

## ***Bringing you the best from Wales and from the North American Welsh community . . .***

From the start of the planning, the goal of the planning team was to try to entice the best of Welsh contributors to the First North American Festival of Wales. This we think we have done and here is a sampling of the artists and presenters that will make the Richmond 2003 North American festival of Wales a truly Welsh experience.

### **Welsh National Eisteddfod Winners, the Duvant Male Choir ([www.duvant.org](http://www.duvant.org)) (Sponsored by Gren Thomas, Strongbow Resources Inc and Navigator Resources Ltd.).**

The Duvant Male Choir from South Wales, the oldest male choir in Wales, will be the featured choir at the Grand Concert. It is an outstanding group of choristers led by two of Wales<sup>1</sup> best young musicians, director Tim Rhys-Evans and accompanist Jeffrey Howard. There is a new vigor and excitement about the choir since these two musicians took over the reins, made evident by the judges' acclaim as the Duvant Male Choir was named winners of several eisteddfodau. Recent victories include the Welsh Semi-National Eisteddfod in 2001 in Cardigan, and the male voice competition at the Welsh National Eisteddfod in 2002.

Director Timothy Evans has developed a very special program entitled "Wales, A Musical Journey," to illustrate in music how Wales has changed and keeps changing, and how music has greatly influenced life within Welsh communities.

### **Jason Howard, internationally recognized Welsh baritone opera star and soloist ([www.jasonhoward.net](http://www.jasonhoward.net)) (Sponsored by the Wales Tourist Board, [www.wtbonline.gov.uk](http://www.wtbonline.gov.uk))**

Jason Howard, born and raised in Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales, is an internationally acclaimed baritone who has sung lead roles in major opera houses all over the world, including The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, the Opéra National de Paris, the English National Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera, Seattle Opera, New York City Opera, Tel Aviv Opera House - and of course the Welsh National Opera in Cardiff!

On top of his busy operatic schedule, Jason has played a major role in Welsh music. He has appeared in countless TV and radio productions; has sung with male voice choirs throughout Wales, including the pre-game singing at Wales<sup>1</sup> home rugby international matches; and recorded several CDs in a variety of musical styles, from operatic to Broadway music, and in both English and Welsh.

### **Haydn James, director of the Gymanfa Ganu (Sponsored by Col. Alf and Mrs. Faye Reese)**

If you want to sing with a Gymanfa director who has the most experience in directing large groups of people then you must come to Richmond For Haydn James, music is his passion. He has an outstanding international reputation as director, arranger and adjudicator of choral music. Haydn is the Musical Director of the London Welsh Male Voice Choir and of Côr Meibion de Cymru (the South Wales Male Choir). He has also conducted no less than seven of the Festivals of Male Choirs at the Royal Albert Hall in London. Not content with directing these male voice choirs, Hayden has led the massed spectator singing prior to Wales<sup>1</sup> home rugby international games since 1998. In 2001 he was selected to conduct the British Lions choir on their tour of Australia and in 2002 directed the singing at the international match between Wales and South Africa in Cape Town. With this pedigree, it is not hard to predict that we shall have two outstanding Gymanfa sessions.

### **Mabon, the best folk group in Wales ([www.mabon.org](http://www.mabon.org)) (Sponsored by the Welsh Development Agency)**

The festival entertainment will begin with energetic and rousing music from Mabon. Based in Bridgend, this will be the group's first visit to North America. They regularly play at European and British Celtic festivals, most recently at the Wales World Nation pavilion at the Festival Interceltique de Lorient in France

Mabon - leader Derek Smith, acoustic guitar; Iolo Whelan, percussion and low whistle; Jamie Smith, accordion; and Gareth Whelan, fiddle -is regarded as one of Wales<sup>1</sup> finest folk performance and dance bands, thrilling - and exhausting - audiences at concerts, dances and on festival stages. Their music style is to take traditional tunes from across the Celtic countries and rearrange them with a vibrant and innovative approach ("Mabonized," as it is called by the group). Couple these with original compositions written by accordionist Jamie Smith, and any Mabon program displays wonderfully fresh directions in the Celtic music genre.

In addition to their Festival opening concert, Mabon will also direct the dancing at the Saturday morning dance workshop, so bring along your dancing shoes and be prepared for at least an hour of exhilarating dancing and exercise to the best twmpath dance group in Wales!

### **Tim Rhys Evans and Jeffrey Howard, extraordinary young musicians**

Vibrant director of the Dunvant Choir, Tim Rhys Evans is a versatile musician. Not only has does he direct the Dunvant choir - he has also won various vocal performance scholarships and competitions. His innovative and progressive musical talent has been instrumental in taking the Dunvant Choir back to the top of the Welsh male choir list. In addition to his duties as director of the choir for our Grand Concert, Tim will be one of the adjudicators for the solo competitions at the Eisteddfod.

Jeffrey Howard, the accompanist of the Dunvant Choir, will also be the accompanist for the Gymanfa Ganu sessions and our semi-professional Eisteddfod competition Jeffrey has

completed the advanced organ course and the church music course at the Royal Academy of Music, where he received several prizes for piano and organ performance. His skills on keyboard instruments are astounding and he will exhilarate the congregation at the Gymanfa.

**Terry Breverton, three-time Welsh Books Council "Book of the Month" author. (Supported by the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff ([www.uwic.ac.uk](http://www.uwic.ac.uk))).**

The extrovert and entertaining style and expert knowledge of Terry Breverton will be seen at his seminars on Welsh Saints and Welsh Pirates. Both are topics upon which Terry has recently published and won Welsh Book of the Month awards. Terry is a prolific author - in the last three years he has written and published nine books covering many aspects of Welsh history and Welsh life. Each has been received with considerable acclaim by the critics and Terry has built a successful publishing company, Wales Books-Glyndwr Publishing ([www.walesbooks.com](http://www.walesbooks.com)), around his writings.

**Eirionedd Baskerville, Director of Publications at the National Library of Wales (Sponsored by the National Library of Wales, [www.llgc.org.uk](http://www.llgc.org.uk))**

The National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth has huge resources for the genealogist, and if you want to know how the National Library of Wales can help your genealogy research, Eirionedd Baskerville is the fount of all information. As just one indication of her deep knowledge and understanding, Eirionedd is the author of the Wales Tourist Board Publication on tracing your Welsh roots.

**Bronn and Katherine Journey ([www.phileomusic.com](http://www.phileomusic.com)) (Sponsored by the Puget Sound Welsh Association)**

Bronn and Katherine Journey will be hosting the after-banquet entertainment. Bronn is very well known in the Welsh communities in America's Northwest and in Western Canada. His grandfather emigrated from Penrhyndeudraeth in Wales and became one of the celebrated directors of the early Welsh cymanfaoedd in the Puget Sound region. Bronn is very proud of his Welsh heritage. His versatile style and relaxed, humorous approach to a "seriously classical" instrument have made him a favorite with concertgoers. His Christmas concerts always play to sell out audiences. Katherine, an excellent soprano, has delighted audiences both in the USA and in her native Canada. They make a wonderful duo and will ensure that the after banquet concert will be an occasion to remember. Visit their web site at [www.phileomusic.com](http://www.phileomusic.com) and sample some of their special music

**Rhiannon Acree, Ysgol Gân director**

Those who attended the National Gymanfa Ganu in San Jose in 2001 will undoubtedly remember Rhiannon's inspired and exhilarating conducting of the afternoon Gymanfa Ganu session. Although not directing the full Gymanfa sessions this year, she will surely bring that special Welsh 'hwyl' to the Ysgol Gân seminars.

Supporting our well known persons are a cadre of very talented individuals: Rufus Adams from Rhyl will discuss David Lloyd George; Ronald Rees of New Brunswick will talk about the Welsh copper industry and scientist Sir William Logan; Gren Thomas of Vancouver will describe his incredible journey to discovering the diamond fields of the Northwest territories; Geoffrey Madoc-Jones of Vancouver will enlighten us even more about the life of Dylan Thomas; Gaynor Samuel will take new and innovative approaches to the learning of Welsh in our language classes. And we are sure that you can deduce by their names that all of our speakers have strong Welsh connections. To round it all off, Welsh corgi dogs will be scampering through the halls of the hotel, herding people into the demonstration of this unique Welsh breed.

While working hard to bring this splendid group of people together, we must thank our many sponsors who have contributed money and support to enable it to happen. In addition to those listed above, we have to thank the Welsh Societies of Victoria, Vancouver and of the Pacific Northwest for their generous and wonderful support.

The Eisteddfod: Need to write here, waiting for storytelling to go in. BUG  
PHIL TO DO THIS, ALTHOUGH I WILL PROBABLY END UP DOING IT FRIDAY  
MORNING . .

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Wales resource center: Description of marketplace.

Welsh North American Chamber of Commerce conference and golf tournament

Tours of Vancouver, Victoria, and Whistler, the location for the Winter Olympics in 2010.

## SIDEBAR

Over the last year we have described for Ninnau readers the program plans and content for the North American Festival of Wales. This final article is an overview of many of the events and the people that we have enticed to come and educate and entertain. The planning team has worked hard for two years to bring together this outstanding program.

Our annual North American Welsh Gathering, the Gymanfa Ganu, has a new name < The North American Festival of Wales < and a new logo tying the three nations of Wales, Canada and the United States of America into one unique combination, as seen above < but the traditional components are retained. There is still time for you to send in registration forms and sign up for your favorite activities. Entries to the eisteddfod are closed, but marketplace and brochure advertising space may still be available. If you are interested in either of these possibilities, please contact

[REDACTED] or [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] as soon as possible.

The full daily schedule of events can be obtained from our web site at [www.nafow.org](http://www.nafow.org) or by requesting information from [REDACTED] or calling [REDACTED]

[Other key communication details to include]

Hotels: Best Western Richmond Inn and Convention Center 1-604-273-7878  
The Vancouver Airport Hilton Inn 1-604-273-6336  
Quote North American Welsh Festival to obtain rates.

National Car rental: 1-800 CAR RENT. Contract ID is 5007125

Air Canada: Convention number CV 864378