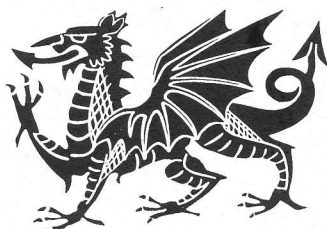


**The Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association, Inc.**



***Then and Now--1989 and 2002***

**A Report Comparing the Results  
of the 1989 and 2002  
WNGGA Membership Surveys**

**Prepared By**

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## INTRODUCTION

A great philosopher once said "Know Thyself." This maxim is particularly important for organizations. By knowing the background of those who are its members, the governing body and officers of an organization are better able to establish and implement basic goals for the membership.

The Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association (WNGGA) was established in 1929 and, over the years, has established the following as its basic objective:

To preserve, develop and promote our Welsh religious and cultural heritage and our religious and cultural traditions, including but not limited to the Gymanfa Ganu, and to do all things necessary and proper to accomplish and enhance the same. (2002 WNGGA Constitution Article 2)

To implement this basic goal, the governance of the organization has an elected Board of Trustees with specific representatives from Canada, United States East (of the Mississippi River), and United States West (of the Mississippi River). The Board of Trustees is entrusted to elect four national officers with the past president and an at-large member from the Board to be the Executive Committee.

As the organization grew and its membership expanded to include persons from not only North America but also Wales and other overseas locations, a headquarters was established. Managing the WNGGA Headquarters was entrusted to the Secretary until 1995 when the title was officially changed to Executive Director. When the change was made, the Executive Director was appointed by the Board of Trustees.

Over the years, the responsibility of the WNGGA Headquarters has expanded to include not only processing of memberships and sale of hymnals but also providing logistical support for the officers, the Executive Committee, the Board of Trustees, WNGGA committees, and the membership in general.

From 1988 through 1990, under the leadership of WNGGA President Paul Stevens, the Board of Trustees decided to ascertain the backgrounds of the WNGGA membership. A membership survey form was devised and distributed to all members (See Appendix A). The results were tabulated and reported in a document entitled "Survey Results - 1989 Membership Survey" (on file at WNGGA Headquarters).

In 1997, a Long-Range Planning Report (LRPR) was prepared and accepted by the Board of Trustees (See Appendix B). The LRPR identified several aspects of the WNGGA governance with numerous recommendations to be considered by the Board of Trustees and membership at large.

In 2002 a suggestion was made to conduct another membership survey to see if there had been changes from 1989 and to secure from the membership basic information so that

future short- and long-range planning might reflect even more concisely ways in which the organization might better serve those who are the WNGGA.

At the 2001-2002 mid-year meeting in Kingston, Ontario, the Board of Trustees agreed that a 2002 Membership Survey should be conducted. A form was prepared and distributed to over 2,700 members of the organization (See Appendix C).

Forms were sent by bulk rate to United States members with a postage paid return address envelope. Forms were sent first class to non-US members with unstamped return address envelopes. The deadline for returning the forms was set for June 15, 2002. By the deadline, an extremely high percentage of responses had been received. Table 1 below shows the comparative results of the responses to the 1989 and the 2002 surveys.

Table 1  
Responses to Membership Survey

	No. Sent	No. Received	Percent
1989	1688	513	30.4
2002	2715	1246	45.9

When the 2002 forms were received at WNGGA Headquarters, an SPSS computer software program was used to provide analyses of the results. Fourteen items in the 1989 survey form were repeated in the 2002 form so that a direct comparison of the results of the two surveys could be clearly seen. In the following sections, the first analyses are of those items which were the same for each of the surveys. In a separate section, the analyses focus on items which were unique to the 2002 survey.

#### ANALYSES OF IDENTICAL ITEMS IN THE TWO SURVEYS

On the following pages are analyses of items which were identical in both the 1989 survey and the 2002 survey. Each table compares the results side by side to show the reader what changes took place over the 13-year period.

Age Classification: The responses to age classifications have changed very little from 1989 to 2002. Despite numerous informal comments that the organization is so heavily dominated by people over the age of sixty, it can be seen in Table 2 that over the 13 years between the two surveys, the distribution by age has changed very little. An addition of the percentages by age classification does show that according to the 2002 survey, 50.8 percent are age 70 or older. The comparable figures for 1989 shows that 44 percent were 70 or over.

Table 2  
Item 1: What is your age classification?

	1989	1989	2002	2002
	No.	Percent*	No.	Percent*
Under 10	2	0.4	4	0.3
10-19	2	0.4	8	0.6
20-29	5	1.0	12	1.0
30-39	19	3.7	30	2.4
40-49	54	10.6	88	7.1
50-59	71	13.9	199	16.0
60-69	133	26.0	271	21.7
70-79	162	31.7	398	31.9
80-89	59	11.5	213	17.1
90 plus	4	0.8	23	1.8
Totals	511	100.0	1246	100.0
No Response	2		16	
Total Surveys	513	100.0	1262	100.0

\* The percentage is calculated based upon the number who responded. It does not include the "no responses."

Marital Status: Options for this particular item as shown in Table 3 were not as clear as they might have been. The option did not provide clear responses by persons who were divorced, or had lost their spouse.

Table 3  
Item 2: What is your marital status?

	1989	1989	2002	2002
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Single	190	38.4	479	39.1
Married	305	61.6	746	60.9
Totals	495	100.0	1225	100.0
No Response	18		37	
Total Surveys	513	100.0	1262	100.0

Born in Wales: As seen in Table 4, over the 13-year span there has been a perceptible shift away from approximately one-fifth of the membership in 1989 having been born in Wales to just over 10 percent in 2002.

Table 4  
Item 3: Were you born in Wales?

	1989	1989	2002	2002
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Yes	98	19.3	150	12.0
No	410	80.7	1097	88.0
Totals	508	100.0	1247	100.0
No Response	5		15	
Total Surveys	513	100.0	1262	100.0

Welsh Descent: Although the WNGGA is identified as an organization for people of “Welsh Descent,” the statistics in Table 5 show that the percentage (91 percent) was unchanged from 1989 to 2002.

Table 5  
Item 4: Are you of Welsh Descent?

	1989	1989	2002	2002
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Yes	448	91.1	1116	91.0
No	44	8.9	111	9.0
Totals	492	100.0	1227	100.0
No Response	21		35	
Total Surveys	513	100.0	1262	100.0

Proportion Welsh: During the time between surveys, as seen in Table 6, the numbers of persons identifying themselves as 100 percent has decreased from half in 1989 to less than a third in 2002. It is also shown that the percentage of less than 50 percent has substantially increased from 16.1 to 24.2.

Table 6  
Item 5: What proportion of you is Welsh?

	1989	1989	2002	2002
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Less than 50	71	16.1	269	24.2
50	146	33.1	403	36.3
75	---	---	101	9.1
100	224	50.8	338	30.4
Totals	441	100.0	1111	100.0
No Response	72		151	
Total Surveys	513	100.0	1262	100.0

Speak Welsh: Table 7 shows that the percentage of persons responding “yes,” has declined by almost 50 percent from 28.9 in 1989 to 15.2 in 2002.

Table 7  
Item 6: Do you speak Welsh?

	1989	1989	2002	2002
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Yes	146	28.9	183	15.2
No	359	71.1	1024	84.8
Totals	505	100.0	1207	100.0
No Response	9		55	
Total Surveys	513	100.0	1262	100.0

Welsh Words in Hymns: A focus of the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association is the singing of Welsh hymns. A truism in musical circles is that the words of the original language of a song usually match the notes of the music better than translation. Thus, the beauty of the Welsh hymns is enhanced when they are sung in the original language.

However, Table 8 shows that there has been a change in that the percentage of yes responses decreased from 69.7 in 1989 to 57.6 in 2002. It should be noted that within the past three years the WNGGA has taken steps to assist persons who want to use Welsh in the hymns by issuing in 2001 the publication entitled Welsh Hymns for Non Welsh Singers. It is anticipated that as the use of this “phonetic hymnal” is increased, more and more people will learn to use Welsh when singing the hymns.

Table 8  
Item 7: Can you sing the Welsh words in the hymns?

	1989	1989	2002	2002
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Yes	350	69.7	691	57.6
No	152	30.3	509	42.4
Totals	502	100.0	1198	100.0
No Response	11		62	
Total Surveys	513	100.0	1262	100.0

Travel to Wales: The identical responses of the two surveys from 1989 and 2002 as shown in Table 9 suggests that “the sense of *Hiraeth*” continues unabated.

Table 9  
Item 8: Have you ever traveled to Wales?

	1989	1989	2002	2002
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Yes	394	76.8	954	76.8
No	119	23.2	288	23.2
Totals	513	100.0	1242	100.0
No Response	0		20	
Total Surveys	513	100.0	1262	100.0

Subscriptions to Welsh-American Newspapers: The cohesiveness of any community is enhanced by the written communication between and among the members of the group. As shown in Table 10, although the raw numbers increased, the percentages decreased considerably from 76.3 in 1989 to 52.0 in 2002.

A contributing factor may have been the establishment of HWYL in the mid 90's as the official newsletter of WNGGA. HWYL is issued quarterly and sent to all WNGGA members. The dramatic drop in the percentage of subscribers to the Welsh-American newspapers may indicate a lessening of the awareness within the North American Welsh Community of what is going on within the group.

Table 10

Item: Do you subscribe to a Welsh-American newspaper?

	1989	1989	2002	2002
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Yes	390	76.3	640	52.0
No	121	23.7	591	48.0
Total	511	100.0	1231	100.0
No Response	2		31	
Total Surveys	513	100.0	1262	100.0

Local Welsh Organizations: In interpreting the responses summarized in Table 11, the reader should realize that the item does not differentiate between groups that meet regularly, have a regular set of officers, have yearly dues, and a number of specific events such as St. David's Day functions, summer picnics, and annual Gymanfa Ganu, pre-Christmas events, etc. and groups which meet only once a year such as an annual Gymanfa Ganu or a St. David's Day event. In addition, because WNGGA membership is less concentrated in some areas, respondents from those areas might have answered "No" because there is no opportunity to be a part of a "local Welsh Organization."

Table 11

Item 11: Do you belong to a local Welsh Organization?

	1989	1989	2002	2002
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Yes	307	68.2	756	61.0
No	143	31.8	484	39.0
Total	450	100.0	1240	100.0
No Response	63		22	
Total Surveys	513	100.0	1262	100.0

Favorite Welsh Hymns: Each respondent was asked to identify her/his five most favorite Welsh hymns. The analysis of the responses was limited to those hymns in the official WNGGA hymnal. As shown in Table 12, the choices of favorite Welsh hymns has remained fairly constant over the interval between surveys. The overwhelming favorite continues to be *Cwm Rhondda*. A tabulation of the 2002 responses for all of the hymns in the hymnal is shown in Appendix D. A review of that Appendix D listing shows that 26 hymns were not selected by anyone.

Table 12  
Item 13: What are your five most favorite Welsh hymns?

	1989	1989	1989	2002	2002	2002
Hymns	No.	Percent	Rank	No.	Percent	Rank
<i>Cwm Rhondda</i>	261	*	1	602	69.35	1
<i>Calon Lan</i>	146	*	4	334	38.48	2
<i>Diadem</i>	149	*	3	294	33.48	3
<i>Rachie</i>	152	*	2	271	31.22	4
<i>Aberystwyth</i>	106	*	7	222	25.58	5
<i>Penpark</i>	141	*	5	211	24.31	6
<i>Blodwen</i>	116	*	6	161	18.55	7
<i>Sanctus</i>	74	*	9	131	15.09	8
<i>Arglwydd, Dyma Fi</i>	61	*	11	121	13.94	9
<i>Bryn Calfaria</i>	68	*	10	117	13.48	10
<i>Hyfrydol</i>	37	*	14	100	11.52	11

\* Total number of respondents to this question in 1989 was not available.

Attendance at National Gymanfa Ganu: Table 13 shows that over 80 percent of the WNGGA members have attended the National Gymanfa Ganu. In the 2002 survey, no attempt was made to evaluate the various parts of the National as was done in 1989. It should be noted that the fact that so many members have attended reflects well on the National being a critical component of the organization's overall program of activities.

Table 13  
Item 14: Have you ever attended the National Gymanfa Ganu?

	1989	1989	2002	2002
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Yes	446	87.8	1041	83.7
No	62	12.2	202	16.3
Total	508	100.0	1243	100.0
No Response	5		19	
Total Surveys	513	100.0	1262	100.0

Number of Nationals Attended: The responses shown in Table 14 indicate that 50.1 percent of the respondents in 1989 and 56.9 in 2002 had attended 1 to 4 times. Although attendance is affected by the proximity to where the National is being held, attendance at 1 to 4 times by over half of the respondents indicates a loyalty to this major annual event for the organization.

Table 14  
Item 15: How many "Nationals" have you attended?

	1989	1989	2002	2002
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
1	70	15.6	214	21.0
2	70	15.6	153	15.0
3	46	10.2	118	11.5
4	39	8.7	96	9.4
5	23	5.1	89	8.7
6 plus	201	44.8	351	34.4
Total	449	100.0	1021	100.0
No Response	64		241	
Total Surveys	513	100.0	1262	100.0

Change Date for National: Despite numerous suggestions that the annual event be changed from Labor Day weekend, the results show that between 1989 and 2002, as seen in Table 15, an even larger number and percentage of people do not want it changed. A frequent rationale for making the change is the conflict with the start of schools and colleges. Yet, in spite of these arguments, in 2002 over two-thirds of the WNGGA members prefer to keep it at the same time.

Table 15  
Item 20: Should the National be changed to a date other than Labor Day?

	1989	1989	2002	2002
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Yes	176	42.6	321	31.3
No	237	57.4	705	68.7
Total	413	100.0	1026	100.0
No Response	100		236	
Total Surveys	513	100.0	1262	100.0

#### ANALYSES OF UNIQUE 2002 ITEMS

Several items were included in the 2002 survey which had not been included in the earlier collection of data. Each of the following tables provides the comparison of responses based on the options included in each item.

Attendance at St. David's Day Events: On or around March 1, St. David's Day, the people of Wales and of Welsh descent across the world hold special observances such as banquets, luncheons, dinners, and Gymanfa Ganu singing sessions. The responses to this 2002 item summarized in Table 16 shows that just over half of the respondents did attend a special event. It should be noted that the responses may have been skewed by those who reside in areas where such events are not held.

Table 16  
2002 Item 12: Did you attend a special St. David's Day event around March 1?

Response	No.	Percent
Yes	628	51.8
No	584	48.2
Total	1212	100.0
No Response	50	
Total Surveys	1262	100.0

Computer Users: Because computer usage has exploded in the interval between 1989 and 2002, this item was included. An indicator of the popularity of computer usage can be seen in Table 17 which shows that two-thirds of the respondents identify themselves as computer users.

Table 17  
2002 Item 16: Do you use a computer?

Response	No.	Percent
Yes	829	67.1
No	407	32.9
Total	1236	100.0
No Response	26	
Total Surveys	1262	100.0

Age Comparison of Computer Users: For Table 18, a further analysis was made of the responses according to age classifications. It shows that the greatest percentage of "yes" computer users were in the 60-69 age range but the greatest number of "no" computer users in the 70-79 range.

Table 18  
Analysis of Computer Users Respondents by Age

Age	Yes	Percent of 1231	No	Percent of 1231	Totals
Under 30	23	1.9	1	0.1	24
30-39	29	2.4	1	0.1	30
40-49	87	7.1	1	0.1	88
50-59	189	15.3	9	0.7	198
60-69	218	17.7	50	4.1	268
70-79	209	17.0	186	15.1	395
80-89	69	5.6	137	11.1	206
90 plus	3	0.2	19	1.5	22
Totals	827	67.2	404	32.8	1231
No Age Response	2		3		5
Totals	829		407		1236

E-mail Address: This responses to this item of 63.4 percent “yes” strongly suggest that the use of e-mail should be pursued as a means of increased communication via electronic newsletters and announcements. Just as other organizations have begun using the internet and e-mail to help keep members informed, so also should the WNGGA begin moving in that direction to help create a more knowledgeable membership concerning items of interest within the North American Welsh Community.

Table 19  
2002 Item 17: Do you have an e-mail address?

Responses	No.	Percent
Yes	786	63.4
No	454	36.6
Total	1240	100.0
No Response	22	
Total Surveys	1262	100.0

WNGGA Web Site Usage: Along with the increased use of computers and the use of e-mail, the WNGGA web site is an opportunity for the wider North American Welsh Community to be kept up to date about WNGGA and its links to other organizations. Within recent years there has been a steady increase in messages to the WNGGA International Headquarters which make specific references to the organization’s web site. This is a definite trend among organizations and should be stressed by the WNGGA to its members. It has the message of the organization to not only the North American Welsh Community but also other persons and groups interested in the program of WNGGA.

Despite having a web site for several years and members being reminded of its availability, the responses summarized in Table 20 are disappointing to persons wishing to “move” the organization toward more electronic intra-organization communication. Although over two-thirds of the respondents indicate they are computer users (See Table 17) and 63 percent have e-mail addresses, barely one-fifth of the respondents have seen the WNGGA web site.

Table 20  
2002 Item 18: Have you seen the WNGGA web site?

Response	No.	Percent
Yes	255	21.1
No	956	78.9
Total	1211	100.0
No Response	51	
Total Surveys	1262	100.0

WNGGA Regional Events: The WNGGA for many years included in its Constitution a provision to allow groups to have regional events. Because of travel times it was felt that more people would have an opportunity to come together if they did not have to travel so far to the National. However, times have changed and the use of air flights has changed the travel time to the point that people can get to the National more quickly than before.

However, the strong positive response to this item suggests that perhaps there should be regionals in addition to the National. A question that would have to be considered is whether this would detract from the National and its new focus on being the North American Festival of Wales.

Table 21  
2002 Item 19: Should WNGGA have regional events in addition to the National?

Response	No.	Percent
Yes	696	71.3
No	280	28.7
Total	976	100.0
No Response	286	
Total Surveys	1262	100.0

## CONCLUSIONS

A comparison of the major results of the 1989 and 2002 membership surveys shows the following:

1. The age distribution of WNGGA membership has not changed dramatically over the interim. The median age has moved up slightly but 50 percent of the organization today is 60 or older.
2. The ethnicity of the organization is changing with fewer people born in Wales and of 100 percent Welsh descent. There is still a very strong Welsh component supporting the identification of WNGGA being a "Welsh" organization.
3. If the organization is to continue its focus on maintaining its hymn singing tradition, there must be an effort to help members become familiar with the Welsh language through language study and the singing of the hymns in Welsh.
4. There continues to be a high degree of interest in Wales as shown that three-fourths of the members have traveled to Wales. Should the WNGGA look into a focus on fostering an increase in this activity through assistance by the organization?
5. A strong intra-organization communication provides a strengthening of the bonds within any group. The substantial drop in the percentage of persons subscribing to Welsh-American Newspapers suggests that the current WNGGA Newsletter should be made the major source of news for the organization.

# Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association 1989 Membership Survey

**Directions:** The Board of Trustees of the WNGGA asks you to respond to the following items and to return this form as soon as you can. When you have completed answering the items, simply fold the sheet in such a way that the return address is on the outside. Staple or tape the form shut and mail it back. No stamp is needed. You need not include your name. Your assistance with this WNGGA project will be very much appreciated.

1. Age: 10-19 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-69 70-79 80-89 90-plus
2. Marital Status: Single Married
3. Were you born in Wales? ..... Yes No
4. Are you of Welsh descent? ..... Yes No
5. If your answer to No. 4 above was Yes, what proportion of you is Welsh?  
     100 percent                                      50 percent                                      Less than 50 percent
6. Do you speak Welsh? ..... Yes No
7. Can you sing the Welsh words in the hymns? ..... Yes No
8. Have you ever traveled to Wales? ..... Yes No
9. Do you subscribe to a Welsh-American newspaper? ..... Yes No
10. Do you belong to a local Welsh organization? ..... Yes No
11. What are your five most-favorite Welsh Hymns?

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12. Have you ever attended the National Gymanfa Ganu? ..... Yes No
13. If your answer to No. 12 above was Yes, how many "Nationals" have you attended? (Circle the answer)  
     1    2    3    4    5    6 or more

(NOTE: If your answer to No. 12 was No, skip No. 14 and go to No. 15.)

14. If your answer to No. 12 was Yes, please answer this question by indicating the extent to which you agree with the following statements about specific activities at the National by circling the appropriate number at the right.

(KEY: 1 = Strongly Agree (SA); 2 = Agree (A); 3 = No Opinion (NO); 4 = Disagree (D); 5 = Strongly Disagree (SD))

	SA	A	NO	D	SD
a. The <b>Seminars</b> are an important part of the National Gymanfa Ganu .....	1	2	3	4	5
b. The <b>Tours</b> are an important part of the National Gymanfa Ganu .....	1	2	3	4	5
c. The <b>Grand Concert</b> is an important part of the National Gymanfa Ganu .....	1	2	3	4	5
d. The <b>Noson Lawen</b> is an important part of the National Gymanfa Ganu .....	1	2	3	4	5
e. The <b>Awr Y Plant</b> is an important part of the National Gymanfa Ganu .....	1	2	3	4	5

15. Within recent years more and more schools and colleges have started their fall term before Labor Day. Suggestions have been made to change the dates of the National Gymanfa Ganu from Labor Day weekend to another time during the year. Do you feel the dates should be changed? ..... Yes No

If your answer is Yes, what other dates would you suggest? \_\_\_\_\_

16. Since 1970, the WNGGA has supported the WAY (Welsh Associated Youth) organization. Should WNGGA continue to support WAY? ..... Yes No

If your answer is Yes, in what way?

17. Should the WNGGA establish "local chapters"? ..... Yes No

18. What suggestions do you have on how the WNGGA might increase its membership.

19. At the present time, the primary focus of the WNGGA is to plan and host the annual National Gymanfa Ganu on Labor Day weekend. What suggestions do you have for additional activities or projects for the WNGGA?

- (1)
- (2)
- (3)