

July 5, 1995

Col. Alfred J. Reese, Jr. Ret USA
P.O. Box [REDACTED]
Lehighton, PA 18235

Dear Alfred:

At long last there is time to send you information you had asked for regarding the history of WNGGA.

For some unknown reason I do not have the program from the first National in 1929, however, enclosed are the programs from the 2nd (1930), 5th (1933), 6th (1934), 7th (1935) and the 11th (1939). Within the pages of these programs there appears some interesting information, not as much as I had hoped for. Then I have also enclosed copies of 1992 Kansas City and 1993 Wilkes-Barre program booklets for additional information.

I remember hearing Jack Meadows, my predecessor and Morris Wrench talk about having attended the first National Gymanfa Ganu held in Niagara Falls, New York in 1929. Both said they had boarded a train or maybe trains in Youngstown, Ohio, along with approximately 1,400 other people. They journeyed to Niagara Falls, New York where they walked from the train to the Niagara River, crossed a bridge to Goat Island, and there sang our glorious Welsh Hymns to the accompaniment of the rush of water in the river and over the falls. Thus began the first Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu. And Jack Meadows always said of the National "It all began right here in the Mahoning Valley of North Eastern Ohio.

You will note in the program booklets, that the first two Presidents were from Youngstown, Ohio; William E. Lewis and James Attwood. You will also note the first director was from Youngstown; Prof. Isaac Prosser, then the following three directors were from Buffalo, New York. For the first ten years, directors for the National were from the states of Ohio, New York and Pennsylvania.

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Do hope you will be able to use the above information and also that found in the program booklets to develop the first of a series of articles on history of the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association.

I will do my very best to uncover additional information from local news papers and our National Archives.

Sincerely,

Nelson L. Llewellyn,
Executive Director