



The **Founders' Day Service**, normally held in June to commemorate the arrival of the Cardigan settlers, will not be held this year due to the pandemic restrictions. However, we are hoping to be able to gather again in September. Details to come in the September newsletter or via email/Facebook.

## SAY IT IN CYMRAEG

You might hear the expression '**lechyd da!**' being shouted in a bar in Wales. This means 'Cheers', or 'To your good health'. It is pronounced 'yeah-ch-id da', with the 'ch' sounding like the 'ch' in the Scottish word 'loch'.

*Don't forget to make your usual June donation to support the Welsh Chapel. Cheques must be made out to the **New Brunswick Welsh Heritage Trust** and mailed c/o Janet Thomas, 100 Epworth Circle, Fredericton, NB E3A 2M6. All donations of \$10 or more will receive a tax receipt at the end of the year. Thank you!*



A farmer was out tending his flock when he saw a man drinking with a cupped hand from a stream. He shouted over in Welsh "Don't drink the water! It's disgusting! There's sheep poo in it!"

The man at the stream lifted his head and carried on drinking. Realizing the man couldn't hear him, the farmer moved closer and shouted the same thing in Welsh. But still the man couldn't hear him.

Finally, the farmer walked right up to the man and repeated his warning. To which the man replied "Dreadfully sorry, my good man. I can't understand a word you say. Can you speak English, old chap?"

"Oh, I see", said the farmer. "I was just saying if you use both hands you can get more in."

## SPEAK IT NOT!!



The Welsh language is known as *Cymraeg*. It has been spoken continuously in Wales throughout recorded history. Welsh originated from the language spoken by the ancient Celtic Britons. Various regional dialects led to the development of different languages, and by the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century Welsh was established as a separate language. Over the centuries the Welsh language evolved to the Welsh spoken today.

From the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, Welsh was a thriving language, recording Welsh laws, poetry, music, stories and history. The translation of the New Testament into Welsh in 1567, followed by the translation of the entire Bible in 1588 helped keep Welsh a part of daily life of all classes of Welsh society.

The effort to eliminate the Welsh language began with the passing of Henry VIII's Laws in Wales Acts in 1535 and 1542 intended to bring Wales under English law. These Acts banned the Welsh language from being used in the courts and those who could not speak English were not permitted to hold any public office. This effectively anglicized the landed gentry and made Welsh the language of the working classes.

By the late 1700's the active discouragement of the Welsh language was occurring in schools through the use of the 'Welsh Not'. The Welsh Not was a stick etched with the words 'Welsh Not' or the letters 'W.N.'. It was designed to be worn around the neck of any child caught speaking Welsh. The student would wear the shameful stick until another child was caught speaking Welsh. At the end of the day, the child wearing the Welsh Not would be punished.

In 1847 a report on the state of education in Wales, conducted by three English commissioners, was particularly scathing, citing the use of the Welsh language as one of the reasons that the Welsh were ignorant, lazy and immoral. They concluded that education in Wales was substandard, not surprising since English teachers were teaching Welsh-speaking children from English textbooks! In 1870 a new Act was proclaimed, requiring schools to be taught in English only. The Welsh Not was used in some schools well into the 1900's.

The efforts to suppress the Welsh language resulted in a decline in the number of Welsh speakers. By 1981 less than 20% of the population of Wales could speak Welsh. Drastic measures were needed if Welsh was to survive as a language. In 1988 the Welsh Language Act required all children to learn Welsh as a second language. In 1993 the Act was revised to state that Welsh and English should be treated equally in Wales and it required the public sector to provide services in both languages. A revision in 2011 gave Welsh official language status and appointed a Language Commissioner with the responsibility for the promotion of the language and the protection of the rights of Welsh speakers.

Today Welsh is seen on all public signs. Children learn Welsh in school and many children attend schools which teach primarily in Welsh. The percentage of Welsh speakers has increased to just under 30%.

There are few, if any, Welsh speakers among the descendants of the original Cardigan families. Although Welsh was spoken in the homes of the Cardigan settlers, English was taught in the school in the settlement. The first schoolmaster, Thomas Saunders, knew that the children needed to master the English language if they were to be successful in this new land. As a result, most of families 'lost' their Welsh language. Dr. Peter Thomas believed that Caleb Evans was the last fluent Welsh speaker in the Cardigan area. He died in 1921.

# THE NORTH CARDIGAN UNITED CHURCH

*Thank you to Coleen Williams for this article.*

In order to fully appreciate the history of the North Cardigan Church, we need to go back to 1819 and the founding of the Welsh community of Cardigan. These people, mainly Baptists and Congregationalists, were very devout and had dreams of one day having churches built in their settlement. The Baptists built their first church between 1825-1826.



Within the next few years, a Congregational Church was built on the northeast corner of Lot 11 West, which had been granted to Daniel Davis. Reverend Archibald MacCallum, who had moved here in 1829, became the first minister. By the early 1850s they were being served by Reverend George Stirling from the Upper Keswick Pastoral Charge. It wasn't until 1859 that the small plot of land containing the church was placed under the ownership of the Congregational church in the form of a deed drawn up by the children of the late Daniel Davis.

Between 1875 and 1879 Methodist ministers from the Upper Keswick Pastoral Charge held services in the community and interest grew in building a new church across the road on property that was later donated by Thomas and Margaret Griffiths. This property would be large enough to accommodate a cemetery as well. On September 19, 1881, the cornerstone was laid, and construction began. The church was dedicated on July 30, 1883. It is interesting to note that total cost of building and furnishing the church was \$1,231.11 and they were debt free with a balance of \$61.95 at the date of dedication. The original board of Trustees were: John Griffiths, John Evans, Thomas S. Griffiths, David L. Evans, Charles Sansom, George Evans, David Armstrong, David J. Griffiths, James J. Evans, Leslie White, James L. Evans and William Griffiths.

The first grave to be opened was for John Evans, who passed away in 1889. Prior to the donation of land for a new cemetery, many of the members of the Congregational/Methodist church were buried in the Baptist Cemetery, now known as the Cardigan Welsh Cemetery. Generations of the original Welsh settlers are buried here but only one person, John Griffiths (1813-1899), son of David and Rachel Griffiths, has the distinction of coming here aboard the Albion in June 1819. Two more sections of property surrounding the church were donated, one on the north side by Thomas and Margaret Griffiths, and a section at the rear of the property by Douglas and Florence Thomas.

Between the years 1885-1925, several English children, mostly from the Liverpool area, were sent to Canada. Children ranging from age 3 to 16, who were orphans or children of families who could no longer care for them were sent here mainly under the direction of the Middlemore Homes. After landing here, they were placed with families, many of which were located in Cardigan and the surrounding areas. Some of the children sent here remained in the community and are now buried in our cemetery.

Our church continued to flourish and, in 1925, following the union of several denominations, became known as the North Cardigan United Church. On January 1, 1945, the church was struck by lightning causing damage to the steeple and also the interior. Services continued to be held during the repairs and the church carried on.

Cardigan remained with the Upper Keswick Circuit until the mid fifties when the circuit disbanded. In the following years, we were served mostly by student ministers, and, it wasn't until the late sixties that Cardigan was able to join with the Stanley Pastoral charge. We have remained with them until this day.

We celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1983 and we are still carrying on, having services on a regular basis. Our church has been well maintained throughout the years and although there is nothing outstanding about it, for many it represents a beacon of hope, joy and comfort.

One of the mottos of the United Church is "All are Welcome", and I can say without reservation that this applies to the North Cardigan United Church.

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## DAVID JAMES, CARDIGAN'S WELSH PREACHER

**"Feb. 1, 1827. I visited Cardigan, and spent two weeks in that settlement. Preached every evening, and three times on Lord's-days, and administered the Lord's supper once. This small church in their destitute state maintain good union and love, and meet three times on the Sabbath, and once or twice on week days, for the worship of God.**

David James must have been astonished to find so many of his countrymen in Fredericton in the fall of 1820. He had been sent by the Baptist Missionary Society of Massachusetts "to preach the gospel in destitute places." And he did just that for the next eight years, preaching in communities along the Miramichi River.

David helped establish the Baptist congregation in Cardigan in 1825. He must have planned to settle in the area, as in August 1826 he petitioned for land. His petition reported that he was a 35-year old Welsh man who had been resident in the province for six years. He asked for land on the southeast side of the Nashwaak to be bounded by a route blazed for the purposes of opening a road from the Cardigan settlement to the south west Miramichi.

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He said that he was the only Welsh Baptist preacher in the province, having come to this province from America at the request of his countrymen from Cardigan. He asked for as much land as the Governor seemed fit to grant him, a single man. But he informed them that the information he had sent to his father in Wales had induced him to dispose of his property and close his business there in order to emigrate at the beginning of the next season, along with two of his brothers and a brother-in-law, all of whom are married with families. And since the land is far into the wilderness he asked for 800 acres to be preserved for his father and brothers for their arrival next spring, to be adjoined to his land on the north east and fronted on the south east by the blazed route.

For some reason, David changed his plans and his father and brothers never arrived in New Brunswick. In November 1828 he married Mary Humphreys in Somersworth, New Hampshire. By June of the following year, the young couple were settled into a congregation in Kennebunk, Maine where they stayed until David was sent to Newburg, New York to establish a new congregation. Mary died in 1844 leaving David to raise his four children alone. In 1848 he married Martha Thompson Hill with whom he had another son.

By the early 1850s the family had moved to Galesburg, Illinois where David died in 1856.