



St. David's Newsletter



February 2012



St. David's Cathedral,
Wales

The Daffodil Luncheon Saturday, February 25 The Club at Nevillewood

Cash Bar at Noon — Serving at 12.45
\$30 Entrée Choices:

Roast Sliced Tenderloin of Beef or
Sonoma Stuffed Chicken Breast.

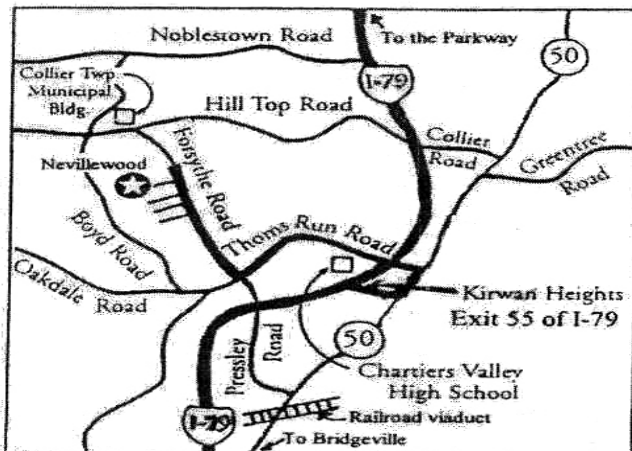
Featuring

Lucy Scandrett, Harpist

Sing-a-long with Jack Owen

A Welsh Recitation by Ian Samways

**A Registration Form is on page 4
and include it in the Return Envelope**



New Officers for the Society Named

The Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Ian Samways will be President of the Society, and Betsy Teti will be Vice President, for the year 2012. We all offer them our support.

The Board recognizes and extends our thanks to Suzanne Hayden as President and Robert Willis as Vice President for their commitment and significant accomplishments on our behalf in the past year. The full roster of Board Officers is found on page two.

Welsh North American Association

It is exciting to report that the new Executive Secretary of the Welsh North American Association, formerly known as the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association, is not only the youngest person to hold this office, but also the first woman to do so. Dr. Megan Williams, a resident of Trumansburg, N.Y. with her husband Sion and two young sons, emigrated from Criccieth, Wales two years ago. Her age bodes well for the future of the Association, whose international headquarters address is P.O. Box 410, Granville, Ohio.

Membership Year Starts March 1

Our membership year starts with St. David's Day, March 1. Dues are \$15 per year, to support the Board's heritage activities, and the expenses for programming and mailing. Please look at the address label on this Newsletter to note the year of your prior donation, which is placed next to your surname. Prospective members are shown with "P". The dues form is on page 4. A pre-addressed envelope is enclosed.

MANY WELSH TREASURES ENDURE

Some churches and chapels in Wales are facing the challenge of serving smaller congregations. Sadly, chapels are closing. Past treasures can lose their luster. Yet some things of faith do endure. One such example is an 1852 Book of Common Prayer that was given to Harriet Wolford, with best wishes from E.F.N. Uplands, Swansea, 1853.

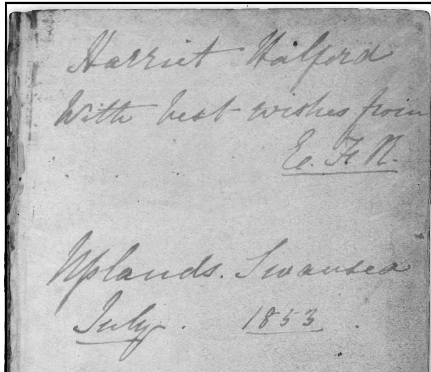


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Harriet married Owen Thomas in Swansea, Wales. Their daughter was Anna Thomas Rees Edwards, and each one is now buried in Homewood Cemetery, Pittsburgh. Anna's daughter was Edith Mabel Rees Hughes, who next successively bequeathed the Prayer Book to her daughter, Betty Hughes Faber, a current member of St. David's Society.

AIDS TO LEARNING WELSH

Our Welsh classes will begin on Wednesday, March 14 through May 23 in classroom 1228 at Pitt. Call Dale Richards at 412-794-4050 or redragon-dale@msn.com for details.

Click on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/learnwelsh/links/onlinecourses.shtml> or <http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/learning/learnwelsh> for tips on learning Welsh.

Alex Trebek, host of "Jeopardy" says that of the languages he knows, Welsh is most difficult for him.



St. David's Society 2012 Calendar of Events

- February 24** Pub Crawl Details: call 724-449-3359
February 25, St. David's Day Luncheon at The Club at Nevillewood.
March 1 Hash Run Details: call 724-449-3359
March 3 Wheeling Celtic Celebration
March 14 Welsh classes thru May 23, at Pitt
April 7 Scottish Tartan Days
April 27-29 Ontario Welsh Festival
May 18-20 Pittsburgh Folk Festival
June 10 Picnic with St. Andrew's Society, Monroeville Community Park.
TBA Book Club and Tea, McGinnis Sisters Store, Monroeville Details: call 724-941-5260 (home)
TBA Welsh Cake Bakeoff
TBA October Gymanfa Ganu, Beaver Falls, Pa.

January 25 was St. Dwynwen's Day, the Welsh equivalent of St. Valentine's Day. To read her love story, go to <http://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/Wales-History/>



LEEK PIE

- 2-1/2 cups cleaned chopped leeks
 - 8 ounces chopped bacon, fried crisp
 - 3/4 cup half & half or light cream
 - 3 eggs
 - Salt and pepper
 - Pinch of nutmeg
 - 9-inch unbaked pie shell
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
Mix and pour all ingredients into the pie shell.
Bake at 350 degrees for approximately 40 minutes.

"A Little Welsh Cookbook" by E. Smith Twickly

St. David's Society of Pittsburgh, Ian Samways, President, 412-215-9161 ISamways@aol.com

Betsy Teti, Vice President, 412-341-1832 betsyat@verizon.net

Elizabeth Jeffries, Secretary 412-244-1578 eajsolo@aol.com

Mike Powell, Treasurer 412-856-0142 mpowell@pointpark.edu

Richard Davies, Assistant Treasurer, and Editor 412-489-3795

Ian Samways, Nationality Room Treasurer, 412-215-9161 ISamways@aol.com

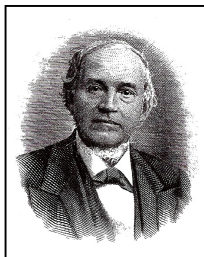
Jack Owen and Dale Richards, Nationality Room Co-Chairs

2012

James Rees, a Welsh Steamboat Builder in Pittsburgh

A persistent question that could have been asked of early emigrants to southwest Pennsylvania is, why did they choose to settle here. A frequent answer is that they chose the Pittsburgh region to work in the coal mines and steel mills. However, the Rees family, consisting of father, mother and nine children, came from Wales in 1827 with an eye on manufacturing.

Their first home was in Wheeling, where, sadly, one week after arriving, the father unexpectedly died. James, (born on December 25, 1821) quickly had visions of work he could do to help his widowed mother. As he aged, James worked for Samuel Roberts, pushing coal cars out of the pit. His pay was \$1.50 per week. He then worked in the machine shops of Smith and Irwin, earning \$3 per week, where he observed the evolving partnership of steam power and machinery. Not content to waste time, he went to the Pittsburgh Mainline Canal depot and offered to take the travelers' trunks to a hotel for twenty-five cents apiece. He then hired a drayman to take the whole load for fifty cents, and he kept the profit.



James Rees

James' next job was as a foreman at Snowden & Co., Brownsville, where he instituted a policy of reducing the work day from 12 hours to 10 hours. During winter months, he was an engineer on river boats. He returned in 1834 to Pittsburgh to Stackhouse & Thompson Co. to oversee the construction of the side wheel steamboat named *Michigan*. It was launched in Erie in 1843, the first iron hulled dreadnaught warship built for the U. S. Navy for action on the Great Lakes.

James next bought the establishment of Robert Whitman at the Point. Because of his reputation, work came in so quickly that he expanded to a site at Duquesne Way and Fourth Avenue. In the 1850's he developed a line of freight and passenger packets on the Allegheny River. He successfully transported oil until 1865 when railroads took over the business. James and his sons became the James Rees & Sons of Pittsburgh, and they built a steel plate steamboat, the first in the United States. James' stern-wheel steamboat business soon expanded internationally, into South America, then into Russia.

James and his family lived at 5045 Fifth Avenue, and as a city resident, he served on the City Council, its water and fire committees and in the city volunteer fire department. James died on September 12, 1889, at age 68, a respected businessman who knew the names of his old workers, who had given him their trust and loyalty.

His sons, James, Thomas, William, Charles and D. A. Rees, continued in business as the James Rees & Sons, boiler manufacturers, and the James Rees Duquesne Engine Works. In 1895, they merged to form the James Rees and Sons Company. The Company built the amazing total of some 600 steamboats.

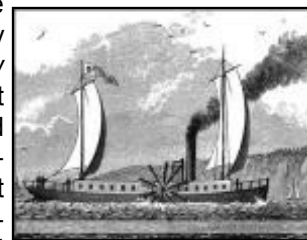
The Steamboat Business in Pittsburgh

King George III in 1763 declared that white settlers were not permitted to cross a demarcation line drawn on the summit of the Allegheny Mountains. This was to honor a treaty he made with the Iroquois League. Settlers ignored the edict and they headed westward through Pittsburgh, soon to be called "the gateway to the west". To travel westward meant that flat boats, keel boats and rafts had to be made. Thus a new industry began around the Monongahela, Allegheny and Ohio Rivers.

In 1794, local merchants were eager to sell their products in new settlements along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers and especially in New Orleans. Merchants felt that they were not adequately protected by Washington's administration to use the rivers, and this was part of the impetus for the Whiskey Rebellion. As the rivers became safer for commerce and travelers, more boats were needed.

Elizabeth, and Brownsville, where barges are being built today, also became centers for steamboat building. In 1802, the Lewis and Clark Expedition ordered at Elizabeth a keel boat, and a pirogue, which is a flat bottom boat they would use in swamp areas.

The first steamship to navigate the rivers west of the Allegheny Mountains was named the *New Orleans*, and in October, 1811, it sailed from Pittsburgh and reached New Orleans in January, 1812. However, it was not powerful enough to return northward. The War of 1812-14 and the needs of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry's squadron also spurred the steamship industry in southwest Pennsylvania.



Steamship *New Orleans*

Isaac Craig, who with his partners had opened the first glass factory in Pittsburgh, also started a shipyard in Brownsville where they built the *Enterprise*, the first steamboat that could make a round trip between Pittsburgh and New Orleans. When the Marquis de Lafayette came to Pittsburgh in April 1825, he came up the Mississippi on the steamboat *Mechanic*, which sank at Louisville and his luggage was lost. He arrived in Pittsburgh in a carriage pulled by four white horses and the cheers of grateful citizens.

The Rev. Richard Davies

References:

Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Spirit, "Pittsburgh and Waterways", William B. Rodgers, pp 39-48, Chamber of Commerce of Pittsburgh, 1927.
The History of Pittsburgh, pp. 1036-1039.
<http://www.riverboatdaves.com>
"Pittsburgh Builds a Brown Water Navy", Arthur Fox, Western Pennsylvania History, Summer 2011.

February 25 Luncheon Reservation Form and 2012 Dues Donation

Luncheon Entrée Choice(s):

Beef _____ Chicken _____ @ \$ 30. Not refundable after Monday, February 21

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email address _____

Check if you prefer receiving the Newsletter by email. _____

Dues are \$15. The total enclosed for the Dues and/or the Luncheon is \$ _____ payable to St. David's Society of Pgh.

You may include this Form and your check in the enclosed envelope addressed to Richard Davies, 300 Madison Ave., #309, Pittsburgh Pa. 15243-1087

Return Service Requested

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St. David's Society of Pittsburgh
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