

MALAD VALLEY WELSH SOCIETY

Volume 10 Number 1 – March 2015

ST. DAVID'S DAY CELEBRATION IN MALAD

The Malad Valley Welsh Society hosted a Fireside to commemorate St. David's Day this year. Approximately 85 people attended this special event.

Besides reminding people of the reason for celebrating St. David's Day (the day St. David, the patron saint of Wales, died), the event honored the life and music of Evan Stephens, the best known and most prolific poet and composer in LDS Church history. Evan came to the United States from his native Wales when he was 12 years old; his family settled in Willard, Utah. By the time Evan was a teenager, his extraordinary musical talent was already recognized, and he chose to stay in Salt Lake when most of his family moved up to St. John, Samaria, and Malad. He often visited family members in Malad Valley, walking or catching rides from Salt Lake. He came to Malad several times to judge the local *eisteddfod*, that was held either in Malad or St. John from the 1880s through 1916. He has numerous relatives who still live in Malad Valley.

Evan became the third conductor of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and envisioned a great choir that would rival the choirs back in Wales. He insisted on Choir members auditioning for the Choir and on their being called as official Choir members so that a consistent membership of 400 was achieved. He also took the Choir on its first national tour, which ended at the Chicago World's Fair. There the Choir won second place in the international choral competition. Many thought that the Tabernacle Choir should have won first place because the winning choir had recruited many Welsh singers to

augment its numbers for the finale competition.

Many of Evan Stephens' compositions are in the LDS Hymnbook today. His hymns include "Our Mountain Home So Dear," "Let Us All Press On," and "True to the Faith." However, because many of the accompaniments are among the most difficult in the hymnbook, Evan Stephens' songs are not as well known as they should be. This Fireside was an attempt to keep his memory and music alive.

A pencil sketch by Christine Beck of Malad was borrowed from the Oneida Pioneer Museum so it could be displayed at the Fireside. Paula Morby, a great-niece of Evan Stephens, presented his life sketch. Vocal numbers were performed by Diane and Blair Gleed, Katie and Kelly Gleed, and Pam Molineaux, all members of the Darl Gleed family. A piano-organ duet was performed by Helen Ward and Jean Thomas. The congregation joined in singing several of Evan Stephens' songs, after which traditional Welsh cakes (provided by Dotty Evanson, Bob Crowther, and Christine Bowen) were served as refreshments.

One of the original members of the Welsh Society, LUCILLE THOMAS BLAISDELL KEENE, died suddenly in January at the age of 85. She was born and raised in Malad and married Orlan Blaisdell. After he died at age 43, she later married Bob Keene. She was extremely proud of her Welsh heritage and came to the Welsh Festival every year. She will be missed.

**11th ANNUAL
MALAD VALLEY
WELSH FESTIVAL
JUNE 26 – 28, 2015**

**See www.welshfestival.com for
more information.**

**ONEIDA PIONEER MUSEUM WILL OPEN
MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND**

The Oneida Pioneer Museum will open for the summer on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend with its traditional bake sale. This year musical entertainment and other events are tentatively planned for the opening weekend, beginning before noon on Saturday, May 23. The Museum will also be open on Memorial Day from noon – 5:00 p.m.

The Museum will be open from 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. Tuesday – Saturday from Memorial Day until Labor Day. Stop by and see the artifacts, photos, and memorabilia of the Malad Valley pioneers. With the new air conditioning funded by a grant from the Nell J. Redfield Foundation, you can stay cool all summer when you visit the Museum.

**PLAN YOUR FAMILY REUNION
AT THE WELSH FESTIVAL!**

**Contact Jean Thomas
(thomjea2@isu.edu or 208-766-
5361) if you want to reserve
meeting space, have your reunion
advertised in Festival publicity,
and receive coupons for the
Festival food and craft booths for
all of your Reunion attendees!**

FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM

The Oneida Pioneer Museum is launching a new initiative – the FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM -- to inform people about the Museum, to solicit donations to the collection, and to raise money for upgrades and remodeling of the building.

Built in 1914, the Museum is now locally owned because of the generous donation of the building by the R.B. Davis family. The Board has a lot of plans for the building, including renovating the former hotel rooms on the third floor as theme rooms to house some of the collection. Wouldn't it be nice to see a World War II room or a 1930s school room or a Church of the Seven Spires room? Maybe some of the rooms will house artifacts from Samaria, Daniels, St. John, Cherry Creek, Pleasantview, and other local communities and be appropriately named.

But such ambitious projects require time and lots of money, so you can help by becoming a FRIEND OF THE MUSEUM. This annual donation will entitle the FRIEND to see his or her name prominently displayed in the Museum, to receive an annual report, and to be a special guest at Museum functions. For example, when the Museum hosts a cowboy music and poetry evening, FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM will be invited to a dinner with the performers and front-row seats for the program.

Your donation can be at any level you prefer:

Annual:	\$20 (2 years - \$35)
Handcart:	\$50 (2 years - \$95)
Covered Wagon:	\$100 (2 years - \$190)
Stagecoach:	\$200 (2 years - \$390)

Just send your tax deductible donation to the Museum at P.O. Box 79, and you will immediately begin receiving information about upcoming Museum events.

DONATE TO A RESTORATION PROJECT IN WALES!

When on a business trip for Hess Pumice Products of Malad, Mike Hess, Jr., met some of the people involved in the restoration of this tramway in Chirck, Wales. They were excited to find out about the Welsh Festival and the Welsh Society. They asked if we would advertise their project in case people might want to donate to the restoration of the tramway. More information, including photos, can be seen on their website: www.thegvt.org.

The Glyn Valley Tramway Trust is a registered charity working towards the recreation of this quaint little tramway in Chirk and the Ceiriog Valley.

Part of the historic Glyn Valley Tramway - dubbed the "Little Bit of Heaven Railway"-- is being restored by volunteers from the Trust who want to recreate the tramway as it would have been in its heyday.

Chirk 'the Gateway to Wales' is a pretty little town situated on the edge of the County of Wrexham, and at the start of the beautiful Ceiriog Valley. Now the focus of the Trust's endeavours to recreate the tramway, Chirk is set to see steam trains running once again through its picturesque scenery.

PLANNING UNDERWAY FOR THE 11TH ANNUAL WELSH FESTIVAL

The 11th annual Malad Valley Welsh Festival will be held June 26-28, 2015. Some plans are still tentative, but the Festival is sure to have entertainment for everyone.

Presentations will be by Lucie Washburn on "Owen Glyndwr: The Last Real Prince of Wales," Debra Baldwin on "Learning Welsh through Folk Songs," Cathy Clayton on "The Harp in Welsh Culture and Tradition," and Ron Dennis on "Welsh Pioneers to the Malad Valley."

Lucie Washburn has been a popular presenter every Welsh Festival with her educational and entertaining insights to Welsh literature, culture, and history. Debra Baldwin's down-to-earth presentation style makes learning the Welsh language do-able, even for those with no ear for Welsh. Cathy Clayton performed on the outdoor amphitheatre and at the evening choral concert last year and wowed the crowd with her expertise and knowledge about the harp. Ron Dennis is always a Festival favourite with his knowledge of the Welsh Mormon emigration.

Music will again be a highlight of the Festival, just as it is in Wales. Auditions are being held for the choral concert, the youth concert, the piano duet concert, and the male vocalist concert so that favorites from past years and new musicians will entertain audiences at the four concerts.

New performing groups have been invited to the Welsh Festival to entertain the crowd outdoors on the amphitheater. Welsh and Celtic musicians will perform as well as groups who perform good, old Western music.

Family history displays will again feature some of the first families in Malad Valley. In addition, exhibits about the clothes and food of Wales will be in the cultural hall.

One new event being planned is a photography exhibit and competition. This event will not be just for professionals but for anyone who has a photograph that deserves to be on display. Watch for more information about this event.

Wagon rides to historic sites, the quilt show, community meals, pioneer games, vendors, and maybe some new outdoor events are in the planning stages. There will be something for everyone - whether you are Welsh or not! Come celebrate the heritage of Malad Valley during the Welsh Festival!

Members of the Malad Valley Welsh Festival Planning Committee:

Jean Thomas, Chair, 208-766-4417
Bob Crowther, Family Displays, 208-766-4642
Helen Ward, Concerts, 208-766-4104
Jean Thomas, Presentations, 208-766-4417
Roxanne Albrechtsen, Craft Vendors, 208-604-1234
Jill Daniels, Food Vendors, 208-766-2110
Lloyd Bush, Photography Exhibit, 208-766-4466
Edna Palmer, Presbyterian Church, 208-766-2777
Luke Waldron, Liaison with Samaria, 208-380-3522
Fay Cottle, Oneida Pioneer Museum, 208-766-4847
Tracy Ward, Pioneer Games, 208-766-2977

LOOKING FOR A UNIQUE GIFT? Give a membership to the Malad Valley Welsh Society – just \$10. Contact Jean Thomas (208-766-4417).

Did you know?

The word for “leek” and for “daffodil” is the same in Welsh – cenihen. Therefore, the traditional symbol of Wales is the leek, but the modern symbol is the daffodil.

Wear either a leek or a daffodil on St. David’s Day!

Malad Valley Family History Books, Volumes 1-3, are available at Thomas Market, the Blue Goose, the Oneida Pioneer Museum, and Malad City Hall.

The Malad Valley Welsh Society Newsletter is published semi-annually. All members of the Malad Valley Welsh Society receive a copy as a benefit of membership. To put stories, ads, or information in the Newsletter, contact Jean Thomas (208-766-5361) or thomjea2@isu.edu.

Renew your membership in the Malad Valley Welsh Society now! The annual membership runs from Festival to Festival. Dues remain just \$10 per person per year, and \$7 of your dues go to support the Welsh Festival. A renewal application is enclosed, so send it in today to keep your membership in one of the largest Welsh societies in the U.S.

The Malad Valley Welsh Foundation is the nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that raises funds to support the Festival. All donations to the Festival and Society are tax deductible. To make charitable donations to benefit the Society and Festival, please send your donation to the Malad Valley Welsh Foundation, 59 Bannock Street, Malad, ID 83252.

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Did you know?

According to researchers at Brigham Young University, Malad City has the highest percentage of people of Welsh descent of any city outside of Wales. Is it any wonder that everyone has a nickname?

SEE YOU AT THE WELSH FESTIVAL!