

Gymanfa Ganu Means Noson Llawen for the Welsh

Ever hear of the Gymanfa Ganu?

It will be in Rochester Sept. 5 and 6, and because of it there will be singing in the streets, singing in Eastman Theater, at the Powers and at Highland Park—in fact, singing everywhere.

There will be an estimated 5,000 Americans and Canadians of Welsh birth or ancestry here. Many people will come direct from Wales for the event.

• • •
THE GYMANFA GANU is a Welsh festival for sacred song. In America it is sponsored by the National Gymanfa Ganu Association of the United States and Canada Inc. Held annually since 1929, except for three wartime years, the national Gymanfa Ganu is really an annual convention for people of Welsh descent in the New World.

Being a Welsh affair, it concentrates on song. The Welsh, or Cymry in their own ancient language, have been famous as singers for nearly 1,000 years.

George Bundy, Warren, Ohio, executive secretary-treasurer of the national organization, and Arthur M. Roberts, Utica, executive secretary of the Rochester Eastern Gymanfa Ganu, are here to event with local group.



GYMANFA GANU PLANNERS — George Bundy (left) and Arthur M. Roberts will tell you that pertains to the Welsh singing festival they are planning for Rochester.

Frank Gannett is honorary president, 51 Litchfield St., is area president, and also a vice-president of the national organization. Lynn C. Wat-

THE MEETING DATES here fall on a Saturday and Sunday.

"On Saturday there will be an excursion to the Gannett property on Gannett Hill in Bristol," Roberts said today. "We expect about 2,000 to arrive in time for that."

Returning to Rochester late in the afternoon, the visitors will hold a business meeting at Eastman Theater where all sessions will be held.

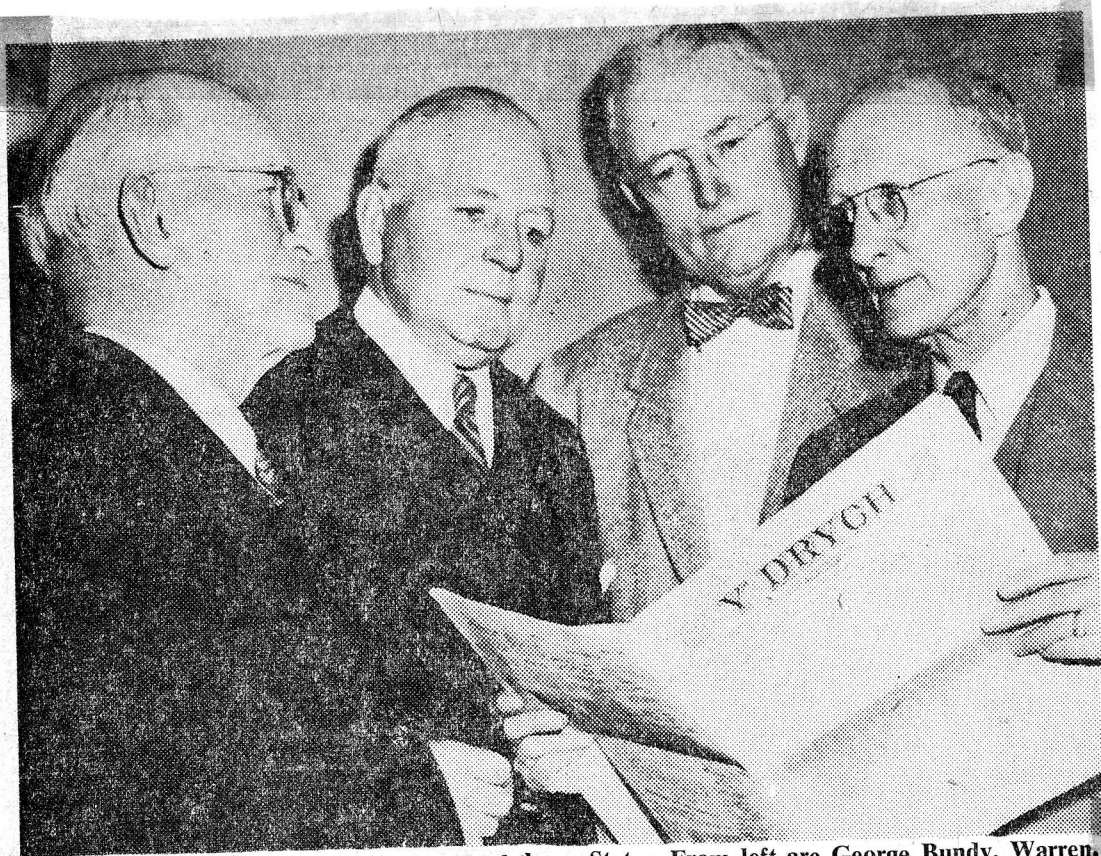
"Saturday night we will hold a 'noson llawen' or 'happy night' at the theater," said Roberts. He is editor of the nation's only Welsh newspaper, *Y Drych*, published in Utica. *Y Drych* means "The Mirror."

The "happy night" is a song concert in which folk songs and national airs will replace the hymns and religious music emphasized during the rest of the two-day meeting.

• • •
THE CONCERT singing will be led by some of the best Welsh soloists in this country and Canada and the more than 2,000 people in the audience are expected to join in.

Since it is expected that Eastman Theater will be filled to overflowing, arrangements are being made to set up a public address system to broadcast the music in Highland Park.

er 6727
 EVENINGS
 OR IN



PREPARE CONVENTION—Planners of the 1953 Gymanfa Ganu, Welsh song festival to be held here next September, scan Y Drych, only Welsh newspaper published in the United

States. From left are George Bundy, Warren, Ohio; Lynn C. Watkins, Brighton; the Rev. Gerald Watkins, D.D., Lake Ave. Baptist Church; Arthur Roberts, Utica, Y Drych editor.

Welsh Singing Unit to Convene Here

Gymanfa Ganu will be held here next September.

Arrangements were made yesterday for 6,000 members of the National Gymanfa Ganu Association of the United States and Canada, Welsh-American singing society, to hold its annual noson lawen (happy evening) and worship service at the Eastman Theater Sept. 5 and 6, 1953.

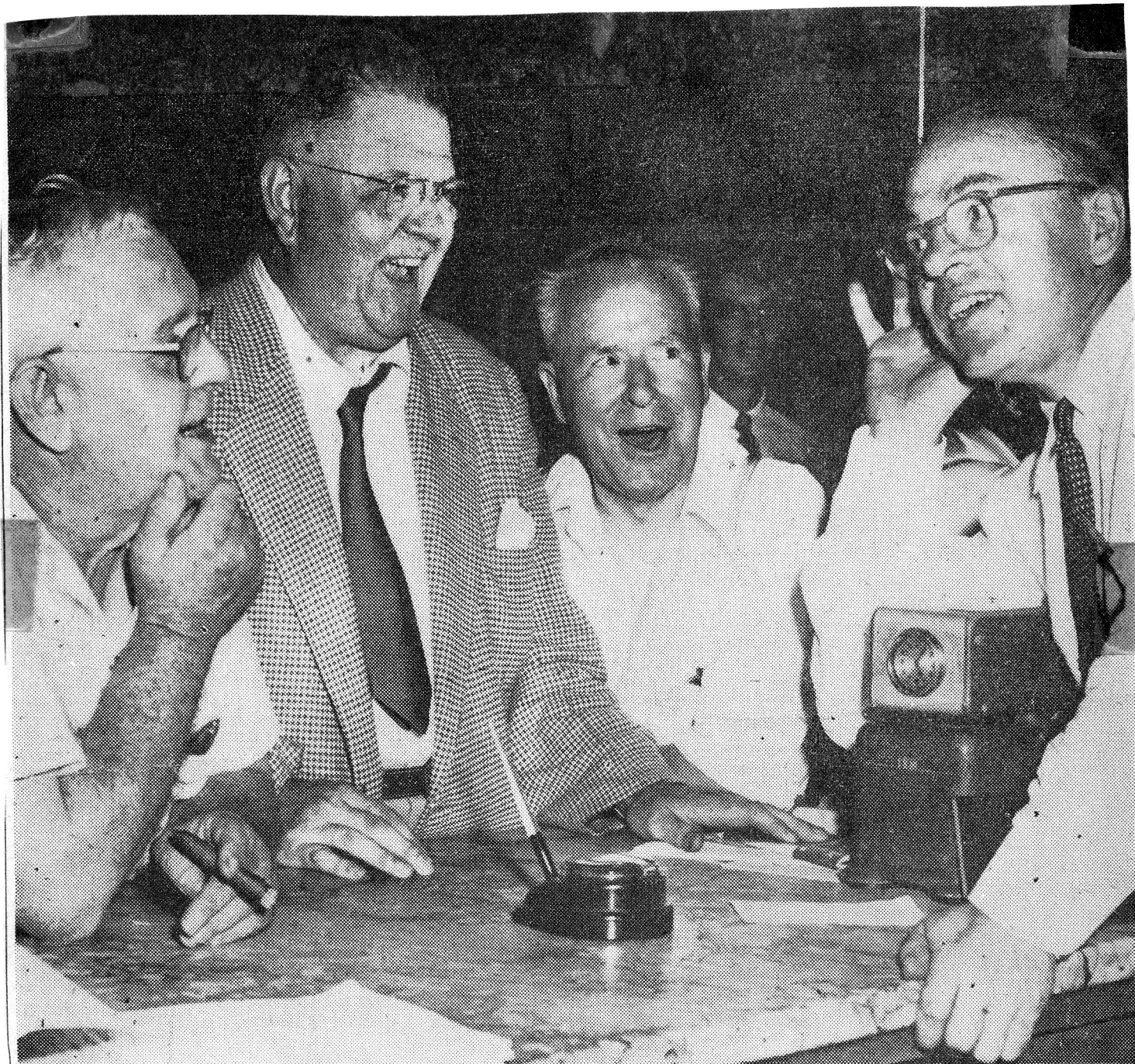
The program will consist of congregational singing in Welsh of hymns and Welsh folk songs. More than 90 per cent of the program will be singing, participated in by the audience.

This meeting will be sponsored by the Gymanfa Ganu Association of the Northeast, which includes New York and New England. Lynn C. Watkins, 36 Shoreham Dr., Brighton, president of the regional association, and Arthur M. Roberts, Utica, executive secretary, are making the plans along with George Bundy, Warren, Ohio, national secretary-treasurer. The Rev. Gerald Watkins, D.D., pastor of Lake Ave. Baptist Church, is in charge of religious services at the meeting.

Most of the singing, Bundy said, will be in parts. The Welsh are credited with originating part singing at least as early as 1188. An earlier Gymanfa Ganu drew from composer Walter Damrosch a tribute that the Welsh are a race "who were born with music in their souls, and who cultivated the God given gift through the centuries."

Translated, Gymanfa Ganu means "festival for sacred song."

Recheater 1953



HARMONY—Like Welshmen the world over, members of Gymanfa Ganu find no trouble in harmonizing with John R. Williams, desk clerk at the Powers Hotel and himself of Welsh ancestry, when they registered yesterday for the na-

tional convention. Joining in stirring "Men of Harlech" are Evan J. Evans of Youngstown, Ohio; John Ffestyn Jenkins of Boston, David J. Brown of Boston and Williams. The sessions will last through tomorrow evening.



GOOD NEWS—The Gymanfa Ganu is under way. Among the 5,000 Welshmen in town for the 22d national festival of song are these joyous songsters caught by the photographer as they raised their voices in lobby of Powers.

Rain Drives Welshmen Inside for Festival Picnic

Shrugging off the rain with the observation that it was "just like Festiniog," Welshmen prepared for their "Noson Lawen" — or happy evening—at 8 p. m. today in the Eastman Theater.

Festiniog, explained Welshmen here for the 22d annual Gymanfa Ganu (sacred song festival), is a slate-quarrying section of Wales where "you never go out without an umbrella."

Rain forced a switch in a picnic today, which officially started the two-day convention.

After rain soaked the Bristol Springs area, where they were to have been entertained at the

Frank Gannett Summer home on Gannett Hill, the affair was switched to the East Main St. Armory.

Those assisting Mary D'Ambra, the caterer, with arrangements, had nervously watched the storm as it crept from Toronto, to Buffalo, to the Rochester and Bristol area.

• • •
THE PICNIC program included hymns and Welsh folk songs.

Tonight's program will include solos by outstanding singers as well as folk-singing by the audience and numbers by the Welsh Gleemen, a Detroit, Mich., choral

ensemble. Arthur H. James of Plymouth, Pa., will be master of ceremonies.

Preacher at an all-Welsh service at 10:30 a. m. tomorrow in Lake Ave. Baptist Church will be the Rev. R. Glynne Lloyd of Utica. The Rev. Dr. Gerald Watkins will officiate.

At an English service at the Baptist Temple, the Rev. Peredur W. Jones, of Cookshire, Que., Canada, will preach. The Rev. Klye Haselden will be moderator.

• • •
THE GYMANFA GANU proper will begin at 2 p. m. tomorrow

in the Eastman Theater, conducted by Meredydd Evans, of Princeton, N. J. Edward Blythin, Cleveland, Ohio, will be chairman and Arthur M. R. Hughes of Rochester will be president.

The affair will wind up with an evening session at 7:30 tomorrow in the Eastman Theater, conducted by E. J. Hughes, of Caernarvon, North Wales. Dr. Watkins will be president and Prof. John Hughes, of McGill University, Montreal, Canada, will be chairman.

An election of officers was scheduled for late today.

5,000 Welsh Singers Lift Their Voices Here

Rochester-1953

The "hwyl" which stirred hundreds of Welshmen to song at the Powers Hotel last night will be felt by thousands more today at the opening of the 22nd National Gymanfa Ganu—festival of sacred song.

And the "hwyl" (literally the "moving spirit") will assert itself with increasing strength until tomorrow night, when Gymanfa Ganu reaches a climax with a final songfest at the Eastman Theater. Officials of the National Gymanfa Ganu Association of the United States and Canada, do not expect their members to be sung out until the small hours of Monday morning.

Vanguard of the 5,000 to 6,000 Welshmen from both countries expected to take part in the festival began pouring into Rochester early yesterday. They flocked to the registration point in the Powers where a special interpreter had to be assigned to help typists from the Rochester Convention Bureau spell many of the unusual names.

Although no sessions were scheduled, lack of a program failed to stop the songsters. They gathered around the piano in the Powers ballroom in the evening for an impromptu vocal warm-up.

First scheduled songfest is a short outdoor program which will follow a picnic lunch at the summer home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Gannett on Gannett Hill, Bristol Springs, today. The only talking of the convention will be at a business meeting of the association at 4:30 p. m. when officers for the next two years will be elected. Site of the next annual Gymanfa Ganu also will be announced.

Welsh folk songs will be featured at a "Noson Lawen," or happy evening, in the Eastman Theater at 8 p. m. It will be followed by a reception in the Powers ballroom.

Two special church services, one in Welsh and the other in English, will open the program tomorrow at 10:30 a. m. The Welsh service will be held in Lake Avenue Baptist Church, while the English service will be conducted in the Baptist Temple.

The actual Gymanfa Ganu will be held in the Eastman Theater at 2:30 and 7:30 p. m. and the public is invited. It is sponsored by the Rochester and Northeastern Gymanfa Ganu Associations.

What's in a Name?

Today We Meet
the EVANSES

WITH about 5,000 Welshmen here over the weekend, the surname Evans should have been seen and heard quite frequently.



Evans

That surname is a form of the common Welsh baptismal name Evan. The name Evans probably was derived from two Welsh words which mean "fearless and bold."

Even before the visiting Welshmen arrived for their songfest, the Evans family was well represented in Monroe County. The name appears about 150 times in the city directory and nearly 60 times in the suburban directory.

One of the earliest members of the Evans clan in America was Richard Evans, who came over from Bristol, Eng. He was one of the founders of the Colonial Trading Company.

His son, John continued in the business. He later became head of the Army Commissariat Department under Gen. George

Washington. John Evans married Susan March of Newburyport, Mass., in 1776.

The coat of arms shown here was first used by Lott Evans, who emigrated from Wales to Pennsylvania in 1681. The family motto below the insignia is "libertas." This means liberty.

Tomorrow: Todd.

Tomas-Morris - Rochester Sunday Sept 6, 1952



WELSHMEN—Lynn C. Watkins of Rochester, a vice president of the Gymanfa Ganu Association, at left in left-hand picture, chats with Frank Gannett at session of the



national group yesterday. At right: Arthur H. James of Plymouth, Pa., former governor of that state, presides at song session. Story and other picture on Page 1B.

Two Churches Schedule Special Welsh Services

In connection with the Welsh Music Festival here, two Rochester churches will act as host at services tomorrow.

Lake Avenue Baptist will feature a Welsh service tomorrow at 10:30 a. m. Dr. R. Glynne Lloyd of Utica will be speaker.

Director of hymns will be Mrs. Annie Wilson Jayne of Charleston, W. Va. Miss Margaret Griffith of Utica will be organist.

The entire service will be in the Welsh language. Special

Welsh music will be featured.

Baptist Temple will have a service in English tomorrow at 10:30 a. m. in honor of the Welsh. Preacher will be Dr. Peredur W. Jones of Quebec. Director of hymns will be Albert T. Davies of Detroit, Mich.; Mrs. Estelle Roberts Schubert will be organist.

Welsh Take Over

Thousands Pour In For Song Festival

It was "Sut y mae hi?" and "Boreu Da" as Welshmen from Patagonia to Pelham Manor began pouring into town bent only on four-part harmony.

Target of repeated "Sut y mae hi?" (it means "How are you?") and "Boreu da" ("Good morning") from the vanguard of 5,000 Welshmen descending on the city is George Bundy, the peppery executive secretary of the National Gymanfa Ganu Association.

THE ASSOCIATION is sponsoring the 22d annual National Gymanfa Ganu (it's pronounced "Geh-mahn-vah geh-nee") which begins tomorrow. It's Welsh for "sacred song festival."

Bundy—a native Welshman who is forced to admit that his name isn't Welsh at all, but English—detached himself from Jones, Evans, Thomas, Hughes and other Welshmen who were arriving to tell something of his compatriots.

He was joined by Allen Thomas, president of the association, who was born in a community with the name of Rhosllanerchrugog.

WELSHMEN, they explained, have been singing since at least the 1200s, when Giraldus de Barri, an English historian, re-

ported four-part harmony echoing through the Welsh glades.

They sing without rehearsal, in Welsh and altogether, instead of divided into basses, tenors, altos, sopranos and the like.

Their language, the pair explained, is spoken by about 75 per cent of association members. It's of Celtic (but they can't understand the Irishman's Gaelic) and is written with the ordinary alphabet (with the exception that "w" is a sixth vowel).

AN EX-OFFICIO get-together tonight at the Powers will start the convention.

It will get underway officially tomorrow with a picnic at the Frank Gannett Summer home on Gannett Hill, Bristol Springs. At 8 p. m. tomorrow in the Eastman Theater, a "Noson Lawen" or happy evening, will feature Welsh folk songs and entertainment.

The Gymanfa Ganu will begin at 2:30 p. m. and 7:30 p. m. Sunday in the Eastman. All songfests are free to the public.

Fire Drives 5 to Street

Fire today drove a family of five into the street and left only a shell of a building standing at 712½ Meigs St. Damage was estimated at \$50,000.

Made homeless were Mr. and Mrs. Richard Parsons, their sons, Richard, 5, and Carl, 4, and a daughter, Bonnie, 1. Flames were discovered by Richard in the kitchen. They spread quickly through the rest of the 1½-story house.

Battalion 3 Chief Joseph Nyhan said cause was undetermined. Leopold Fisher, 1770 Culver Rd., owner of the building, estimated damage at \$35,000 to the house and \$15,000 to the contents.

Vets to Plan Dance

Genesee Valley Post, American Legion, will meet Sept. 11 at the 40&8 Home, 933 University Ave., to discuss the Fall dance, set for Nov. 11, and the Past Commanders' dinner in honor of Edward Seager.

Lake Avenue Baptists Slate Welsh Service

Nothing but the ancient Cymric language of Wales will be heard at the 10:30 a. m. service tomorrow in Lake Avenue Baptist Church. Both sermon and songs will be in Welsh, the special music being arranged to bring out the best in Welsh singing.

Director of the hymns will be Mrs. Annie Wilson Jayne of Charleston, W. Va. The organist will be Miss Margaret Griffith of Utica. The entire order of service will be in Cymric or Welsh. The service is arranged in connection with the Welsh Musical Festival in Rochester.

At the Baptist Temple, the 10:30 a. m. service will be in English, but the church will be host to the music festival. The sermon will be delivered by the Rev. Peredur W. Jones of Quebec. Director of hymns will be Albert T. Davies of Detroit. Mrs. Estelle Roberts Schubert will be at the organ.

Rochester
1953



SONGSTERS—George Bundy (left) and Allen Thomas take time out from planning session for song festival for some reminiscing about "Yr Hen Wlad"—which means "the old country" to a Welshman.

Speechless Convention Coming (Everyone Sings)

Soon 5,000 Jones, Evans, Williams, Thomas, Hughes, Griffiths, Jenkins and other Welsh names will be crowding Rochester hotel registers.

The monickers will be of participants in the 22d annual Gymanfa Ganu in Eastman Theater Sept. 5 and 6.

Besides being that unusual event—"a convention without a single speech"—a Gymanfa Ganu is an assembly or festival for sacred song for the Cymry, or Welsh.

The singers will come from all parts of the United States and Canada.

The meeting will begin Friday evening, Sept. 4, with a get-together at the Powers, convention headquarters.

The convention proper will get under way Sept. 5 with a picnic at the Frank Gannett Summer home on Gannett Hill in the Bristol Hills.

At 8 that evening in the Eastman Theater, a "Noson Lawen"—or "happy evening"—will feature the folk songs of Wales with solos—in Welsh—by eminent Welsh singers. There also will be group singing. Arthur H. James, a former governor of Pennsylvania, will be master of ceremonies.

At 10:30 a. m. the following day—Saturday, Sept. 5—a full

Welsh service will be conducted in Lake Ave. Baptist Church with a sermon by Dr. R. Glynn Lloyd, of Utica. Dr. Gerald Watkins, pastor of the host church, will serve as moderator.

An English service will be conducted in the Baptist Temple at 10:30 with the Rev. Peredur W. Jones, of Cookshire, Que., Canada, preaching.

• • •

THE GYMANFA GANU will begin at 2:30 p. m. Sunday, Sept. 6. The conductor will be a Princeton, N. J., musician, Meredydd Evans.

An evening session at 7:30 will be conducted by E. J. Hughes of Caernarvon, North Wales.

"And in all likelihood," the Gymanfa Ganu members warn in advance publicity, "members will sing on the streets of downtown Rochester... with nothing stronger than good Welsh tea needed to bring a song to their lips. Whenever two Welshmen get together, they sing."



TRAVELERS—Four persons, shown warming up for Welsh "worship through music," traveled total of 10,000 miles to Gymanfa Ganu here. From Patagonia, Argentina are Blodwen Evans, at piano, and Llinos Owen, right. Mr. and Mrs. Hywel Gee Williams left Wales 2 weeks ago.

Old Welshmen's Eyes Water As Wales Hymns Fill Air

BY STEVE HAMMER

They wept for singing in the Eastman Theater yesterday, the 2,500 Welshmen here for their 22nd annual Gymanfa Ganu.

The twin program—afternoon and evening—actually was "worship through music," in the words of Edward Blythin of Cleveland, chairman of the afternoon session. As the hymns of Wales swept through the great auditorium, many an oldster born on the rocky peninsula shed a quiet tear in remembrance of a distant youth and culture.

There were no performers, no audience; the functions of both belonged to all those present, most of whom had come far to sing the old hymns once more. They sang with a fervor which left no doubt that they thought the trip worth while. In keeping with the worship atmosphere, there was no applause.

From the balcony, closed to the conventioners, the hymn service sounded more like a concert for the benefit of the single reporter in the hall. But a close look at the crowd was convincing evidence that the event was a spiritual experience for thousands of Welshmen singing.

The tunes they sang were profound, yet well short of forbidding in nature. The hymns of Wales, which have a special place in the history of music, are a curious mixture of devotional and secular flavors.

The universal appeal of Welsh hymns for Welshmen perhaps lies in the fact that they are the predominant form of musical expression there.

"When Welshmen are happy, they sing hymns in their pubs," Meredydd Evans of Princeton, N. J., leader of the afternoon session, explained. A recent immigrant from Wales, he is well steeped in the traditions of his country.

Welsh folk songs, he said, frequently are hymn tunes on which secular poetry was superimposed. He explained the phenomenal talent for choral singing with the fact that polyphonic music in

Wales predated by centuries the development of multi-part singing elsewhere.

The tradition of Wales was clearly evident in the unrehearsed performances yesterday. The chorus in the Eastman's orchestra seats sounded spontaneously perfect.

One of the striking characteristics of Welsh music is the predominance of minor keys. In other musical cultures, works in minor keys generally convey sadness or at least nostalgia. But somehow, the Welshmen from this country and Canada singing yesterday gave those hymns a happy flavor in odd contrast to their harmonic structure. Another striking feature was that the voices of so many grey-haired people could sound so young.

The identity and personality of last night's conductor, E. J. Hughes of Caernarvon, North Wales, lent added authenticity to the program. Seasoned veterans of past festivals were emphatic in pointing out that "he is the real, the traditional kind of Gymanfa Ganu leader." They responded to his baton with even greater fervor than they had to any other conductor.

Only the massive perfection of the total performances could overshadow the work of the two accompanists. Miss Margaret Griffith of Utica alternated between the piano, accompanying soloists, and the magnificent Eastman Theater organ which she handled with accomplishment during the hymns. Mrs. Estelle Schubert of Oak Park, Ill., was at the piano most of the time, supplementing the organ accompaniment.

Last night's session was the final climax of the 1953 Gymanfa. The Eastman lobby echoed with the majestic Welsh hymns—a replay of recordings made minutes earlier in the hall—as the participants bade each other farewell until next year's Gymanfa Philadelphia.

5,000 Welsh Singers Prove Heritage Value In Eastman Concert

By STEVE HAMMER

Other pictures Page 3B

The world's most harmonious convention, dedicated solely to the preservation of the enchanting music of Wales, last night put up a convincing argument for its cause at the Noson Lawen (Happy Time) opening the 22nd annual Gymanfa Ganu in the Eastman Theater.

From the lips of the people renowned for their mastery of choral singing, the music sounded worth preserving indeed—and then some. The songs, with overtones of English and Scottish folk songs, would be a welcome addition to any recital program.

Some of the soloists themselves would do well in recital. And the chorus, made up of the entire convention—thousands strong—at times reached near-professional standards, and without the benefit of rehearsal.

The group, meeting in Rochester for the first time, gets together annually just to sing. The Welsh heritage is their common bond, expressed in music by people who love to sing and whose musical tradition goes back to King Arthur's time. Some 5,000 Welshmen were expected for the Gymanfa.

Many are or were professional singers, but the great majority

the balcony of the Armory's great hall, they alternated sacred and folk songs as their hosts listened with obvious pleasure. They sat without regard for voices—sopranos, tenors, altos and basses mixed—yet untroubled by the different parts being sung all around them.

The song books in their hands gave only the music of the melodies. But it took them only a couple of verses to construct their harmonies, and by the time they reached the third verse they sounded, collectively, like a great organ.

In an executive committee meeting between the picnic and the evening program, Henry T. Jones of Newcastle, Pa., was elected to the presidency he had relinquished four years ago. By the narrow margin of 49 to 43

NEW DODGE Passenger Car.
It's under its own power will be worth AT LEAST
NY car, regardless of age or condition that can
EVOY'S toward a big
NEW 1953 DODGE



... the Armory's great hall, they alternated sacred and folk songs as their hosts listened with obvious pleasure. They sat without regard for voices — sopranos, tenors, altos and basses mixed — yet untroubled by the different parts being sung all around them.

Some of the soloists themselves would do well in recital. And the chorus, made up of the entire convention — thousands strong — at times reached near-professional standards, and without the benefit of rehearsal.

The group, meeting in Rochester for the first time, gets together annually just to sing. The Welsh heritage is their common bond, expressed in music by people who love to sing and whose musical tradition goes back to King Arthur's time. Some 5,000 Welshmen were expected for the Gymanfa.

Many are or were professional singers, but the great majority consisted of judges and janitors, preachers and physicians, salesmen and housewives. Last night's master of ceremonies was ex-Gov. Arthur H. James of Pennsylvania, who came solely because he likes to hear and sing Welsh songs.

One of the ex-pros was Mrs. Phyllis Evans, who sang grand opera in this country and in England before settling down to matrimony. Actually she is only a Welshman-in-law, but she sang the songs of her husband's country with convincing authenticity. Her voice was brilliant enough to make her the equal of many name sopranos.

Her husband, Meredydd Evans, sang a group of haunting tunes with equal accomplishment. His considerable talent might easily make him a living, but he prefers to work on his doctorate in preparation for a teaching career in philosophy.

Although age has left its mark on the voice of silver-haired Prof. Merlin Davis of Toronto, Ont., his performance in two folk songs left no doubt that he is an artist of note. There were other soloists, too many to mention. Singing sometimes in English but mostly in Welsh, their performances were convincing sales talk indeed for the preservation of Welsh music.

Earlier in the day, the delegates were guests of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Gannett at a pre-convention picnic in the Main Street East Armory. Originally scheduled at the Gannett summer home near Bristol Springs, the event was forced indoors by the morning deluge. Gannett is honorary president of the Rochester and Northeastern Gymanfa Ganu Association; Lynn C. Watkins, also of Rochester, is president.

The tuneful conventioners lit-

... the Armory's great hall, they alternated sacred and folk songs as their hosts listened with obvious pleasure. They sat without regard for voices — sopranos, tenors, altos and basses mixed — yet untroubled by the different parts being sung all around them.

The song books in their hands gave only the music of the melodies. But it took them only a couple of verses to construct their harmonies, and by the time they reached the third verse they sounded, collectively, like a great organ.

In an executive committee meeting between the picnic and the evening program, Henry T. Jones of Newcastle, Pa., was elected to the presidency he had relinquished four years ago. By the narrow margin of 49 to 43



HENRY T. JONES
... heads Welsh singers

...ally sang for their lunch. From he was chosen over Allen Thomas of Ferndale, Mich., who took the office in 1949.

Elected vice presidents were: Dr. John Hughes, Montreal, Canada; Dr. M. D. Thomas, Salt Lake City, Utah, and Thomas Reeves of Philadelphia. George Bundy of Warren, Ohio, was reelected executive secretary-treasurer.

Today's session will begin with two simultaneous church services — one, in Welsh, in Lake Avenue Baptist Church, the other, in English, in the Baptist Temple. Both will begin at 10:30 a. m.

The afternoon Gymanfa will convene in the Eastman Theater at 2 p. m. Arthur M. R. Hughes, president of the Union Trust Company, will preside over the session, while the Rev. Gerald Watkins, pastor of Lake Avenue Baptist Church, will act in the same capacity at 8 tonight to end the Gymanfa.