They had experienced its adoption by the Hong Kong Welsh Society from one of the Welch Regiment’s initiation rituals. The ceremony begins with a tray containing a leek and a goblet of ale being carried to the President by a senior member of the Committee. The President then relates the achievements of the recipients of the award and asks them to “taste the leek and sip the ale” in honour of their long and devoted service to the Society.

A list of recipients of the Leek are listed in Appendix B

The Society has attracted some notable guests over the years.

- In 1973 Philip Madoc, of “Don’t tell him, Pike” fame in “Dad’s Army”, accompanied by his wife Ruth, of “Hi-de-Hi” fame, was the main guest.
- 1981’s guest of honour was Ken Bowen, a native of Llanelli and head of vocal studies at the Royal College of Music. Ken was a well-known operatic singer who had appeared on radio and television.
- In 1998 Shirley Thomas, the granddaughter of the mid-wife who assisted at Mair Goodman’s birth, was the main guest.
- In 1999, the Rev Dr Leslie Griffiths, now Lord Griffiths of Burry Port, was the guest
- In 2001 the guest was D Eifion Thomas, the musical director of the Llanelli Male Choir.
- In 2009 Lord Roberts of Llandudno was with us during Maureen’s Presidency
- In 2012, our anniversary year, we were privileged to have the BBC News anchor-man Huw Edwards as our guest of honour.



D Eifion Thomas



Lord Roberts of  
Llandudno



Huw Edwards

Unfortunately, the arrangements have not always gone to plan.



- In 1966, Mr D Ifor Davies, MP for Gower, was to have been the guest of honour but the impending election forced him to return to his constituency. He was present in the following year, and this is how he complimented the Society:-  
*“The purpose of St David’s Day celebrations is to remind us of our duty to our country and in many directions to love, serve and respect it. You have shown your love by forming this Society”.*
- In 1968 Captain Davies, Governor of Chelmsford Prison had to withdraw as guest of honour due to taking up the Governorship of Strangeways Prison, Manchester.
- In 1973 His Royal Highness, Prince Charles, was not able to accept the invitation *“since he will be abroad with his ship on that date”.*
- In 1995 the President, Derrick Thomas, was unable to attend as he was in hospital. Brian Thomas (no relation to Derrick) stood in and proposed the toast to the guests *and to absent friends* and escorted Vera to the top table. Bryn Roberts, a colleague of Derrick’s from his days in Hong Kong, responded on behalf of the guests.
- In 1997, the position was partly reversed when Graham Roberts could not attend as main guest due to illness and Derrick Thomas stood in for him.

The success of the Dinners can be attributed to the dedication and negotiating skills of the two members – Mair Goodman and Cynthia Styles - who between them have “organised” the forty-six Dinners that have been held since 1967. In that year, Mair was commissioned to liaise with the Hotel Manager over the menu that the Committee had chosen and she was requested to make a booking for the following year. She continued to be the point of contact until 2001 and, with the help of her husband Harry, (the adjudicator in the Sole Mornay case), drew up the seating plan and organised the distribution of daffodils to the guests. Within that period Mair was President on three occasions.

Following Mair’s death in June 2002, the Society was fortunate that Cynthia was available to step into the breach. Cynthia is the only other person to have been President on three occasions and she brings her own caring and meticulous style to the occasion. This is particularly evidenced in the Welsh-themed Menu Cards, the table decorations and the sensitive seating arrangements. The current team is complemented by David Brown, the Society’s Web Site and Audio Manager, and his wife Edith who work closely with Cynthia to bring the same impressive standard to the Table Plan and the individual place cards.

Usually the Society’s Press Officer provides the reports that appear in the local press but in 1966 Guy Hawtin, a local reporter, was a guest at the Dinner.

The Article that he produced is humorous, sympathetic and complimentary and it forms a fitting conclusion to this section on the Dinners.

### ***It's all Welsh to me!***

*Bwydlen, cawl hufen Merllys, Lledan mewn saws, Cyw rhost, Cig moch a saws bara, tatws rhost a thatus stwns mewn hufen.*

*For those peasants who totally lack culture, feeling and artistic perception – that was Welsh, that was. There's something lyrical about the language.*

*It is a language for poets and composers. It flows musically like a rippling brook.*

*I am one of those uncultured peasants. I am a hack. No starving in garrets for me.*

*I am tone deaf and the only poetry in my soul is the poetry of hard news and hard money.*

*The music that inspires me is the tinkle of cash registers but I must admit that I am charmed by spoken Welsh.*

*The Chelmsford and District Welsh Society's St David's Day dinner, at the County Hotel on Friday, made me feel like a fish out of water. I couldn't even understand the menu.*

*Anyway, as the linguists will have realised, the first paragraph took us as far as the meat course.*

*The bwydlen tasted very strongly of cardboard and printer's ink and it wasn't until later I discovered it was "Menu."*

*Cawl Hufen Merllys turned out to be soup.*

### ***I STUDIED***

*Leden mewn saws! I studied the cutlery. Fish! It arrived. Gingerly I prodded it. It tasted alright.*

*A fellow Englishman leaned across the table. "Plaice, I think" he whispered confidentially.*

*It took no great linguist to discover that Cyw Rhost was roast chicken.*

*But was a bit puzzled when Eirin Gwlanog turned up – it tasted just like ice cream.*

*This week's star prize goes to the person who can work out the meaning of Caws a Choffi.*

*Welshmen excepted of course.*

*After dinner came the speeches – more Welsh. The music of the language mesmerised me.*

### ***CULTURED***

*The Welsh must be a cultured people.*

*They had the good sense to elect petite brunette Mrs Mair Goodman president. She did a splendid job.*

*The MP for Gower, Mr D Ifor Davies, was to have been guest of honour, but with the impending election, he had to dash back to his constituency. Mair filled in with ease – if she carries on in the same way she'll go to the House of Commons herself. Vice-President Mr T.D.E. Williams proposed the toast to "Dewi Sant" no prizes for what that one means - St David. He spoke with all the poetic fervour of a Welsh Baptist preacher. After the dinner, one thing occurred to me. It's a good job we conquered Wales a few hundred years ago. They are so nationalistic now, we wouldn't stand a chance.*

## The Annual Male Voice Concerts

*Blessed is a land that sings  
Happy are its people*

In October 1966 a group of members travelled by coach to a Morriston Orpheus concert that had been organised by the Harlow and District Welsh Society. It followed similar trips, made by cars, in the previous three years when the choirs had been Pendyrus, Pontarddlais, and Treorchy, respectively.

After the visit to Harlow to hear the Morriston Orpheus Choir, the Committee decided to include a Concert in their 1968-69 programme but, having heard four South Wales choirs, they decided that it would be a refreshing change to hear a more local choir. The London Welsh Male Voice Choir duly accepted the invitation. The Concert was held in the Civic Theatre on 18<sup>th</sup> May 1968. That concert, and the one in 1982 by the Canoldir Choir from the Midlands, are the only ones not to have been given by a choir from Wales.

The second Concert, given in 1969 by Pontarddlais, was unique in that it was held in Hoffman's Social Hall. It was reported that this was the first time in over 40 years that a choir from Wales had visited Essex. It followed a concert that was given in Maldon in 1926 by a party of unemployed Welshmen – The Pontypool Prize Singers. The singers were subsequently offered jobs by Sir Valentine Crittall and changed their name to the Crittall Glee Men. The 1969 AGM Minutes record that Ken Davies, the Treasurer, “was disappointed at the loss on the Concert, but he viewed it as money paid for a valuable experience.”

From 1970 to 1979 the concerts were held in the Civic Theatre but eventually it became apparent that the visiting choirs were voicing their concerns about the drapes and upholstery that shrouded the Civic Theatre stage. They were absorbing the sound and the Choirs were unhappy at not being able to deliver their full musical experience. So, in 1980 a more suitable Hall was identified.

Christ Church was a superb concert venue. It had outstanding acoustics; accommodated the choir and (until 2007) an audience of five hundred; it had a balcony and, with the sun streaming in on a glorious June evening; it truly was an idyllic setting. There was also ample parking within the church grounds and on the nearby New London Road. The large hall beneath the church made an excellent place in which to host the “famous” tea of ham salad and apple tart to which all choirs were treated upon arrival. It is not generally known that, until 2000, the portions of apple pie were scientifically measured – yes, the ladies in the kitchen were working to a precise specification. When Gwyneth Abbott took over “i/c Refreshments” from Mair Goodman the template was mysteriously mislaid.

Sadly, during 2007 the Christ Church premises were subject to a health and safety check and as a result the capacity of the Church was set at four hundred

and the choir, the artistes and even the Church Stewards had to be accommodated within that number. The choices for the Society were clear. It could continue to use Christ Church and put a ceiling of three hundred and twenty on the ticket sales or it could find an alternative venue that could house an audience of five hundred.

The venue was accordingly transferred to Chelmsford Cathedral. The Cathedral has the capacity to accommodate our numbers, the teas can be served in the "Chapter House", the acoustics are good, and the only downside is that the heavy stone pillars restrict the vision from some seats.

The Concerts begin at 7.30pm with the doors opening at 6.45pm i.e. immediately after the public Evensong. In order to secure a good seat many of the audience arrive very early and this has recently led to a new experience. The ladies can now be found selling the Concert Programmes along the queue as it snakes its way out of the Cathedral grounds and into Tindal Square.

Until the mid 1990's all the choristers were hosted overnight in the homes of Society members or their friends. In those days the choirs usually arrived in late afternoon or early evening and, after a rehearsal with the Artistes, they would have tea before changing for the Concert. After the concert the choristers, members and hosts would adjourn to a suitable hall where the choir would enjoy a well-earned drink and everybody would participate in the impromptu singing and story-telling. During the course of this "afterglow" (considered by many to be better than the formal concert) the choristers were introduced to the members and friends who were going to provide them with a bed for the night.

Due to the advancing age of the Society's members and the preference of present day choristers, the private homes have been replaced by the Miami Hotel which also, conveniently, houses the afterglow.

The Table shows that the most common arrangement is for the programme to include one or two male or female singers, who serve to provide the choir with a much-needed period of rest. However, over the years, there have been some notable exceptions.

- The 1969 Pontarddulais Concert that was held in Hoffman's Social Hall certainly gave value for money. The choir sang 15 pieces, there was a contribution in both halves from a soprano and a baritone and a Violinist also had a slot in both halves.
- In 1972, Sam Griffiths, Baritone, was joined by Herbert Jones, an Elocutionist, who gave a selection of monologues in each half.
- In 1986, the Froncysyllte Choir was joined by Melodi, a group of four friends comprising Huw Evans (a tenor), Glenys Roberts (a soprano), Gwawr Owen (piano and harp) and Gaenor Howells (elocutionist). They gave a moving programme of singing, piano accompaniment and recitation. Melodi had previously been guests at one of the Society's 1984 monthly meetings.

- The 25<sup>th</sup> Concert was special in that the Artistes consisted of Nerys Jones (a soprano), D. Hugh Jones who ran from piano to organ and back again, and Gareth Small, a trumpeter.
- Dylan Cernyw brought his Harp to Chelmsford in 1999 and again in 2002. On both occasions he thrilled the audiences with an exciting programme of classical and ragtime music and traditional airs played with a modern flair. In the 2002 Concert he combined with Jill Padfield, soprano, to captivate the audience with *Suo Gan* and *Cymru'r Fach*.
- In 2004 Ystradgynlais' accompanist, Elen Lord-Rees, and the scheduled Soprano, Helen Gibbon, were unable to attend. However, the show went on as the choir found admirable, last minute replacements in Deian Rowlands (harp) and Nicki Phillips (Flute); a husband and wife duo who were invited back by the Society in 2006 when they supported the Pontarddulais choir.
- The *Godre'r Aran* concert in 2005 was notable for the presence in the choir of Alejandro Jones, a native of Patagonia, who was spending 6 months in North Wales. His contribution of folk singing in Spanish and Welsh was special.
- The Brythoniad Male Choir from Blaenau Ffestiniog was the choir chosen by president Carys Williams to sing in the Golden Jubilee year. Iwan Wyn Parry (baritone) was the soloist.



Brythoniaid Male Choir



Iwan Wyn Parry

With an average of at least 12 choral items at each Concert, the same favourites have appeared time and again. “Gwahoddiad” wins the prize for the item that has appeared most frequently (16 times in the scheduled programme). “Myfanwy” has appeared in the programme 9 times but has also been sung as an encore on many occasions. “Finlandia”, “Nant-y-mynydd”, “Tydi a Roddaist” and “Eli Jenkins Prayer” are some of the other regular items. The once omni-present “Martyrs of the Arena” and “Laudamus” have given way to “Do you hear the people sing?” and “Nkosi sikeleli’ Afrika”.

All of the Concerts have been of a high standard and fortunately there have been no major problems.

The following are just some of the outstanding reviews, unusual events and minor mishaps of the past 45 years

- The warmth of the welcome was superb with friendly and well-organised people. It was a wonderful venue for singing on a warm summer evening.
- In 1970 the journey from Llanelli took the Cwmfelin Choir 11 hours and they arrived just half an hour before the Concert was due to start. Despite their weariness they gave an excellent concert which left everyone breathless.
- In 1972 one of the highlights of the Treorchy concert was His Excellency J R Rabukawaqa M.V.O., M.B.E., High Commissioner of Fiji and his wife Adi Mei, guests of the Society, singing "Calon Lan" in Fijian with the Society President, Glyn Jeffries, joining them in Welsh.
- In 1977, Tredegar Orpheus visited St John's Hospital before their long journey home and sang at the bedside of Bill Hurman, a Society member who was desperately ill. Sadly, Bill died twelve days later. Ken Davies, the Concert Secretary, had arranged the visit during which the choir sang "All through the Night" and other songs.
- In 1981 the entire audience rose to its feet to applaud the Dunvant Choir after an electrifying and triumphant performance
- 1990 was the year when the "clapping" record was set as the audience just would not stop applauding the Morryston Orpheus Choir.
- In 1991, Councillor D Pyman, the Mayor, compared Traeth's singing to the Borough Motto "Many Minds One Heart". He said "Although I cannot understand a word you are singing, it is obvious you are Many Voices One Note."
- In 1992, Ystradgynlais expressed the view that this visit was probably the best reception that they had ever received and they were full of praise for the organisation and hospitality of the Society. They expressed a wish that came to fruition in 2004, to be invited back.
- The Press Report on the 1994 Trelawnydd Concert reads "Geraint Roberts' control of the choir, his total absorption in extracting perfection from the men and his passion for the music itself, assisted by his outstanding accompanist, Angela Jones, all combined to create a choral experience of extraordinary beauty." It is a description that could apply to most of the concerts.
- In 1999, Maelgwn delayed their long journey home to attend the morning Songs of Praise at Trinity Methodist Church.

- In 2003, Lord Petre, Lord Lieutenant of Essex, was the guest at the Godre'r Aran concert.

Three members – Ken Davies, Eddie Alcock and Arthur Williams – have successively held the post of Concert Secretary and their attention to detail and their organisational skills have each contributed to the success of the Concerts. Ken was Society Treasurer at the time of the first Concert and became Concert Secretary in 1983. His last Concert in charge was Dowlais in 2000. His thorough planning was regularly the subject of positive comment from the choirs. Eddie's first Concert was Llanelli in 2001 (see below) and since 2007 Arthur has been in charge of the arrangements. Ken and Eddie contacted the choirs, artistes and church authorities by phone, letter or Email. Arthur's style is somewhat different. At appropriate times he attends the Committee Meetings, and announces that he and Carys have just returned from Wales where they met an up-and-coming singer or attended a choir practice or a great concert. His recommendations are always unanimously approved.

Just as the previous section concluded with a special report on one of the Dinners, so this section ends with a comment on one of the Concerts.

In 2001 Eifion Thomas, the Musical Director of the Llanelli Male Voice Choir was the guest of honour at the Society's St David's Day Dinner. Three months later he was back in Chelmsford with his choir. In the weeks leading up to the Concert, the Society had received a copy of the Programme and the Committee's first thoughts were that it was not suitable for Chelmsford. However, in their wisdom they decided that they were not qualified or indeed entitled to question the artistic judgement of the Choir. It soon transpired that the choir was using the visit to rehearse the programme that had been compiled and arranged by Eifion for their tour of Minneapolis, Denver and Salt Lake City. The music had been subdivided into six sections with each section being prefaced by a narrative. The narrator was Munro Walters. The six sections were :

- Ein Hanes – Our History
- Hiraeth a Serch – Love and Longing
- Capeli ac Eglwysi – Chapels and Churches
- Y Cartref a Chymeriadau – The Home and Characters
- Miri Mawr – Laughter and Mirth
- Am Gyfiawnder – For Justice

The first half featured Welsh music arranged by the conductor and the second half commenced with a selection from Verdi and concluded with the haunting rendition of "Do you hear the people sing?"

It transpired that the Committee's concerns about the suitability of the programme were so wrong. One of the many memorable moments of the evening was the reciting, by Munro Walters, of Michael Burns' "Welsh Love Letter" as the



prelude to the choir's rendition of the great Welsh love song "Myfanwy". In the letter the suitor boasts:

"Were all the peaks of Gwynedd  
In one huge mountain piled  
I'd climb them, climb them all  
To reach you  
Oh! How I love you!"

The sentiment is repeated for the "streams" and then the "forts" of Gwynedd. The final short verse reads:

"See you Saturday, love  
**If it's not raining."**

A most poignant moment at the end of that concert was the dedication of the encore "The Lily of the Valley" to D E Jones, a founder member of the choir and the late father of Cynthia Styles. Cynthia was the President at that time.

Choirs that have performed in Chelmsford are listed in Appendix C

### **Church Services**

The Society "goes to Church" three times a year – to celebrate St David's Day, to give thanks for the blessings of the past year and to raise the roof in a Cymanfa Ganu.

Just one week after the Society's first **St David's Day** Dinner members of the Society converged on a newly-built Trinity Methodist Church in Rainsford Road (it had just been dedicated on February 7<sup>th</sup> 1962) for a service that was conducted by the Rev Norman Povey, a native of Wales. Members of the Braintree and Brentwood Welsh Societies were present and two of the lessons were read by Mervyn Jones, the Society President. It was an evening Service. Since then the Service has been held in a number of different churches. For example the records show that a service was held at the London Road Congregational Church on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1965 and other services were held in the old Market Road Baptist Church. The London Road Church was later demolished and replaced by the building that until recently housed the Alders Store. During the 1960's the Society returned to Trinity Road Methodist Church. In 1978 despite the inclement weather the Service was well attended and the congregation sang with sincerity and gusto. Neville Hogarth, the church organist, accompanied the singing. In 1990 the Service moved to the Society's current "spiritual home" at the Little Baddow United Reform Church. A number of ministers, including Society members the Rev Derfel Richards and Rev Rowland Webb, have "taken

the service” but since she was introduced to us in 1999 the Rev Dr Cally Hammond, the daughter of Ron and the late Betty Hammond, has led us in prayer. The attendance, the integrated service and the singing at the Service that was held on March 4<sup>th</sup> 2012 are considered to be among the best.

The Society’s first contact with the Little Baddow United Reform Church and the custom of joining them in a **thanksgiving service** on one of the Sundays in **June** had a delightful beginning. In 1964 Eric Davies, who was completing his first term of office as President, and his wife Margaret, who was to become President in 1978, had erected a marquee in their garden on the occasion of their daughter’s wedding. To mark the occasion they invited their friends from the Welsh Society to join them for drinks *provided they attended the morning family service at Little Baddow Church*. The first hymn that the two communities sang together was “I bob un sydd ffyddlon” and it was followed by “Blaenwern” and “Calon Lan”. Similar successful services have been held annually ever since and it is now a tradition that the President and Vice-President read the Lessons in Welsh and in English. One of the special items at the time of the first service was the “Children’s Story” that was presented by a lay member of the congregation. From the early seventies until 1981 it was presented by Margaret Davies (the mother of the bride) but in 1982 she was succeeded by Florence Howells who gave the talk for the next eighteen years. During that period it changed from being the “Children’s Story” to the “First Address” and all who heard Florence’s account of the wild geese in flight will have a clear picture of them passing overhead in a “V” formation with each goose encouraging the others with its “honk-honks” and of the lead bird seamlessly dropping to the rear of the formation as he tired. The visit always concludes with the whole congregation assembling in the garden behind the church for coffee and biscuits.



Little Baddow URC Chapel



St Michael's and All Angels Roxwell

Yet another of the founding committee’s specific recommendations was that there should be a **Cymanfa Ganu**. In the early days these events were scheduled

into each year's programme and they were often shared with members of neighbouring Welsh Societies. They took the same format as that practiced in Wales. There would be a full rehearsal in the afternoon followed by a "proper" tea. The formal singing would take place in the evening with a special conductor and occasionally a soloist. In 1973 it was held in the Congregational Chapel in Billericay. Between 1979/80 and 1989/90 the Society members travelled to London to join the massed singing at Westminster Baptist Church. Following a period in the late eighties when attendances dwindled, it was decided not to hold a Cymanfa but, fortunately, it was revived in 1997 when the Rev Rowland Webb, a Society member, conducted a well-attended gathering at St Mary's Church in Burnham-on-Crouch. Later Rowland and the Cymanfa moved to Stock. The present venue, arranged by Shirley Moody, is St Michael and All Angels Church, Roxwell where society and church members combine in the singing. In 1977, the Cymanfa was saved from a last-minute cancellation by securing the services of an external pianist. That was a "one off". Until she moved to Bristol, Hilary Tucker was the regular accompanist but in recent times Keith Byatt has generously made himself available for the Cymanfa and so many other events.

### **The Welsh Classes**

At the March 1961 meeting the Piloting Committee suggested that the future activities should include a Welsh Teaching Class and lessons had already begun before the First AGM was held in the following October. Could the speed with which the suggestion was implemented have had anything to do with the number of teachers on the Committee?

The AGM Minutes contained a substantial note on the classes and they tell us that Miss D M Jones had taken over the lead role from Miss Nansi Evans; there had been 14 people present at the previous Thursday evening's class and, following a discussion, it was agreed that the classes would be switched to Wednesday evenings and that a second class for more advanced study should be set up. The classes continued for a number of years during which several members reached a creditable conversational stage.

There then followed a period when no classes were held but a new series began in 2010. The prime mover for this initiative was Shirley Moody. During her term of office as President, Shirley had realised how much of the language in which she had been fluent as a youngster had been lost. In January 2010 "Te Gyda Shirley" signified the beginning of new classes with the teacher, Arthur Williams, handling the problems of a "mixed ability" group very well. The members range from those with virtually no prior knowledge of spoken Welsh to a couple with the equivalent of "O" Level Welsh.

## **The Annual Trips**

One of the outstanding qualities of the Society is its friendliness and this is very much in evidence during the annual trips that have been arranged for the past two decades by Derrick Thomas, the Society's unpaid Transport Co-ordinator. Until the mid 90's the outings were to such places as Sandringham, Chatham, Leeds Castle and Portsmouth - all venues that could be reached within a couple of hours, thus giving time for a lunch, some sight-seeing and a return home by early evening. The Portsmouth trip was special in that the local Welsh Society provided a tea before the journey home. A special feature of these day trips was "the Howells Raffle". Everyone on the coach would be given a number of tickets stapled together and during the course of the day as many as fifteen prizes would be drawn. To the amazement of those involved, every child on the coach somehow (?) became a winner. The proximity of the Channel Tunnel brought a change in the nature of the trips and, for a short period, members enjoyed excursions to Bruges, Ghent, Le Touquet and other French towns. There were always stops, on the way home, at a chocolate factory or a wine warehouse or the Cite d'Europe. The final change in the nature of the trips occurred in 2006 with a 3 night break in Cardiff. This was followed in subsequent years with similar stays in Llandudno, Carmarthen and Beaumaris. Each time, a full programme of events is arranged with several optional outings and suitable Welsh entertainment.

## **Donations to Charity**

An accusation that cannot be aimed at the Society is that it is totally inward-looking, because an examination of the Accounts shows that it has given more than £30,000 to a variety of Charities.

The first "substantial" donation was the £5 that was sent to the Miners' Disaster Fund following the death, in 1965, of thirty one miners who were killed by explosions in the Cambria Colliery. The amount does not sound very much but if adjustment is made for the effects of the change to decimal currency in 1971 and the hyper-inflation of the 1970's it is equivalent to a donation of just under £100. This was soon to be followed by a donation of £10 that was sent to the Aberfan Fund that was set up after tragedy struck on Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> October 1966, when one hundred and forty four people, mostly children, lost their lives. The following message to the Mayor of Merthyr Tydfil accompanied the donation:

*"The many Welsh people living in Chelmsford send their deepest sympathy to the people of Aberfan.*

*Our hearts have been with them since the terrifying, incredible news first broke  
Ein cydymdeimlad dwysaf iddynt".*

A few months later, at the St David's Day Dinner, Alderman C Allsop, Mayor of Chelmsford, informed the guests that his special Aberfan Appeal had raised £750. In the same spirit, but several decades later, a donation of £100 was sent to the Swansea Valley Appeal Fund that was set up following the death of four miners in the Gleision Colliery in October 2011.

An early indication of the generous outlook of members can be found in the Minutes of the 1968 Annual General Meeting - "*Discussion followed in which the point was made that the Society should help local charities.*" Partly as a result of this, the original reactive policy soon gave way to a proactive one in which one of the monthly meetings was classed as a Charity Evening with the proceeds being donated to an organisation of the President's choosing. During the 90's the system was extended to include the proceeds from coffee mornings organised by members of the Committee. As well as being very enjoyable social occasions each of these get-togethers brings in about £150. A few years later an end-of-the-season Garden Party was added to the Programme. They tend to attract a larger audience than the Coffee Mornings and they contribute some £400 to the Charity Account. Hilary & Viv Tucker organised the first in 2000 when they opened up their garden in Tillingham. Betty & Ron Hammond, Mair & Brian Thomas and Ron & Jean Jones followed before Catherine & John Griffin invited members to their spacious and delightful garden in Little Baddow. When they retired to Cheshire, the Society grabbed Shirley & Don Moody's offer to host it at Radley Green Farm, Roxwell where it has now become a big family occasion with a range of activities to suit all ages.

The Society is heavily indebted to the Chelmsford Male Voice Choir. The first time that they helped to raise funds was in 1969 when Jack Gane, who had been elected to the Committee during the first AGM and who also audited the Accounts, was the conductor. They have since returned on many occasions performing in the Chapter House, the Central Baptist Church and Trinity Methodist Church. Others who have made notable contributions are the Essex Yeomanry Association Band (founded in 1809), the Band of the Welsh Guards, Brythoniaid Male Choir, the Haverfordwest Ladies Choir and the Essex Caprice Wind Orchestra.

If there were a prize for the greatest individual charitable contribution it would undoubtedly have been won by Sara, the granddaughter of Shiela Dunlevey, who was President in 1988-89. In 2008, Sara raised £1,270 from a sponsored swim at the Chelmsford County High School for Girls, and donated it to the Society's nominated Charity - The Childhood Eye Cancer Trust. The runner-up would have been Elizabeth Peters who, for many years, has brought a bag of 5p coins (at least £5's worth each time) to the monthly meetings with a request that it be added to the Society's Charity.

These, of course, are not the only charitable donations that the Society has made. At each St David's Day Dinner all the guests are presented with a daffodil upon arrival. Since 1997 the Society has used the Marie Curie daffodils. We are also regular contributors to the "Pit Ponies" Charity that operates in South Wales. Some discerning members of the Committee, reportedly with "O" Levels in Maths and Biology, are of the opinion that we are no longer contributing to the upkeep of pit ponies, but to the offspring of pit ponies.

### **Sponsorship of the National Eisteddfod Competitions.**

The Accounts for 1986/87 contain the following entry – "Gift to set up an endowment for Annual Eisteddfod prizes - £250." The intention was that this capital would be invested so that the Interest could be used to provide prizes. However, inflation soon took its toll and as early as 1990 a further donation of £50 was made. In the less favourable financial climate in which the investment of a nominal sum produces very little interest the prizes are now provided by direct annual payments from the Society. The first year of this new system was 2006 and since then £150 per year has been given to the Eisteddfod Organisers, with a request that, in line with our policy of encouraging young up-and-coming talent, it be allocated to two of the winners in the "16 to 19 year old competitions". The beneficiaries of our donations have been girl and boy singers, step dancers and brass and woodwind soloists. Members who have been fortunate enough to attend the Eisteddfods speak of their pride on hearing the name of the Society linked to the award.

## Chapter Three

### THE MANAGEMENT OF THE SOCIETY

#### The First Annual General Meeting

The existence of a viable Welsh Society in Chelmsford was duly confirmed on October 24<sup>th</sup> 1961, when sixty seven members attended the first Annual General Meeting. Ben Evans chaired the meeting but declined the invitation to become President. Sadly, he died a few months later. Mervyn Jones, another of the “original three”, accepted the nomination to become the first President. Due to pressure of work, Mr Holiwell felt unable to carry on as Secretary and that post was filled by Tom Davies. Mr R Thomas continued as Treasurer. Nine of the members who had served on the Pilot Committee were elected to the new Committee and Mair Goodman, who was to be at the heart of the Society for the next 40 years, received her first mention.

#### What has contributed to the long life of the Society?

In those early days, there were several Welsh Societies in Essex and the surrounding districts, and there were frequent interchanges of visits. Sadly, not one of the other Societies has survived. Why is it that the Chelmsford and District Welsh Society has survived, and that today it is as active and as strong as it has ever been?

First and foremost the success is due to the dedication and reliability of a handful of people. Each of the thirty six men and women who have filled the office of President has made a contribution by working with their respective committees, year in year out, to provide high quality entertainment within an extremely friendly atmosphere. They have each held office for twelve months at a time and, throughout, have maintained a membership in excess of one hundred. They truly are the **bricks** of the organisation.

Without any doubt, the Society’s continued existence has been guaranteed by the two people who, between them, have held the position of Society Secretary for forty six years. Cyril Howells was Secretary for twenty six years (from 1966 to 1992) and then Mair Thomas, who is still in post, took over. Cyril and Mair, fully supported by Florence and Brian respectively, have both worked tirelessly to secure the services of artistes and speakers. Year after year, they have arranged a full programme and they have always ensured that the members and their guests have gathered in the correct venue on the same night. They have acted as constant advisers to the Presidents and, by their dedication and commitment over such a long period they have guaranteed that the Chelmsford Society never

wavered. At the end of each year they have remained as enthusiastic as they were at the time of their first election. They are the **cement** that has held it all together.

The Society has operated within the following favourable framework:-

- A written Constitution and Rules - *giving the Society a formality*
- The practice of having written minutes for all meetings – *ensuring efficiency and consistency*
- An annual subscription - *giving members a sense of belonging*
- A monthly newsletter - *keeping members informed*
- A President who is in office for one year only - *keeping the Society fresh*
- Holding meetings, normally, on the same day of the month - *making it part of routine*
- Holding meetings, normally, in the same venue - *avoiding confusion*

The practice of holding the formal Annual General Meeting in June *reflects the high number of teachers in the Society.*

## **The Presidents**

As stated above, each President has made a major contribution to the success of the Society. He/she is the Chief Executive and chairs all functions and meetings. The President is not just a figurehead but helps to shape each year's programme. Over the years, many of the guest speakers and performers at the monthly meetings have been nominated by the President and, in the days before the Society appointed a Concert Secretary, the visiting choir was often from the President's home town. The chief guest at the St David's Day Dinner is invariably a friend or close acquaintance of the President. It is said that the Society grants the President two privileges, duties or burdens. Firstly, he chooses the Hymn with which the second half of the Concert starts, and he has the (dubious) honour of selecting the sweet for the St David's Day Dinner. In recent years this "honour" has not always been taken up. The Society's Presidents are listed in Appendix E. The list of the post holders for the first fifty years of the Society shows that the office has been held by thirty six different people; ten of whom - Jim Armishaw, Maureen Byatt, Eric Davies, Ken Davies, Margaret Dutton, Betty Hammond, Cyril Howells, Brian Thomas, Derrick Thomas and Mair Thomas - have been President on two occasions. Only two Presidents – Mair Goodman and Cynthia Styles – have served for three years. Mair passed away on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2002 but there is still time for Cynthia to stand alone with a fourth election.

The fact that four husband and wives - Eric & Margaret Davies, Cyril & Florence Howells, Glyn & Margaret Jordan and Brian & Mair Thomas - have been



Presidents speaks volumes for the spirit of the Society and, in its fiftieth year, fourteen past Presidents are still alive and ten of them are members of the 2011-12 Committee.

At the time of his death, in 1976, it was reported that “the person who had given the Society its friendly atmosphere had been lost”

A list of society Presidents is tabled in Appendix D

## **The Secretaries**

The most onerous position in the Society is undoubtedly that of Secretary. He/she is the point of contact with each of the speakers, makes firm arrangements for the hiring of halls and produces timely minutes of all the meetings. During the past fifty years six people have, in turn, ensured that there has always been a full programme of events for members. Those six people are:

Mr Halliwell	1961 (Until the AGM)
Tom Davies	1961-1962
Ken Davies	1962-1963
Mr H J Jones	1963-1966
Cyril Howells	1966-1992
Mair Thomas	1992- date

Tom and Ken Davies (not related) each did one full year. Mr H J Jones served for three years and then handed over to Cyril Howells. Twenty-six years later, and some four years after he had stated “I hope there is someone out there with thoughts of taking over the Secretaryship”, he handed over to Mair who is still in office.

Cyril and Mair both warrant special consideration.

The first mention of Cyril appears in the Minutes of the 1965 AGM where his election to the Committee is recorded. Twelve months later he was elected Secretary. Throughout his long period in office there was only one occasion when he did not cover himself in glory, and this is how he reported it in his first set of AGM Minutes.

*“The minutes of the last meeting could not be signed as the Secretary had forgotten to bring them with him.”*

One wonders how the Society would have progressed, if that lapse had cost him his re-election. During his period as Secretary Cyril also did two years (1975/76 and 1991/92) as President. Upon his retirement, he said *“In the twenty-six years I have spent before the mast of the Society I have always found a spirit of co-operation from visitors. A wealth of personalities and groups has come to Chelmsford and, possibly, the most rewarding of all, was the fact that they were*

*prepared to return. Most important of all though, is the spirit of friendship which has existed in the Society and I ask for it to continue in the future."*

It is fitting that the words of Brian Thomas, the Society's current "resident eulogist", concludes the notes on Cyril.

*"No words of mine can express the depth of gratitude that the Chelmsford and District Welsh Society owe to Cyril. [.....]. What he gave is immeasurable! When people mention our Society they think of Cyril Howells. Cyril's name, his inspiration, his humour, his special charm, his friendliness and his kind deeds will never be forgotten by his family, his colleagues, his friends or anyone else who had the good fortune to meet him."*

The missing sentence [.....] from the above quotation is "He will be irreplaceable" Fortunately, that has turned out not to be the case, thanks to the enthusiasm and special qualities that Mair has brought to the post.

To those who were on the Committee in the early 1990's Mair will be especially remembered for the changes she introduced in the production (NB Not the printing but the arranging thereof!) of each year's programme. The following is an extract from the 1976 Minutes "*The Meeting was asked to pass to the Secretary any suggestions for next year's programme*" and, in 1983, the same message was tersely put as "*Ideas for next year's programme*". So, while the rest of the Committee departed for a care-free summer break Cyril was left to follow up the suggestions and then lengthy discussions would take place in the subsequent Committee Meetings. That has now changed. During the closing months of each year Mair liaises with the President-elect to ensure that the following year's programme can be ratified by the Committee before they depart for the Summer break. With the content, cost and contracts for the following year's meetings finalised, the Membership Programme Cards are printed and are ready to be exchanged for the annual subscription at the September meeting. All agree that the new procedures have not adversely affected the quality or the variety of the programmes.

Mair has also been President on two occasions (1990/91 and 2005/06) and throughout her time as Secretary she has been supported by her husband, Brian, who was President in 1987/88 and 2001/02.

## **The Treasurers and Finance**

The 2010 Audited Accounts show that the Society's Funds totalled £4,219. This is a healthy sum that provides adequate cover should a problem arise with any of the Society's major events. It is a testimony to the good stewardship of the nine people who have held the office of Treasurer. Carys took over the books at the 2011 AGM.

Mr R Thomas	1961-1964
Ken Davies	1964-1979
Jean Davies	1979-1985
Margaret Dutton	1985-1988
Anthony Harding	1988-1989
John Evans	1989-1990
Betty Hammond	1990-1993
Eddie Alcock	1993-2011
Carys Williams	2011- date

As the data for the first ten formative years show (see Appendix E), the Society has always had a sound financial basis. The annual subscription was set at a reasonable level that guaranteed a healthy membership. The price that was set for the Annual Dinner, in most cases, gave a small profit and, from 1967 onwards, a Jumble Sale brought in some additional external funding. During the ten year period the Society Funds grew from a humble £29 to £126 – ie five times the cost of hiring premises for the monthly meetings.

Mr R Thomas was the Treasurer for the first three years and then Ken Davies filled the office for the next fifteen years. Ken's involvement in the Society was not restricted to finance. He was Secretary during 1962-63, President in 1980 and 1993 and Concert Secretary from 1987 to 2000. Although he lived in Chelmsford Ken was manager of the Billericay Branch of the Trustee Savings Bank. His recruitment skills are legendary and he could detect the faintest of Welsh accents. This usually resulted in their owners being approached to join the Society. His willingness to help others was unbounded and, at the end of each meeting, he was always the first to approach the artiste or speaker to offer his services to carry any equipment out of the hall.

When Ken was elected Vice-President in 1979, his wife, Jean, succeeded him as Treasurer. She held the post for six years thus ensuring that it was “in the family” for twenty one years. When she demitted office in 1985, the Society's Funds had risen to £1,040 ie almost twelve times the cost of hiring premises for the monthly meetings. Jean is still an active member of the Society and is an Honorary Vice-President. The Society also regularly benefits from her flower-arranging skills.

Margaret Dutton, the mathematics teacher who had hosted the early St David's Day House Parties, followed Jean. Margaret is another of the many people who have made a wide contribution to the life of the Society. We have heard that she and Hilary Tucker played a piano duet of dance tunes at the start of the 1979 AGM. Margaret and her husband, Frank, presented the Quiz in 1995. It is remembered for the “What's my line?” questions that were mimed by Margaret. She, too, was President on two occasions (1967/68 and 1996/97) and she supervised the refreshments at the monthly meetings for many years.

In 1990, Betty Hammond, characteristically, stepped in when no one else would do so. She was a member of the Committee for twenty five years, was President in 1989/90 and 2003/04, followed Cyril Howells as organiser of the June church services and was the first female Master of Ceremonies at the St David's Day Dinner. She was usually one of the first to volunteer to host charity lunches, coffee mornings and garden parties.

In 1993, she gladly handed over the Treasurer's role to Eddie Alcock who had arrived in Chelmsford after long service with the Harlow and District Welsh Society. Eddie was President in 1995/96 and combined the role of Treasurer with that of Concert Secretary from 1991 to 2007.

### **Technical Support including the Web-Site**

Today's members may think that they are the first ones to be concerned at **not being able to hear clearly** at meetings. That is not the case. In 1974, following a number of comments, a public address system was purchased and, twelve months later, members complained that it was not being used enough. It was still a matter for concern some ten years later when Mrs Merrifield asked if the Committee could "look again at some amplifying equipment as there was a problem in not being able to hear what is going on". Nowadays, the meetings are supported by excellent audio and visual equipment and the Society's user-friendly Web-Site informs members and the public about the history of the Society including the most recent events. It also contains details of future events. All of this is organised by David Brown to whom all the external favourable comments are referred.

### **Other Outstanding Contributors.**

Miss **Nansi Ifans**, who was one of the three who placed the original advertisement in the paper, suffered from Multiple Sclerosis. She moved to Chelmsford so that she could be cared for by her brother, John, and his wife, Doris. She was involved in the setting up of the first Welsh classes, but her health prevented her from playing a major role. She was instrumental in urging members "to join in the world-wide silent prayer for MS at 6pm on Christmas Day, 1972." This initiative had been running for a number of years and she advised that it was "supported by Ministers of all religions, the Pope and members of the Royal Family". Nansi's final years were spent in the Marillac Hospital at Warley where she was looked after by the Sisters of Charity. She died in 1987 aged eighty one.

The records contain the names of so many members who are not mentioned in this Account but who have contributed so much to the life of the Society. They include Eric Davies, Mair Goodman, Cyril Coleman, Glyn Jeffries and Hilary

Tucker. Many of those who are active today will warrant special mention in the 2022 Addendum.

### Honorary Vice-Presidents

There are currently five Honorary Vice-Presidents:

- Jean Davies – Founder Member.
- Janet Wash – Founder Member.
- Norma Maskell – For 30 years committed service to the Society having first been elected to the Committee in 1976.
- Eddie Alcock – For committed service to the Society.
- Derrick Thomas – For committed service to the Society.

### Miscellaneous

One of the clauses that appeared in the original Constitution and Rules, but which has since been removed, is that the Executive Committee should consist of 12 members, **of which at least 4 should be women**. In the event it has not been necessary to invoke this safeguard and the following Table of Presidents is, in itself, a social commentary on moves towards sexual equality in the late twentieth century.

Number of Male and Female Presidents

Period	Male	Female	%Female
1961-1970	7	3	30
1971-1980	8	2	20
1981-1990	4	6	60
1991-2000	5	5	50
2001-2010	6	4	40

NB: The 2011/12 Committee consists of seven men and eleven women.

The cake that was the centre piece at the Supper that marked “**twenty five years of Welsh activity** in the County Town.” was baked by Mrs Lilian Banks whose childhood friends included Tommy Farr and George Thomas (Lord Tonypany). Janet Laycock and Jean Davies were among the nineteen founder members present, and the instructions for the evening read “Bring your own knife and fork. The rest will be provided”

On April 30<sup>th</sup> 2005 the Society joined other Chelmsford organisations at the “**One World**” event that was held in the Town Centre. Menna Hubbard was a magnificent ambassador for the Society in her Welsh Costume, and the Society’s

profile was raised as Welsh cakes were handed out and advice was given to those who were planning to visit Wales.

Until the move to the Cathedral the **teas at the Concert** were provided by the Chelmsford Branch of the Save the Children Fund. For many years the organisers were Betty and Des Richards and, at the June 1996 Little Baddow Service, they were formally thanked and presented with a Society Goblet, in appreciation of their tremendous efforts over a period of many years.

The **President's Chain of Office** was purchased during 1984/85 at a cost of £55.

## Chapter Four

### THE SECOND FIFTY YEARS

This account is a record of an organisation that has successfully provided social, cultural and recreational opportunities for its members for the past fifty years. The Society currently has a membership of 110, an Annual Subscription of £15 and is governed by the following Committee members:

<b>President:</b>	Carys Williams
<b>Vice-President:</b>	Liz Armishaw
<b>Secretary:</b>	Mair Thomas
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Carys Williams
<b>Assistant secretary:</b>	Brian Thomas
<b>Web-site and audio organiser:</b>	David Brown
<b>Press secretary:</b>	Jim Armishaw
<b>St David's Day Dinner organisers:</b>	Cynthia Styles David Brown
<b>Refreshments:</b>	Gwyneth Abbott, Edith Brown, Maureen Byatt, Buddug R Frank , Enid Morris, Ivy Price..
<b>Multimedia organiser:</b>	Mike Price
<b>Raffles:</b>	Liz Armishaw, Ron Jones Derrick Thomas
<b>Welsh classes &amp; Church services:</b>	Shirley Moody
<b>Outings:</b>	Derrick Thomas
<b>Archivist:</b>	Eddie Alcock

At the Annual General Meeting that will be held later this month a new team will take over. It will be led by Liz Armishaw, the current Vice-president, and there are no apparent reasons why the second fifty years will not be celebrated in 2062.

In conclusion, the following extract from the Order of Service of one of the early meetings with the Little Baddow URC Congregation, is as appropriate today as it was then.

O! Mor hoff yw cwmni'r brodyr  
Sydd a'u hwyneb tua's wlad  
Heb un tafod yn gwenieithio  
Heb un fron yn meithrin brad

O how pleasant to be in the company of brothers  
Where all face the same goal,  
Where there's no sound of disagreement  
And no word of false flattery.



## Appendix A

### PROPOSED CHELMSFORD WELSH SOCIETY

MINUTES of the PILOTING COMMITTEE  
held on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1961

#### PRESENT:

Mr Ben Evans (Chairman), Mesdames Pugh & Timothy, the Misses Harris & Laycock, Messrs T Davies, D Ford, G J Holiwell, D Jones, J M Jones, E Morgan, E Thomas, G Thomas & R Thomas.

#### CHAIRMAN

1. Resolved that Mr Ben Evans be appointed Chairman of this Committee.

#### HONORARY TREASURER

2. Resolved that Mr R Thomas be appointed Honorary Treasurer

#### FUTURE POLICY OF SOCIETY

3. The Committee gave consideration to the next step to be taken in the formation of a Chelmsford Welsh Society in the light of the decision taken at a gathering of Chelmsford Welsh held in Kings Road School on St David's Day. It was the general opinion of the Committee that another Social evening should be held before the Summer at which function proposals should be submitted for the official formation of a Chelmsford Welsh Society.

#### RESOLVED –

- (a) that a Social evening be arranged for Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1961 to be held in the School Hall, Kings Road Junior School;
- (b) that the programme should consist of Welsh Music on records; readings of some of the works of Dylan Thomas; Cymanfa Ganu and refreshments;
- (c) that the arrangements for refreshments be left in the hands of Miss Harris and Miss Laycock;
- (d) that the programme of music for the Cymanfa Ganu be the responsibility of Mr Tom Davies;
- (e) that Mr J M Jones make arrangements for a pianist;
- (f) that lapel badges be provided.

## CONSTITUTION OF SOCIETY

4. The Committee having considered the matter decided to recommend at the Social to be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> May that a General Meeting be held in September for the purpose of forming a Chelmsford Welsh Society, membership to be open to all persons being either Welsh or Welsh extraction or having strong Welsh connections. At such a meeting a formal constitution should be submitted for approval, Officers appointed and an Annual subscription of 2/6d recommended. The suggestions will be made that future activities of the Society might include (1) a celebration of St David's Day (ii) an all-Welsh Cymanfa Ganu including Societies from nearby Districts (iii) 100% Welsh Service in one of the Churches (iv) formation of a Welsh Teaching Class (v) Dramatic & Choral Groups (vi) possible visits to Welsh functions elsewhere (vii) the visit annually of some distinguished Welsh person.

## NEXT MEETING

5. RESOLVED that the next meeting of this Committee be held on the 20<sup>th</sup> April 1961

## Appendix B

### Recipients of the Order of the Leek Members Honoured for Loyal Service to the Society

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>RECIPIENTS</b>
1994	Mair & Brian Thomas
1995	Mair & Harry Goodman
1996	Jean & Ken Davies
1997	Florence & Cyril Howells
1998	Jean & Ron Jones
1999	Cynthia & John Styles
2000	Betty & Ron Hammond
2001	Vera & Derrick Thomas
2002	Hilary & Viv Tucker
2003	Norma & Ron Maskell
2004	Marie & Eddie Alcock
2004	Agnes Evans
2005	Maureen & Keith Byatt
2006	Edith & David Brown
2007	Rev Rowland Webb
2008	Liz & Jim Armishaw
2009	Carys & Arthur Williams

## Appendix C

### Annual Male Voice Choir Concerts

<b>Year</b>	<b>Choir</b>	<b>Artistes</b>
1968	The London Welsh	Anita Williams (Folk Singer)
1969	Pontarddulais	Vivien Townley (S); Kenneth Reynolds (Bt)
1970	Cwmfelin (Llanelli)	Angela Rogers-Lewis ( C ); Islwyn Thomas (T)
1971	Pontarddulais	Pamela Field (S); Gwilym Thomas (Bt)
1972	Treorchi	Sam Griffith (Bt); Herbert Jones (Elocutionist)
1973	Froncysyllte	Janette Dawes (S); Dai Jones (T)
1974	Beaufort	Anne Smith; John Davies
1975	Mynydd Mawr	Nigel Hopkins (Bt); Hazel Howells (S)
1976	Pontarddulais	Elizabeth Gronow; Sioned Williams
1977	Tredegar Orpheus	Maria Williams (S); Peter Reynolds (T)
1978	Brythoniaid	Diane Fuge (S); Tom Davies (B)
1979	Cwmbach	Anne Marie Davies (S); Clive Burge (T)
1980	Llanelli	Ann Hill (S); Teifryn Rees (T)
1981	Dunvant	Angela Rogers Davies ( C ); Huw Evans (T)
1982	Canoldir	Lynne Davies (S); Geraint Roberts (T)
1983	Pontarddulais	Mair Roberts (S); Huw Evans (T)
1984	Dunvant	Ann Hill (S); Gareth Davies (B)
1985	Brythoniaid	Helen Mason; Tom Davies
1986	Froncysyllte	Melodi (Tenor, Soprano, Piano & Harp & Elocutionist)
1987	Pontarddulais	Janice Davies Rees (S); Dafydd Edwards (T)
1988	Llanelli	Bethan Dudley (S); Arwel Treharne Morgan (T)
1989	Dunvant	Claire Hammacott; Huw Rhys Evans (T)
1990	Morrison Orpheus	Wyn Davies** ; Buddug Verona James (Mezzo S)
1991	Traeth	Helen Miles (S); Gwyn Hughes Jones (B)
1992	Ystradgynlais	Dafydd Edwards (T); Trebor Evans (B)
1993	Pontarddulais	D Hugh Jones (O) Nerys Jones (S); Gareth Small (T)

Continued over

## Appendix C (continued)

### Annual Male Voice Choir Concerts

1994	Trelawnydd	Anthony Stuart Lloyd (B); Ros Evans (S)
1995	Dunvant	Sian Williams (S); Aled Hall (T)
1996	Trelawnydd	Carolyn Foulkes (S); Tom Evans (B)
1997	Dowlais	Susan Rees (S); Arwel Treharne Morgan (T)
1998	Llanelli	Mair Roberts (S); Huw Evans (T)
1999	Maelgwyn	Sian Wyn Gibson (Mezzo S); Dylan Cernwy (Harp)
2000	Dowlais	Amy Black (Mezzo S)
2001	Llanelli	Fflur Wyn (S)
2002	Dunvant	Jill Padfield (S); Dylan Cernyw (Harp)
2003	Godre'r Aran	<i>See Text</i>
2004	Ystradgynlais	Eirian Davies (B); Helen Gibbon (S)
2005	Godre'r Aran	<i>See Text</i>
2006	Pontarddulais	Nicki Phillips (Flute); Deian Rowlands (Harp)
2007	Dunvant	Joy Cornock (S)
2008	Llanelli	Garry Griffiths (B)
2009	Maelgwn	Elin Mai (S)
2010	Godre'r Aran	Aled Wyn Davies (T)
2011	Trelawnydd	Andrew Rees (T)
<i>NB Code: Bass (B), Baritone (Bt.) Contralto©, Organ (O), Soprano(S), Tenor (T)</i>		

## Appendix D

### Society Presidents

October 1961	Ben Evans - Inaugural Chairman
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1961	Mervyn Jones
1962	S Upshall
1963	Eric Davies
1964	TLT Williams
1965	Mair Goodman
1966	TDE Williams
1967	Margaret Dutton
1968	Cyril Coleman
1969	Margaret Buxton
1970	Derfel Richards
1971	Eric Davies
1972	Glyn Jeffries
1973	Dick Dunn
1974	Mair Goodman
1975	Cyril Howells
1976	Wyn Lloyd
1977	Jim Heffernan
1978	Margaret Davies
1979	Gwyn Williams
1980	Ken Davies
1981	Gill Ferguson
1982	Hilary Tucker
1983	Glyn Jordan
1984	Cynthia Styles
1985	Meic Davies
1986	Florence Howells

1987	Brian Thomas
1988	Sheila Dunlevy
1989	Betty Hammond
1990	Mair Thomas
1991	Cyril Howells
1992	Margaret Jordan
1993	Ken Davies
1994	Derrick Thomas
1995	Eddie Alcock
1996	Margaret Dutton
1997	Mair Goodman
1998	Maureen Byatt
1999	Ron Jones
2000	Cynthia Styles
2001	Brian Thomas
2002	Jim Armishaw
2003	Betty Hammond
2004	Carys Williams
2005	Mair Thomas
2006	Derrick Thomas
2007	Cynthia Styles
2008	Maureen Byatt
2009	Shirley Moody
2010	Jim Armishaw
2011	Carys Williams

## Appendix E

### Key Financial and Statistical Data relating to the first Ten Years

Year Ending	Subscriptions				Annual Dinner			Hire of Hall	Jumble Sale Income	Society Funds at Year-end
	Number of Members	Sub (each) Pre-Decimal	Sub (each) Post Decimal	Income	Number Paying	Price per Ticket -£	Profit/ (Loss)			
(a)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)	(b)
Sept 1962	129	5/-	-	£32	148	£1.25	£19	£6	-	£29
Sept 1963	106	5/-	-	£27	129	£1.25	£23	£14	-	£39
May 1964	87	5/-	-	£22	92	£1.25	£11	£16	-	£86
May 1965	85	5/-	-	£21	74	£1.25	-£16	£17	-	£77
May 1966	86	5/-	-	£22	76	£1.25	£0	£17	-	£65
May 1967	96	7/6	-	£37	86	£1.38	-£3	£26	£28	£100
May 1968	88	7/6	-	£33	115	£1.38	£9	£17	£25	£123
May 1969	84	7/6	-	£32	135	£1.38	£19	£20	£13	£111
Jun 1970	102	7/6	-	£38	129	£1.50	£12	£23	£30	£119
Jun 1971	94	-	50p	£46	143	£1.50	£5	£23	£21	£126