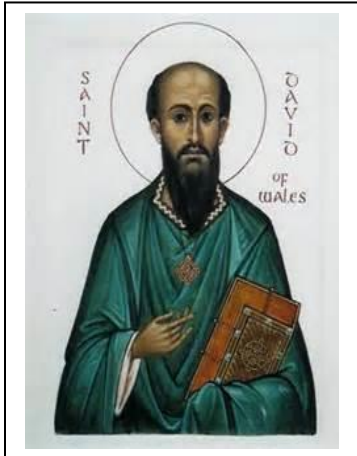




CENTRAL NEW BRUNSWICK WELSH SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 2017



ST. DAVID'S DAY CELEBRATION

When: 5:30 p.m. to socialize
6:15 p.m. for dinner
Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Speaker: *Honourable Lisa Harris, Minister of Celtic Affairs*

Where: Ramada Hotel
580 Riverside Drive
Lower St. Mary's, Fredericton
\$25/person



River Baptism - Photo found at Harvey Studios. On the back it says "Taken at Marysville, New Brunswick Christmas Day by Rev. Dr. G.M. Young, United Church Minister. Minister in photo H. Cosman – Reformed Baptist, Candidate – Miss Grace Allen, Methodist. Thermometer 6 below 0, F. Alexander (Boss) Gibson Horse and sleigh extreme right circa 1898". Makes me wonder if there were winter baptisms in the Cleuristic Stream (the Dunbar) in Cardigan. BRRRRRRR!





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FEBRUARY 2017

The Shrine of St. David

When St. David died on March 1, 589, he was buried at St. David's Cathedral. The shrine was constructed close to the High Altar in the 12th century when Pope Calixtus II declared St. David's Cathedral to be a place of pilgrimage. Pope Calixtus II considered the shrine to be so important that he declared that two pilgrimages to St. David's were equivalent to one to Rome and three pilgrimages were equivalent to one to Jerusalem. As a result, pilgrimages to the Shrine of St. David was very popular in medieval times.



During the 10th and 11th centuries, the cathedral was often raided by Vikings who in 1089 removed the shrine from the church and carried away its precious metals. A new shrine was constructed in 1275, with a wooden canopy decorated with murals of St. David, St. Justinian and St. Denis of France. The relics (remains) of St. David and St. Justinian were kept in a portable stone casket at the foot of the shrine. During the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, the shrine was stripped of its jewels and damaged.

It remained in this condition until 2012.

In September, 2010, the Very Reverend Jonathan Lean, Dean of St. David's launched an appeal to raise £150,000 to restore the medieval shrine. Artists from West Wales were commissioned to undertake the work. The five icons painted to sit in the niches of the restored shrine depict St. Patrick, St. David and St. Andrew. The niches at the rear of the shrine depict St. Non, the mother of St. David, and St. Justinian. The niches at the foot of the shrine, originally use for kneeling, house the remains of St. David and St. Justinian.



On March 1, 2012 the Right Reverend Wyn Evans, Bishop of St. David's unveiled and re-dedicated the shrine. In his sermon, the Dean said *"This shrine honours St David and his life and let us remember his last words to his followers: "Be joyful, keep the faith and do the little things" and let us pray that today will mark the beginning of our great mission to turn visitors into pilgrims."*



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FEBRUARY 2017

Gwenllian ferch Gruffydd (Gwenllian daughter of Gruffydd) was born in 1097, youngest daughter of Gruffydd ap Cynan, Prince of Gwynedd and his wife Angharad. She was reported to be very beautiful, well-educated and brave. Many artistic renderings of Gwenllian depict her with a sword in hand or riding a chariot into battle.

In 1113, Gruffydd ap Rhys, the Prince of the neighbouring kingdom of Deheubath (in South Wales), visited Gwynedd. He and Gwenllian fell in love, eloping to Dinefwr Castle, near the town of Llandeilo in Carmarthenshire, South West Wales. There they raised a family. However, much of their married life was spent fighting the Normans, often being forced to retreat to the mountains from where they could lead lightning raids against the Normans. Gwenllian was often at the side of her husband, taking goods and money from the Normans and English to distribute amongst the poor Welsh families in the region.

In 1136, an uprising in South Wales gave Gruffydd ap Rhys cause to believe that he could oust the hated Normans. He left to visit Gwenllian's father in Gwynedd, hoping to solicit his support. While he was away, the Normans led raids against Deheubath, forcing Gwenllian to raise an army for their defense. Armed for battle, she led her troops – a few hundred poorly-equipped Welshmen. They were badly outnumbered by the better-armed Normans so it was decided that Gwenllian would divide her troops, sending half ahead to cut-off the Normans expected to land at the coast, while hiding the other half in the woods north of Kidwelly Castle from where they could sever the Normans' London supply line by engaging in hit-and-run strikes.

Unfortunately, Gwenllian was betrayed by the Welsh chieftain who was supposed to be attacking the Normans at the coast. Instead, he led them to where her troops were camped. They encircled the Welsh camp, launching a surprise attack. Gwenllian led her troops onto the field outside Kidwelly Castle where she was forced back towards the Normans coming out of the woods by the castle troops. Pinched between two opposing groups, Gwenllian's army was slaughtered, her eldest son killed trying to rescue her. She was brought before the castle Lord, Maurice de Londres, bloodied but defiant, with her wrists bound tightly behind her back. As a woman and a princess, she was entitled to be treated mercifully, but the vindictive Lord wanted

vengeance against Gruffydd ap Rhys so he ordered her immediate execution. He granted that she not be burned at the stake as was usual for women 'traitors', allowing her to be beheaded instead while one of her surviving sons watched. The Norman troops cheered as her bloody head was held aloft.

The bodies of the slain Welshmen were buried in a pit on the battlefield which still today is known as Maes Gwenllian (Field of Gwenllian). A spring welled up on the spot where Gwenllian's decapitated head struck the ground. Gwenllian's bravery fueled the revolt against the Normans and for centuries afterward Welshmen shouted *Revenge for Gwenllian* when in battle. Today a monument commemorating Gwenllian's bravery stands at the entrance to Kidwelly Castle.





CENTRAL NEW BRUNSWICK WELSH SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 2017

Save The Date

March 1, 2017 – St. David's Day celebration, Ramada Inn

May 29, 2017 – Annual General Meeting, 7:00 p.m. St. John's Anglican Church Hall, Main St.

June 11, 2017 – 7:00 p.m. Founder's Day Church Service, Welsh Chapel, Cardigan followed by a shared lunch

Financial Report 2016

New Brunswick Welsh Heritage Trust

Operating Account December 31, 2016 Balance - \$4,200.66

Savings Account December 31, 2016 Balance - \$891.93

Investments December 31, 2016 Balance - \$50,257.50

Donations 2016 - \$4,206.45

Donations 2015 - \$4,191.89

Central New Brunswick Welsh Society

December 31, 2016 Balance - \$2,162.89

I WAKE UP
EVERY MORNING
AND THANK GOD
THAT
I'M
WELSH



ONE DAY IN WALES.....

Young Dylan comes home from school and tells his mother he's been given a part in the school play.

"Wonderful," says his mam. "What part is it?"

The boy says: "I play the part of the Welsh husband."

The mother scowls and says: "Go back and tell them you want a speaking part."



**Join or Renew
Membership**

2017 Dues: \$25 per family, \$15 per individual. Your dues cover the costs for photocopying and mailing our bulletins and newsletters, and for our post office box. Send your dues to: P. O. Box 421, Station A, Fredericton, NB E3B 4Z9.