



# CENTRAL NEW BRUNSWICK WELSH SOCIETY FEBRUARY 2026



## ST. DAVID'S DAY

The Welsh flag will be raised at Fredericton City Hall at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, February 27<sup>th</sup> after which we will gather at *Neighbourly Coffee* for a hot beverage and conversation. *Neighbourly Coffee* is located at 12 Neighbourly Way, just past the Walmart on Two Nations Crossing in Fredericton North.

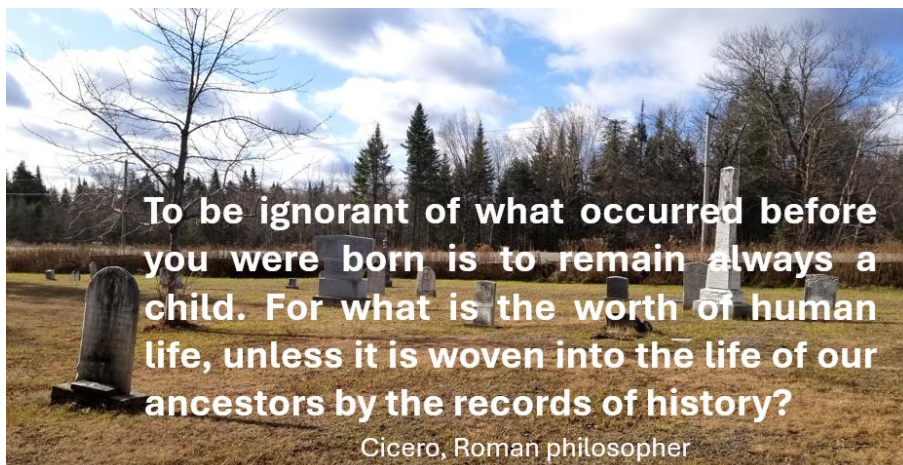
The Red Dragon will be raised at the provincial legislature in Fredericton at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup>. It would be great to have a good turnout for one or both flag raisings.



## ST. DAVID'S DAY CHALLENGE

How many of these questions can you answer correctly?  
(Answers on page 4.)

1. Why is St. David's Day celebrated on March 1<sup>st</sup>?
2. What was St. David's most well-known teaching?
3. How are Welsh cakes cooked?
4. What was the name of the ship that the Cardigan settlers sailed on?
5. On what date did the Cardigan settlers arrive in Saint John, NB?
6. In what year was the Welsh settlement of Cardigan, NB established?
7. Who was the first schoolmaster in the Cardigan settlement?
8. What does Diolch mean?
9. What flower is the symbol of Wales?
10. How do you say 'Wales' in Welsh?



To be ignorant of what occurred before  
you were born is to remain always a  
child. For what is the worth of human  
life, unless it is woven into the life of our  
ancestors by the records of history?

Cicero, Roman philosopher



## FINANCIAL UPDATE

In 2024 the Board of Directors of the Central NB Welsh Society and the NB Welsh Heritage Trust implemented a plan to modernize our banking practices. A dedicated email account was created for the Society and Trust – [nbwelshsocietytrust@gmail.com](mailto:nbwelshsocietytrust@gmail.com) The bank accounts were modified to allow more comprehensive access to online banking services. We can now pay bills, transfer funds and receive e-transfers. In addition, the Board decided to redeem a number of smaller investments with the intention of consolidating these funds in a single larger investment certificate in 2025. This work has been completed with the redemption of the remaining smaller investment certificates and the purchase of a \$20,000 GIC.

**NB WELSH SOCIETY** Bank Balance December 31, 2025 - \$3,766.32  
Income from Memberships - \$455.00

**NB WELSH HERITAGE TRUST** Bank Balance December 31, 2025 - \$9,053.98  
Investments December 31, 2025 - \$63, 443.93

### Major Expenditures 2025

NB Power - \$801.70  
Insurance: \$1,022.00  
Preparation of Financial Statements: \$943.00  
Website registration: \$391.00  
Chapel maintenance: \$225  
Office supplies/copying: \$388.88  
GIC purchase: \$20,000.00

### DONATIONS

2025 - \$7,688.26  
2024 - \$6,409.06  
2023 - \$7,062.18  
2022 - \$4,926.95  
2021 - \$4,258.14



**Membership Dues for 2026** remain at \$15 for a single person and \$25 for a family. Please send your dues c/o Janet Thomas, 100 Epworth Circle, Fredericton, NB E3A 2M6. Cheques must be made out to the **Central NB Welsh Society**. E-transfers can be made via our email address at [nbwelshsocietytrust@gmail.com](mailto:nbwelshsocietytrust@gmail.com) Memberships are the only source of revenue for the Welsh Society, required primarily for financing the cost of the website and the cost of copying and mailing the remaining few newsletters that are sent by Canada Post.

## THE ROYAL ROAD

The Royal Road was the brainchild of Lieutenant Governor Sir Archibald Campbell. When he arrived in 1831, he was confronted by the intrusion of a group of Americans into the Madawaska settlements. He personally led a detachment of troops into the area, arrested the offenders and requested permanent troops to be stationed in New Brunswick. He was denied permanent troops but was able to convince the military leadership in Halifax that the river route to Madawaska was vulnerable. As a result, he initiated the construction of a new road between Fredericton and Grand Falls that would be more secure, shorter and able to move troops quickly if needed. He declared that he wanted a road 'where wheels would go, to be constructed roughly in a straight line between two points'.

In 1831 he hired Daniel Estey to survey the road. Estey reported that 'from Fredericton to the Welsh settlement of Cardigan, a road for the first ten miles had been opened and worked upon, passable for carts, remaining five miles impassable for carts, but could be used by sleighs in winter. From Cardigan to Grand Falls wilderness, no settlement.' The following spring, Estey surveyed across the wilderness, stating that the land was so rich that there would be settlement along the road in no time.

### CIVIL APPOINTMENTS.

The Hon. Thomas Baillie and George F. Street, Esquire, having as Mr. Baillie also did for the collection of the Quit Rents, offered their services, gratuitously, as Commissioners, and John A. Beckwith, Esquire, as their Secretary, for managing the opening of the Royal Road, their offer has been accepted by His Excellency The Lieutenant Governor, and they are appointed accordingly.

Construction of the road began in 1832 after the Lieutenant-Governor made the poor decision to put the universally detested Surveyor-General Thomas Baillie and two of his cronies in charge of the project. Their appointment led to unrelenting criticism of the project. George Lugin, publisher of *The Watchman*, called the road 'a costly toy' and 'an Utopian scheme', although he admitted that a shorter, more direct road would be

advantageous for the province. He was quick to say that the Lieutenant-Governor was not at fault, beyond having appointed this unholy trio.

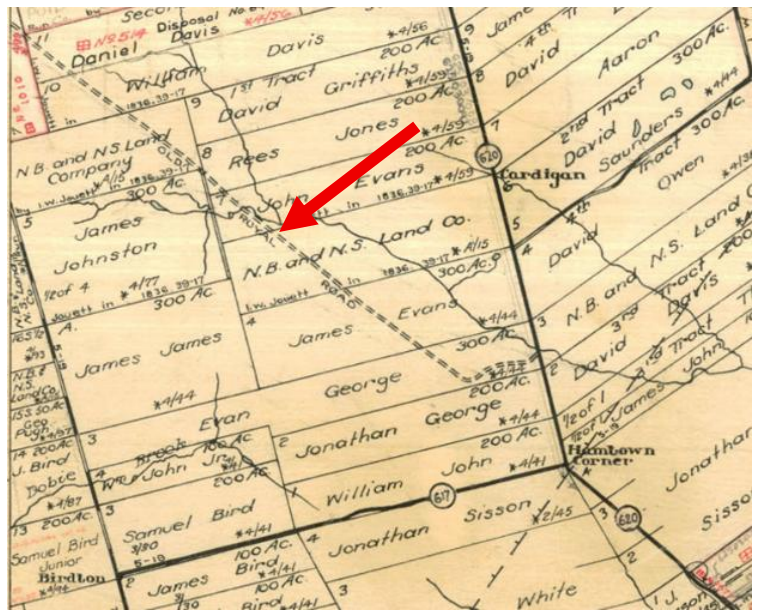
Thomas Baillie had arrived in the province in 1825, having been appointed to the powerful positions of the Commissioner of Crown Lands and the Surveyor-General (second only to the Lieutenant-Governor) by the Colonial Office in London. This made him an outsider, which he might have overcome in time with a little diplomacy and humility. But Baillie had nothing but contempt for the colonial administration. In addition, he was tactless, arrogant, obnoxious and fond of unnecessary displays of wealth. His changes to how crown lands were managed alienated the business community, and his disrespectful attitude infuriated the governing Loyalist elite. His buddy, George Street, wasn't liked much better, despite being born in the province to an elected member of the legislature. He was infamous for killing one of the Wetmore sons in a duel in 1821 (for which he was acquitted!). He was seen as a hanger-on, riding on Baillie's coattails. John Beckwith was, perhaps, the least objectionable of the three, having been born into a family of early settlers and thus, having ties with the province's elite. In addition, as a gifted athlete, he was well-known in the city in his own right. As a deputy-surveyor he was tied to Baillie, but as a lumberman he had his foot in the business community, presumably arguing their case when need be. Beckwith, on the other hand, knew how to use his position to the advantage of himself and his family.

Almost immediately there were accusations of financial misconduct against the three allies. Certainly, there was some skulduggery with the management of the contracts, with questioning on how it turned out that Beckwith received the contract, was paid but the work was not completed. There were also

accusations of patronage. It was reported that Beckwith had directed all the project's business to his brother Francis' mercantile store in Fredericton, much to the displeasure of other grocers. Francis Beckwith publicly denied this, stating that he was selling to the project managers at greatly reduced prices, and that the labourers on the project were not restricted to buying just from him. There were also allegations that the Irish labourers, hired to work specifically on this project, were treated badly with respect to wages and working conditions. In fact, it was said that one of the Overseers of the Royal Road sold the labourers alcohol without having a license to do so. And that 'miniature taverns' were erected along the road and the workers were allowed to get drunk or do even 'worse' things. The controversy did not abate and by 1836, the management of the project had been transferred to the Provincial Secretary, William Odell. Did that remove Baillie and company from the project? It is hard to know....William Odell was Baillie's father-in-law!!

Undoubtedly the Cardigan famers could care less about the controversies. Their main concern was getting a decent road to Fredericton completed. A report to the Legislature tabled in 1833 reported that the first 5 miles was essentially completed and the remaining 7 miles to Cardigan were partially stumped. The road through Cardigan was reported to be hilly and stony. But by 1838 another review of the route described the road as completed and 'in good state'.

Despite the significant efforts and investments made by government, the Royal Road was never completed as planned. In 1847 the project was abandoned, the road having been built across granted land in a nearly straight line for approximately 8 miles northwest of the Cardigan road. Remnants of the road can be found today.



## ST. DAVID'S DAY CHALLENGE ANSWERS

1. ST. DAVID DIED ON MARCH 1, 589 A.D.
2. DO THE LITTLE THINGS
3. FRIED ON A GRIDDLE OR IN A FRYING PAN
4. THE ALBION
5. JUNE 11, 1819
6. 1819
7. THOMAS SAUNDERS
8. THANK YOU.
9. DAFFODIL
10. CYMRU