

File "youth"

From: "Ellis, John" <ellisjs@██████████>
To: <PennsburySings@██████████>
Cc: <WNGGA@██████████>
Subject: RE: welsh music festival
Date: Thu, 22 Jan 2004 11:44:05 -0500

Dear Mr. Moyer,

Many thanks for your email. The Welsh music festival you are planning sounds wonderful. I would like to learn more about it and am happy to assist if I can. I would be particularly interested in any aspects of the festival involving the young people of your area.

I wear a couple of hats among Welsh organizations, so I am guessing you are probably contacting me in regards to the North American Association for the Study of Welsh Culture and History of which I am secretary. This is an academic organization whose primary activity is the organization of a biennial conference on Welsh studies. Although we often have performance oriented aspects of the conference program, it really is primarily geared towards providing a forum for college professors and graduate students to share their research. Our next conference will be held at West Virginia University in Morgantown WV this July. You would be very welcome to attend- if you are interested let me know and I will add you to our mailing list for registration materials.

As it happens, I also serve as the Executive Director of the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association, which I think has more direct relevance to your project. Organized in 1929 and covering the USA and Canada, the WNGGA is the largest Welsh organization in North America. Its primary activity is the annual North American Festival of Wales which is held in a different city each year over the Labor Day weekend. The 2004 festival will take place in Buffalo, New York. This is a four day festival featuring some of the foremost musicians and choirs from Wales, a seminar series, marketplace, eisteddfod (choral, solo, storytelling, literary competitions) and the annual National Gymanfa Ganu (congregational Welsh hymn singing festival). The WNGGA also has a publishing program (we publish various hymnals, including a phonetic version for those working on Welsh pronunciation, and a folk song book) and a scholarship/grants program.

Of most direct interest to your project, the WNGGA's scholarship/grant program provides funding for projects that focus on Welsh culture. The size of the grants vary, but typically grants are for \$1,000. Requirements and an application can be had from the chair of the scholarship/grant committee is Myfanwy Davies (buck@eisa.com).

I would encourage you to attend the 2004 NAFOW Buffalo. In addition to all the Welsh culture to be had, it is a great place to make contacts and to spread the word regarding your project. If you are interested in attending, please send an email with your contact info to wngga@comcast.net and request information on NAFOW 2004.

If you are planning on instructing a youth choir in Welsh music in preparation for your event, I would also encourage you to consider participation in the NAFOW eisteddfod either in 2004 or 2005, as there will be choral competitions for youth choirs. We are keen to have more youth participate in our festival and I am sure your group would receive a very warm welcome. As it happens, the chair of NAFOW 2004 is Myfanwy Davies, so she could be contacted for more information on the eisteddfod as well as the grants program.

I look forward to learning more about your project.

Yours truly,
John S. Ellis

-----Original Message-----

From: PennsburySings@██████████ [mailto:PennsburySings@██████████]
Sent: Wednesday, January 21, 2004 9:48 PM
To: Ellis, John
Subject: welsh music festival

Hello!

My name is James Moyer, and I am the Vocal Music Coordinator for the Pennsbury School District in Bucks County, PA. In April 2005 we will be hosting a **FESTIVAL OF WELSH MUSIC**. This will be a multi-day event featuring concerts with choirs, soloists, instrumental ensembles, guest musicians from Wales, workshop with Welsh composers and conductors, and a variety of Welsh cultural activities mixed with music.

I am interested in information from your organization - and would like to discuss our festival with you at your leisure. Please contact me at the information below.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

James D. Moyer
Director of Choral Activities
Coordinator of Vocal/Choral Music K-12
Pennsbury School District
[REDACTED]
Fairless Hills, PA 19030
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[PennsburySim](#) [REDACTED]

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From: "Ellis, John" <ellis[REDACTED].edu>
To: <WNGG[REDACTED]>
Subject: FW: pennsbury welsh music festival
Date: Thu, 22 Jan 2004 13:44:23 -0500

-----Original Message-----

From: Pennsbury School District [mailto:Pennsbury[REDACTED].edu]
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2004 1:34 PM
To: Ellis, John
Subject: Re: pennsbury welsh music festival

Dear Mr. Ellis:

Thank you so very much for your prompt reply to my inquiry. The information you sent is very valuable, and I thank you for the additional contact information.

This past year we held the **PENNSBURY BERNSTEIN FESTIVAL**. It was a three day event celebrating the vocal/choral music of Maestro Leonard Bernstein. The Maestro's son Alexander was our guest of honor at the festival. This three day event brought together over 600 high school musicians, the local community chorus of 100, and a handful of local and student instrumentalists. It was a great success - and we want to plan something for the next academic year (2004-05). With not wanting to set a precedent of "*What composer will the festival be this year??*" we have decided to focus on the music of a particular region - and we have chosen Wales!

Being of Welsh descent (and a lot of other things as well - I am somewhat of a mutt but have a lot of EVANS blood in me!) I have a passion for Welsh music. As a child I grew up in the Pocono Boy Singers out of East Stroudsburg, PA and have very fond memories of singing the music of Arwel Hughes - and wonderful memories of singing in a Welsh Music Festival at East Stroudsburg State College in the early-mid 1970's under the baton of Maestro Owain Arwel Hughes - the composer's son. We also on numerous occasions went to Scranton, PA to sing for various events hosted by the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association. In fact I still have my "*Favorite Welsh and English Hymns and Melodies*" book from these events.

After the success of our Bernstein Festival - our band director (also a Welshman) wanted to get on board with this next festival - so our student impact has increased by adding the instrumental music department at Pennsbury High School.

Our long range plan is to have a 3 - 5 day event. We would like to close the festival with a performance of "*Dewi Sant*" by Arwel Hughes - hoping we can bring in guest conductor Owain Arwel Hughes, the composers son who is conductor of the Welsh BBC Orchestra, and Welsh tenor Timothy Richards as soloist. We also hope to bring in a Welsh Composer Meuryn Hughes, grandson of the composer and nephew to Owain, and to commission him to write a piece for our festival. Meuryn will also do workshops with our composition students at Pennsbury HS, and Owain will offer conducting workshops in addition to conducting the final concert. We also hope to secure the Bryn Athyn Cathedral in Bryn Athyn, PA (about 15 miles from our school) for a performance of Welsh Hymns during the festival (it would be hard to do such a sacred hymn singing program in our school - and it is a marvelous space in which to sing!!!). Also planned are a concert of Welsh band/instrumental music - and a program of Welsh song and story telling that will be geared towards one of our Elementary grade levels. We also hope to display Welsh artwork and visual arts at all concerts during the festival. All in all, we hope to impact some 1,500+ students directly in our Festival of Welsh Music. We would also be very interested in showcasing a Welsh choir that may be touring the US at this time. Meuryn Hughes is following this up for me in Wales right now. We are able to provide housing, meals, etc...while they would be visiting with us for the festival. We are meeting in Cardiff in July to hopefully iron out details if this is a possibility.

Since we are a public school, I have some seed money - but am now in the process of raising funds for this event. I have contacted Myfanwy Davies about a grant application - that information is very helpful. Thank you. Several businesses helped to support our festival this past year - and with its great success I am hoping for more support from the community this coming year.

I have also contacted WNGGA about attending the NAFOW 2004. I think that myself, along with some of my music staff, will try to attend this festival in September. It would be great to network and get some folks interested in our festival set for April 2005.

Our band and choral departments hope that this festival will produce a joint choral/band tour to Wales in the 2005-06 academic year. Hence, maybe an exchange with ensembles of Owain's or a Welsh Choir that may sing at our festival. Also the possibility of singing under the baton of Owain Arwel Hughes while in Wales has been discussed as well.

Again, **MANY** thanks for all of your information and help. Please keep in touch.

Sincerely,

Jim Moyer

James D. Moyer
Director of Choral Activities
Coordinator of Vocal/Choral Music K-12
Pennsbury School District
[REDACTED] Hood Boulevard
Fairless Hills, PA 19030
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[PennsburySing](#) [REDACTED]

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