

The planning Team: Cynthia St. Clair

Alan Upshall, (Chairman): Alan was born in the Rhondda, Wales and played rugby as a youth (which he defines as “up to 40”). He earned his B.S. degree from University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, and a Ph. D in genetics from Birmingham University, England. Alan taught genetics for 17 years at Lancaster University in England, then came to the USA in 1984 as senior scientist in a biotechnology company. He currently is vice president of drug development at Stem Cell Pharmaceuticals Inc. in Seattle.

Alan joined the Puget Sound Welsh community in 1986 as a member of Cor Cymraeg Seattle, and was choir manager for several years, as well as President of the Puget Sound Welsh Association from 1992-96.

He has been actively involved in the larger Welsh community in North America, as well: founding president of WAPNW and also of the North American Welsh Choir; chairman of the highly successful 1994 National Gymanfa Ganu in Bellevue, Washington; elected to the WNGGA Board of Trustees in 1994, and President of WNGGA from 2000-2002; and he is a member of the Welsh North American Chamber of Commerce. Alan is the editor of **Conversations With the Welsh of Puget Sound**, an oral history recording of much of the activities of the Welsh in the region in the early part of the last century.

Lynn Owens-Whalen, (Vice Chairperson, Tours and hotel interactions):

Lynn is a native of Vancouver, British Columbia but is of Welsh descent through both her mum and dad. From a very early age, her parents introduced her to their extended family in Wales and in other parts of the UK. They also introduced her to the Vancouver Welsh Society and the Cambrian Hall in Vancouver, a unique and very special place for the Welsh of the Vancouver area. As a result, Lynn has a strong bond with family and with her heritage.

Lynn is a graduate, Bachelor of Education (Secondary) and Master’s in Counseling Psychology, of the University of British Columbia. Of Lynn's 31 years as a teacher 28 have been spent in Richmond, the North American Festival of Wales city. She has served as both Vice President and President of the Richmond Teachers' Association, and currently Coordinator of Teaching Personnel, responsible for teacher recruitment, teacher orientation to the profession, and staffing.

Lynn has served on the Board of Trustees for eight years of the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association; as Secretary for two years, and as Vice President for the last two years. She notes, “It is a thrill to join with Chairman Alan Upshall and the rest of the organizing committee to welcome North America and Wales to Richmond/Vancouver in 2003, the first ‘North American festival of Wales’ that demonstrates the commitment of the WNGGA to take a leading role in organizing such an event.”

Gerri Baker-Parry, (Entertainment and Market Place): Gerri became involved with the Welsh Language Group at Bryn Seion Welsh Church in Beaver Creek, Oregon, after

an unsuccessful attempt at teaching herself Welsh. In 1990 she produced a video about the Bryn Seion Gymanfa Ganu which ran on Tualatin Valley Cable Access for over a year. On the fast track now, she was quickly persuaded to serve as Vice President and then President of the Portland Cambrian Social Society, and Treasurer at Bryn Seion Welsh Church, where she continues today as trustee.

After attending her first National Gymanfa in Bellevue, Washington, in 1994, where she first met her future husband Brian Parry, she became involved with the Welsh Association of the Pacific Northwest. She helped organize the 1997 Salem (Oregon) Welsh Weekend, served as newsletter editor, and manages the Web site. In addition, she has served on the Board of the WNGGA for two years and is a life member. Now that Gerri has moved from small town life to Seattle, she divides her time between Welsh Society activities and family and friends all over the Northwest.

Gaynor Evans, (Secretary): Gaynor lives in Richmond, B.C., with her husband Gwyn. She is a retired medical office assistant and now spends most weekdays providing before and after school care to her three grand-children.

She is active in the Vancouver Welsh Society and currently is treasurer. In addition, she has taken on the role of instructor for the Vancouver Welsh Folk Dancers. Gaynor's hobbies are reading, knitting, crossword puzzles, Tai Chi, and Appalachian clog dancing — and in her spare time, she likes to cook.

Philip Humphries, (Eisteddfod): Philip was born and grew up in Aberkenfig, Mid Glamorgan, Wales. He earned a B.S. degree in mechanical engineering at Birmingham University, England, and worked a few years in England before joining the “brain drain” to Seattle in 1966.

He joined the Seattle Welsh Choir in 1984 and has served as treasurer and manager and was recently administrator of the North American Welsh Choir.

Philip took early retirement after 33 years at Boeing – 18 years as an engineer, followed by 15 years in marketing, during which he traveled to many countries and collected lots of frequent flyer miles. He and his wife (also a former Seattle Welsh Choir and North American Welsh Choir member) escaped from the Seattle traffic to the “city of subdued excitement” — Bellingham, WA — in January 2002. Philip reports that he is “enjoying our new house, my espresso machine, making new friends, doing digital photography, singing in the church choir, paragliding, indulging our Australian shepherds, and keeping the home fires burning for my wife, who works four ten-hour days in Seattle.”

Don Murray, (Publicity and Marketing): Don was born in Daysland, Alberta, and grew up in Dawson Creek, British Columbia, but says that he is “somewhat older than Ben Hepner.” His father was born in Wigan, Lancashire, and his mother's family goes

back several generations in Canada. He moved to Vancouver in 1959 and ten years later wed Elizabeth Roberts and “married into the Welsh”.

Don has been to Wales four or five times, and enjoys the singing and poetry. He became a member of the Vancouver Welsh Society in the early 1980s and more recently a member of the WAPNW (Welsh Association of the Pacific Northwest) Board and the Vancouver Dylan Thomas Circle. Don chaired the May 1998 WAPNW Welsh Weekend in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Don was manager of Strategic Marketing and Strategic Planning for BC telephones prior to retirement. He was Chair of Operations (1994, 1995) and Show Chair (1996, 1997) and board member (1998-2002), of the VanDusen Flower & Garden Show, North America’s largest outdoor garden show. Don’s interests include gardening, theatre, writing, planning, marketing, research, socializing, travel, projects, and volunteering.

Brian Parry, (Logisitcs): Brian was born in London of a Welsh father and an Irish mother. In spite of that, he says that he functions quite well most of the time. Brian has been involved in the Puget Sound Welsh Association for a number of years, and has been the President for the past four years. He is also a Past President of the Welsh Association of the Pacific Northwest, as well as a life member of WNGGA. Brian was a member of the organizing committee for the 1994 Gymanfa in Bellevue, Washington and was responsible for the implementation of the ground activities which carried that event to its success.

When not supporting local Welsh activities, Brian works as a mechanical engineer at the Boeing Commercial Airplane Company. His spare time is mostly spent remodeling the house.

Neville Thomas, (Seminars): Neville Thomas was born in 1939 on a hill farm north of Swansea in South Wales. “Family, neighbours, community and schooling were all Welsh-speaking in those days,” he notes. After graduating from the University of Wales, he taught mathematics in London for three years. then emigrated to British Columbia in 1965. He taught for a year, then headed to New Zealand and Australia for two years. Neville returned to Canada in 1968 and “pushed Pythagoras and others of that ilk” until retirement in 1998.

He has been very active in the Vancouver Welsh Society for many years, holding numerous executive positions. In 1995 he co-founded, with two other enthusiasts, Vancouver’s Dylan Thomas Circle, which now has over 100 members. Neville says that he greatly enjoys working with “other eager, visionary souls at organizing events — the past year’s arrangements included a major Welsh Weekend in November, a *Remember Harry Secombe* evening, two Goon Shows, a Trebor Edwards Evening, and planning and participation in the eight-night stage performance of Dylan’s Thomas’ wonderful play, *Under Milk Wood*.”

Neville “greatly enjoys gardening, golfing, politics and traveling into Canada's North (minus the mosquitoes and black flies),” and adds that he is “much impressed with the highly talented and capable colleagues on the Festival of Wales 2003 planning group.”

Helen C. Steinle, (Treasurer): Helen was “born and bred” in Mynytho, North Wales. After spending more than three years in Africa, she emigrated to Prince George, British Columbia, in early 1969. She has lived in Victoria, B.C. since 1977.

Her involvement with the current Victoria Welsh Society began with its inception in 1978. and over the years has served as president, secretary, treasurer, and newsletter editor.

Professionally, Helen has worked as a customer service representative in banks and trust companies. She retired from working in the computer services department of KPMG, an international chartered accounting firm. Helen's involvement with the local Victoria amateur swim club led to an official involvement as a timing results recorder for the 1994 Commonwealth Games.

David Lintern, (Sunday events): Dr. David Lintern was born and raised in South Wales and his parents and grandparents were all from the Rhondda valleys. As with many from that part of the world, David's great grandparents were from rural Wales and they migrated into the Rhondda to work in the coalmines. David's grandparents were the founders of the Blaencwm Baptist chapel, and his father was a Baptist Minister first in Ebbw Vale and later Caerphilly.

David's medical background came from his mother who was a midwife for many years in Llanishen. David is very proud of his Welsh heritage and remembers well singing hymns in Welsh at chapel Gymanfaoedd but like so many children brought up in the Rhondda, he does not speak Welsh. David studied medicine in Dublin where in his spare time he started a Welsh Glee club, which apparently still meets. With his wife Margaret, who originates from Aberystwyth, they emigrated to Canada in 1968. He took up residence as a Family Doctor in Victoria in 1974.

The current Victoria Welsh Society was started in their house in 1979, and David has been an integral member of the Welsh community in Victoria ever since. His collection of Welsh jokes is second to none. Apparently his patients continually ask him when he is going to retire, he wonders if there is a message there.