

Meirion Jones, the conductor, is also a renowned April 18, 1979 Cymantwedd
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Welsh National four years ago. He told me, while having our meeting
but once again he has been called upon to direct the Gymanfa
Gann at the Welsh National Eisteddfod of Wales in Caerdydd this year.

Dear Jack:

Many thanks for your kind letter, and I am sure you will notify me when
the new Gymanfa Gann Books are ready for sale.

You mentioned Glyn Jones in your letter. Yes, I have known Glyn since
the thirties in New York. We used to pal around together. The last
time I saw you was at a party given by Glyn at the National Gymanfa
Gann in Salt Lake City. How the time does fly by so rapidly.

Enclosed you will find a few credits of this marvelous Welsh Male
Voice Choir, Cor y Brythoniaid, and it is self explanatory. However,
I would like to explain a little further regarding the choir.

Mr. Meirion Jones, the conductor, and a Mr. Geraint Jones, a member
of the choir, spent a couple days in San Francisco last week with
representatives of Kaiser Aluminum, who have pledged to help them
in all their publicity etc. Seems Kaiser has a company in Wales,
and are anxious to see this choir come to the United States. A
committee of Welsh people was formed in San Francisco to meet with
them, and from all indications they were quite anxious to have the
choir perform in the Bay Area.

We also formed a committee here in Los Angeles, and met with the
same representatives, and I am glad to report that we all feel the
same, and thought it would be something outstanding to listen to
this marvelous choir. They are contemplating coming over in 1980.

I suppose you are wondering why I am writing to you so early. Well
the choir has already heard of your plans regarding having a Gymanfa
Gann in Vancouver.

What an experience it would be for all of us to hear this Welsh Male
Voice Choir of 90 members putting on a concert prior to the Gymanfa
Gann, and having all of them singing as well at the Gymanfa itself,
nothing would be more thrilling!

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Welsh National four years ago. He told me, while having our meeting
here, that once again he has been called upon to direct the Gymanfa
Gann at the Welsh National Eisteddfod of Wales in Caernarfon this year.

I thought perhaps you and your committee could consider the feasibility
of this venture, to have the "Cor Brythoniaid" put on a concert at
the Vancouver National in September of 1980, and perhaps have Meirion
Jones direct the Gymanfa Gann there as well. You have plenty of time
to think about it Jack, but I would greatly appreciate it if you
could submit the matter to the National Gymanfa Gann Committee for
consideration in the near future.

Trust you and the family are in good health as we are here at the
present.

With kindest regards and thanking you for any assistance you can
give in this matter.

Sincerely,

Gwyn Thomas

COR MEIBION

Y BRYTHONIAID

MALE VOICE CHOIR

Arweinydd / Conductor : MEIRION JONES

Llywydd / President Dr. GWYN THOMAS

Cyfeilydd / Accompanist Mrs. JENNIE M. ELLIS

Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales Winners 1969, 1971, 1977. B.B.C., TV, and I.T.V. appearances.
Festival Diploma Award Winners, Budapest Academy. Radio and Recording Artists.
Concert appearances throughout Britain and Continental Tours.

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Côr y Brythoniaid was formed in 1964, primarily as a competitive choir, and during the first ten years it won every male choral award in Wales. During that time membership grew to well over 100 voices which meant - and still does mean - that, in an area of such sparse population, many members have to travel from afar to twice-weekly rehearsals.

The Choir has won acclaim other than on the competitive stage, through concerts held in most of the large towns and cities of Britain and through frequent radio and television appearances. In 1976, as a result of the quality of their concert repertoire, the Arts Council of Wales adjudged them "Choir of the Year", the only time ever for the award to have been made. At the time, Mr George Guest, Fellow and Organist of St John's College, Cambridge, one of Britain's foremost authorities on choral music and the spokesman for the Arts Council, had this to say - 'This is one of the most thrilling choral sounds that I have ever heard...The immediate impact of their musicianship and of their technique has impressed and moved me at each hearing. Their dedication and loyalty, together with their artistry, help to make them an extremely distinguished choir.' His words uphold a comment that English authoress Gwen Moffat once made after listening to a performance - 'I was overwhelmed..Brythoniaid isn't a choir but an experience.'

Such acclaim was to lead to further recognition of the choir's ability. In 1975, as a result of an invitation from the Tungram Zoltan Kodaly Choir of Budapest and of one performance in particular in that city's Academy of Sciences, the Brythoniaid became only the third choir ever to receive the country's highly coveted award, the

Is-Lywyddion / Vice-Presidents : Mr. R. L. Bellringer, Mrs. E. Blackburn, Mrs. M. Evans, Mr. R. Hall
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Festival Diploma. Zoltan Vassarhely, Musical Director of the Academy and one of Hungary's leading musicians was suitably impressed - "It was sheer magic!" he said.

Another highlight was the Choir's royal performance at Harlech Castle in 1977 when they entertained Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 11 and the Duke of Edinburgh during their Jubilee Tour of Wales.

So far, the Choir has recorded three discs, all of which have been in great demand throughout England and Wales. It is hoped that the next one, recorded especially for their Californian tour, will be just as popular in the States.

MEIRION JONES, the Musical Director, formed his choir back in 1964 at a time when he had decided to bring his own successful career as a baritone soloist to a premature end. For many years he had studied voice technique under eminent Welsh musicians until eventually he became more and more aware of the exiting challenge that choral production offered him. It has been his complete dedication and total commitment over the past 15 years that has built the Brythoniaid into one of the top three choirs in Wales and thus in Britain.

In 1976 he was Guest Conductor of the Annual Festival of the National Eisteddfod of Wales, when he had a "choir" of 8,000 people responding to his baton.

In 1977 he was awarded the Eisteddfod's Ivor Sims Memorial Medal for the year's most successful conductor and in the same year, as a result of his appointment as official Musical Director for the occasion of Her Majesty's visit to North Wales, he was presented the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal.

BLAENAU FFESTINIOG, home of Côr y Brythoniaid, is a small slate-mining town nestling in the Snowdonian mountains of North Wales in an area that has traditionally been the bastion of the Welsh language, culture and way of life. Since the turn of the century the slate industry has been in decline and the community has suffered great unemployment and depopulation. It was during the early years of the decline, when times were particularly hard, that many quarrymen emigrated to the United States, some to California, taking their mining skills with them.

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(Come, Sing to the Lord)



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Y DDRAIG GOCH

A DDYRY CYCHWYN

4-23-79

Dear Gwyn.

Your letter recieved this A.M. thank you very much. That is the best news I have recieved in a very long time, your idea of the choir is something I have been trying to get across to the choirs that come over from the old country for a long time, to come while the National is being held giving them an oppotunity to perform providing the price is right.

Now since the Kaiser Aluminum has an interest in them maybe they would assume some of the finacial responsibility.

Gwyn as far as the National is concerned we do not interfere to much with the local committe who are sponsoring the National as far as telling how to run it as long as they with in the guide lines of the National rules and regulations, but I suggest that you send a copy of your letter to Ms Gwenfyl E. Jones-334-1844, W. 7th Ave, Vancouver, B.C. V6J-1S8. who is the president of the 1980 convention.

I shall be very happy to incorporate in any way possible to further the appearance of the choir in Vancouver.

sincerely

Jack Meadows

Jack Meadows, secretary
 W.N.G.G.A.

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