



Our **THANKSGIVING SERVICE AND POTLUCK SUPPER** will not be held this year as per the directives of the Chief Medical Officer of Public Health with respect to indoor gatherings.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION while we will not be able to hold a Christmas dinner this year, we are hoping to find a way to bring us together to reconnect and celebrate the Christmas season, perhaps at an outdoor venue. If you have a suggestion on how we might do this safely, let us know at bwheal@nb.sympatico.ca More to come in the November newsletter.

***A SEED HIDDEN IN THE HEART OF AN
APPLE IS AN ORCHARD INVISIBLE.***



Welsh Proverb

SAY IT IN CYMRAEG

Diolch yn fawr means 'Thank you very much'. It is pronounced like this:

'Dee-och' with the 'och' sounding like the Scottish word 'loch', without the 'l' and 'un vawr'. So, 'Dee-och un vawr'.

North American Festival of Wales (NAFOW) is a four-day festival of Welsh music and poetry, held every year on Labour Day weekend. In 2021 the NAFOW will be held from September 2nd-5th in Ottawa. First held in 1929, it is the largest gathering of Welsh and Welsh descendants in North America.



St. Brynach's, Nevern, Pembrokeshire, Wales



Even the most unimaginative person would feel uneasy when visiting St. Brynach's church in Nevern, Pembrokeshire, located approximately 10 miles from Cardigan.

The church is approached via a shadowy pathway lined on either side by 700-year old yew trees and ancient gravestones. It is easy to imagine that this has been a site of worship for thousands of years, beginning perhaps in Neolithic times and continuing in the days of the Celtic druids. It is believed that the hillside

above the church has been fortified since the Iron Age and there is speculation that the site may have been taken over for use as a fortification by the Romans, as was their practice.

The Christian church was established in 540 A. D. by St. Brynach, a traveling Christian evangelist who was a friend of St. David's. The local Celtic chieftain, who ruled after the withdrawal of the Romans, provided the land for the church and cemetery. Succeeding Celtic chieftains endowed the church well, making it an attractive asset for the conquering Normans who made many improvements to the stronghold on the hillside and to the church during their 100 years of occupation. The church continued to have additions and improvements made throughout the next 1,000 years.

St. Brynach's is a fascinating church, with many artefacts, some dating back 1,500 years. The most prominent is the 13-foot Celtic Cross, one of the most perfect specimens of its kind. The cross was constructed approximately 1,000 years ago. The church also holds stones inscribed in Greek, Latin and Ogham (an old Irish script) and there is a consecration cross carved on the exterior east wall.



But what makes this church so creepy? Perhaps it is the ancient yew that has been 'bleeding' for hundreds of years. It is said that the blood-red sap will continue to flow until there is a Welshman once again occupying the castle on the hill. Others say that the red sap will ooze until the world is at peace.

Or maybe it is the ancient tombstones and crypts, many with peculiar inscriptions that make the hair on the back of your neck stand up. Whatever the cause, the atmosphere at St. Brynach's reminds us that there may be some truth to the idea that ancient places of worship should be avoided at night!



OUR STORIES

WILLIAM THOMAS AND ANNE JOHN

William Thomas was born in November 1787 in Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire, Wales. Kidwelly is located approximately 40 miles south of Cardigan. In December 1816 he married Anne John, daughter of William and Rachel John, also of Kidwelly. Their first son, William, was born in the following spring.

In February 1819 William and Anne saw the ad for the sailing of the *Albion* to Saint John. The pros and cons of emigrating must have been thoroughly discussed, particularly with Anne's parents and siblings who were also considering the move as were their friends John Evans and David and Rachel Griffiths. In April the young couple and their 2-year old son, William, boarded the ship, joined by Anne's parents, some of her siblings and their friends John, David and Rachel.

At this point William and Anne's story becomes unclear. Although they definitely arrived 'in the colony' in 1819 as per William's declaration on the 1851 Census, they did not live 'in the province' until 1824, as stated by William on his 1826 petition for his land. The best guess is that they disembarked at Shelburne with several other families, intending to join families who had arrived the previous year. And, in fact, among the Shelburne settlers were Henry, David and John Thomas. Like other families in the struggling Shelburne settlement, John and Esther Thomas moved on, arriving in Cardigan in 1822. William and Anne also gave up on Shelburne in favour of joining their friends and family in the Cardigan settlement.

In 1824 William, Anne and their two sons settled on Lot 28 on the west side of the road from Cardigan, in the small hamlet of Tay Creek. William petitioned successfully for his 200 acres in 1826. But by 1829 he was anxiously petitioning the Executive Council again to confirm his possession of the land, as it had been claimed earlier by William and Robert Lindsay who had actually abandoned their claim, not having made any improvements on the land. His request was approved.

Anne and her younger son died sometime between 1829 and 1850. After young William son settled into married life on the homestead, William returned to Wales where he died. Young William married Nancy Boulter in 1848, the daughter of Sarah Davies, another of the *Albion* passengers. Succeeding generations kept the Welsh link strong through marriage with descendants of *Albion* passengers Jonathan and Elizabeth Jones and David and Elizabeth Saunders. Today William and Anne's descendants are spread across the country.



'By all these lovely tokens, September days are here. With summer's best of weather and autumn's best of cheer.' Helen Hunt Jackson

Due to the pandemic, we have had to cancel our two church services where we would normally receive the bulk of our annual donations. Our operational costs remain the same – insurance, preparation of financial statements, power and bank fees. If you are able, please make your usual donation for the operation of the Welsh Chapel and graveyard. Cheques must be made out to the **NB Welsh Heritage Trust** and mailed c/o Janet Thomas, 100 Epworth Circle, Fredericton, NB E3A 2M6 (or you can drop it off if that is easier). All donations of \$10 or more will receive a tax receipt at the end of the year. Many thanks to those who have already sent their donations!!!



THE LEGEND OF DEVIL'S BRIDGE

According to legend the Devil himself visited Ceredigion (Cardigan County) in the 11th century after hearing about its breathtaking scenery. While there, he met an old woman whose cow had wandered across the river. The river had become a raging torrent and the old woman could not imagine how she would retrieve her cow.

In a bid to buy her soul, the Devil said he'd build her a bridge in exchange for possession of the soul of the first living thing that crossed it. The old woman really wanted her cow, so she agreed.

When the bridge was finished, the Devil called the old woman to the river. As she walked towards the bridge, he was gleefully anticipating possessing her soul. But just before she stepped onto the bridge, the old woman took a loaf of bread from her basket and threw it across the bridge. Her old dog chased after the loaf, becoming the first living creature to cross.

It is said that the Devil was never seen in Wales again, as he was so embarrassed at being outwitted by an old lady.