



Message from the WNAA President



WNAA President
Dilys Rana

Annwyl pawb

As we bask in the glow of a wonderful Festival in Ottawa in 2025 we are looking forward to an exciting year of growth and new opportunity in 2026. Our newly formed partnership with NAWF has given us a very real shot in the arm. We have added two new committees to handle awards, scholarships and grants while continuing to manage all of our other commitments to NAFOW and year round responsibilities of WNAA.

Another addition that is particularly dear to my heart is the recently established Sue Stealey Festival Grant. This is a fitting tribute to a generous longtime supporter of many Welsh organisations including WNAA and its festivals. Her bright smile and cheery personality endeared her to so many of us. You can learn more about these new ventures on our website.

I am writing this letter to you in mid February from my little house in Wales. Out of the window is the beautiful vista of the hills of the Clwydian Range sprinkled with snow. The gardens and woodlands are awash with snowdrops and daffodil buds are already full and set to burst open at the first sign of a warm sunny spell. I wish you could be here with me. Since this is not possible for most of you can still plan to attend little Wales in North America at our upcoming festival in Springfield Massachusetts over Labor Day weekend.

We have a terrific lineup of performers to entertain you: Rhys Meirion, Gwilym Bowen Rhys, Eve Goodman and Jess Robinson. Tim Rhys-Evans will bring exciting new talent from the Welsh College of Music and Drana.

Our venture into New England is a first for us. Springfield will surprise you with its own lists of 'firsts', among them its claim to being the birthplace of basketball. There is a fabulous Dr Seuss museum and sculpture park and a museum that provides a fascinating look into the Salem witch trials. Susan Davies Sit, our dynamic local leader, and her team are preparing a warm welcome and an abundance of opportunities to explore Springfield and environs during your stay there.

Make your reservations early and plan to join us for some good Welsh fun and enlightenment. Details are on our website.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Hwyl fawr! Dilys Rana

Register Early!

NAFOW 2026 registration is now open. Please register early to avoid missing out on the tours and events you wish to attend. This saves you time at the registration desk and it helps us plan the event if we know you are coming! Can't wait to greet you at the festival!

2026 North American Festival of Wales

Registration is now open for the 2026 North American Festival of Wales in Springfield, Massachusetts, September 2-6, 2026.

Register through: www.nafow.org

The festival hotel is the Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place Hotel, One Monarch Place, Springfield MA 01144.

Festival rates:

Rooms: \$169.00 per night
On-Site Parking: \$19.95 per day



Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place Hotel

Off-site parking is available at 91 North Parking Garage is located at 1870 E Columbus Avenue. (The nearby lot is not monitored by security.)

Room rates are available August 11 through September 7, 2026. The last day to book is August 10, 2026.

The nearest Airport is Bradley in Hartford, Connecticut (BDL) approximately 25 minutes from Springfield. It is suggested to arrange an Uber or Lyft ride from the airport to the hotel.

Boston (Logan Airport) is a 1.5 drive from Springfield. There is a direct bus (2.5 hrs) for \$8.00 per person.

The Springfield Amtrack Station is a quarter mile from the hotel. There are direct trains from NYC (3.5 hrs); Philadelphia (5 hrs); and Washington, D.C. (7 hrs).

Plan your vacation around the 2026 North American Festival of Wales. There are plenty of sites nearby for every taste and ability!

FYI from IHQ

FYI from IHQ



WNAA Executive Secretary Megan Williams

Having visited Springfield twice already to work on planning details, I must tell you how much I enjoyed each visit. Each festival has a different feeling and while a challenge, it’s also fun to see how we’re going to use local spaces and a new hotel to produce ‘the best NAFOW yet’. This year is no different as we will benefit from using the Sheraton as our base for day-time activities, but also have a roof top concert, enjoy historic Symphony Hall and the cathedral-like settings of Trinity United Methodist Church.

A few logistical points to make you aware of include the number of tours on Thursday; we are running two full-day tours and two walking tours. I anticipate that all will sell out, so please reserve early as spaces are limited.

The setting for the gymanfa is spectacular, but it is a 10-minute drive from the hotel. There are two options; motor coach transportation for \$10 and there is also plenty of parking right at the church.

Please join us as we venture to New England for the first-time for another one-of-a-kind celebration of Wales!

Hwyl am y tro, Megan Williams—Executive Secretary

Sponsors Wanted

To continue to bring top-tier talent from Wales and present a quality Welsh festival, we need your help! We are looking for sponsors for the 2026 North American Festival of Wales.

We have an extensive and exciting program lined up for Springfield and are looking for sponsors ranging from \$250-\$2,500 to cover the transportation and accommodation costs for our talented performers and presenters.

Also, we are looking for sponsors for the less-conventional (and maybe less-glamorous!) expenses associated with running the festival, such as first-time attendees welcome breakfast, shipping costs, van rental, audio visual expenses, printing, office supplies and hot water for the tea room.

If you are interested in becoming a sponsor and would like to know what opportunities are available, please contact Megan Williams: wnaahq@gmail.com.

WNAA, PO Box 1054,
Trumansburg, NY 14886



HWYL is published in the winter and spring by the Welsh North American Association.
Editor: Jan Jones Batty
Direct comments or inquiries to: editor@theWNAA.org

WNAA BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2025-2026

- President: Dilys Rana, Illinois
- Vice President: Jack Williams, Pennsylvania
- Secretary: Jan Jones Batty, Wisconsin
- Treasurer: Dr. David R. Allen, New York
- Deputy Treasurer: David E. Williams, Pennsylvania
- Assistant Treasurer: Diane Owen
- Past President: Jeanne Jones Jindra, Ohio
- Systems Coordinator: Gerri Baker Parry, Oregon

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Dr. Megan Williams, PO Box 1054, Trumansburg, NY 14886
Email: wnaahq@gmail.com Phone: 607-279-7402
Website: festivalofwales.org

US EAST

- Wynrhys Coghlan, Pennsylvania
- Joseph G. Corbin, Wisconsin
- Hywel M. Davies, Delaware
- Diane Owen, Virginia
- Margaret Pemberton, New Jersey
- Ian Samways, Pennsylvania
- Betsy Teti, Pennsylvania

US WEST

- Susan Evans Atchison, Kansas
- Gwenith Closs-Colgrove, Nebraska
- Mary Lynne Evans, Washington
- Will Fanning, California

- Stephen B. Glynn, Missouri
- Kay Thomas, Minnesota

CANADA

- Gwen Dodson, Ontario
- Pat Morris, British Columbia
- Lezlie Wood, Ontario

WALES

- Dan Rowbotham, Wales

NAWF MERGER

- Megan Sue Lloyd, Pennsylvania
- Roderic L. Owen, Virginia

WNAA MISSION

The Welsh North American Association strives to preserve, develop and promote our Welsh cultural heritage and traditions, including the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu, and to do all things necessary and appropriate to accomplish these goals.

THE CITY OF FIRSTS: SPRINGFIELD MA - NAFOW 2026

Sue Davies Sit, Local Festival Chair

The Welsh Society of Western New England (WSWNE) proudly welcomes NAFOW for the first time to New England, in Springfield, Massachusetts—host city for NAFOW 2026!

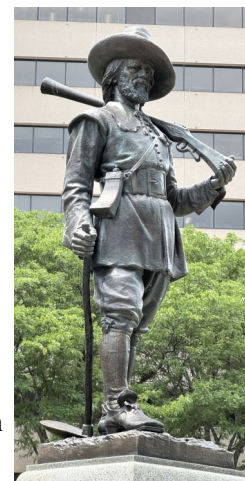
Step into history where Welsh colonists Miles Morgan and Reece Bodurtha helped shape a bold new frontier in the 1600s, right here in Agawam... now Springfield. Discover the spirit of early America and immerse yourself in the rich Welsh legacy that helped build it.

The program is being developed, but we already have stars such as Rhys Meirion, Gymanfa conductor Tim Rhys-Evans as well as young performers from the Urdd and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama with the first live Welsh language play, with English sub-titles, called Parti Priodas. We'll have seminars about traditional Welsh Plygain singing and learn about colonial times including Springfield's witches, one of whom was Welsh, blamed for many things that went wrong in colonial Agawam...



The first Federal Armory was built here, ordered by General George Washington during the Revolutionary War. The Armory later produced the famous Springfield Rifle used during the Civil War. The first Indian Motorcycle was built here. Basketball was invented here by James Naismith and is celebrated at the Basketball Hall of Fame. Dr. Seuss was born here, and there's a fun museum dedicated to his work. How about the first American postcard? The first machining lathe for interchangeable parts, the first dog show in the U.S. in 1875... an endless list. It's a fascinating city and we're going to make sure you have an amazing time here.

Join us in New England for a celebration of culture, community, and colonial adventure!



Miles Morgan

Festival Highlights

A purchased Day Pass is required for seminars, workshops, eisteddfod and Welsh Cinema. Additional tickets are required for meals, gala banquet, concerts and tours. For descriptions of each day's events, biographies of presenters and artists and cost of special events, visit festivalofwales.org

Wednesday

Be sure to attend the Welsh Language Theater and then the evening performance by Bryn Fôn.

Thursday

On Thursday, the festival kicks into high gear. We hope you've signed up ahead to participate in one of the two full-day tours or one of the two walking tours.

Seminars begin in the afternoon, followed by an evening concert by Eve Goodman and Gwilym Bowen Rhys. Top off your evening with informal hymn singing.

Friday Highlights

Seminars, worships, Wales Cinema and the marketplace and tea room begin in the morning. Be sure to attend the slate-splitting demonstration. In the evening, Philip Davies will be honored at the Heritage Award Banquet.

Saturday Highlights

Even more seminars, Wales Cinema, marketplace, tea room, and workshop opportunities. The Saturday Grand Concert features The Voices of Wales.

Sunday Highlights

Two sessions of the 94th National Gymanfa Ganu at off site at Trinity United Methodist Church, a short ride from the hotel. This year's director is Tim Rhys-Evans and sessions are accompanied by David Enlow.

Monday

Full-day tour of Old Sturbridge Village (pre-purchase ticket).

Program Book Deadline for Ads and Donations

The deadline for submissions to the NAFOW 2026 program book is August 1, 2026. This gives us time to format the book, arrange pages and have plenty of time for the printer to make copies.

ADVERTISEMENTS

If you wish to promote your business or Welsh organization in the NAFOW program book, please send your submissions as soon as you can. On the festivalofwales.org website, click on ABOUT THE FESTIVAL and choose ADVERTISE AT NAFOW. Fill out your ad information online, or mail in the advertising form.

DONATIONS AND SUPPORT

If you are making a donation to WNAA or sponsoring activities or supporting NAFOW in any way, please send your contribution well ahead of the deadline so we can give you recognition in the book.



EXTRAORDINARY TALENT AWAITS AT NAFOW 2026!

CONCERT—WEDNESDAY EVENING



Bryn Fôn, born in Llanllyfni, is a Welsh singer-songwriter and actor. In 1977 he was the first artist to play live on BBC Radio Cymru. He formed the musical group Crysbas after leaving college, and Sobin a'r Smaeliad in 1988. He began releasing albums under his band under his own name in 1994 and later recorded and performed as Bryn Fôn a'r Band, releasing music under their own label laBelaBel. He won the song contest Cân i Gymru in 1997, with Un Funud Fach.

WELCOME CONCERT—THURSDAY EVENING



Eve Goodman grew up in north Wales, and has had a deep relationship with singing and sounding for as long as she can remember. Eve writes and performs in both Welsh and English. Having spent much of her childhood feeling things deeply, music became a way to give voice to her inner landscape, allowing her to express herself in a reflective and honest way. "Music is like a portal to my emotions, a way of transmuting and transcribing them."



Gwilym Bowen Rhys has established himself as a worthy ambassador for Welsh language and song at home in Wales and across the world, confirmed by his nomination for the Folk Singer of the Year Award in the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards and winning the Best Solo Artist Award in the Welsh Folk Awards. Hailing from the village of Bethel at the foot of Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon) in northwest Wales, Gwilym has been singing in his native Welsh language since he can remember. Bringing to life ancient Welsh lyrics and melodies, his music is made unique by his own contemporary musical approach.

HERITAGE AWARD BANQUET—FRIDAY NIGHT



Caleb Nicholas will perform at the Friday evening. He is from Pont Hywel, Efailwen, in west Wales and was educated at Ysgol Maenclochog and later at Ysgol y Preseli, where he served as Head Boy. He regularly performed in school productions and represented the school at the Urdd Eisteddfod. In 2019, he was awarded second prize in the Boys' Urdd Solo (Under 19) competition — a pivotal moment that ignited his passion for singing. After leaving school, Caleb moved to Cardiff to train as a medical doctor and now works at the Royal Glamorgan Hospital. Although he sang duets with his twin brother, Heddd, in childhood, it is only in recent years that singing has become a central part of Caleb's life. He studies under Mrs. Eilyr Thomas, whose encouragement and guidance have been invaluable. Winning the Osborne Roberts Memorial Prize at the 2025 Wrexham National Eisteddfod was both an unexpected and profound honour for him. Caleb relishes performing, as a soloist and as a member of Côr Taflais. "Singing remains a deeply rewarding way to unwind after a day caring for patients."

VOICES OF WALES CONCERT—SATURDAY NIGHT



Welsh tenor **Rhys Meirion** has enjoyed international success in opera and recording, and national success in broadcasting. After two years on the Opera Course at The Guild Hall of Music and Drama in London, he joined the English National Opera Jerwood Young Singers Programme and was subsequently a Company Principal before becoming a freelance performer. His roles include Rodolfo in La Boheme, Pinkerton in Madam Butterfly, Alfredo in La Traviata, and many more. Concert highlights include The Karl Jenkins 70th Birthday Celebrations Concert at The Carnegie Hall New York, a gala concert at the Royal Albert Hall with Bryn Terfel, and his BBC Prom debut at the opening night of the BBC Proms (televised on BBC 2).



Welsh Soprano **Jessica Robinson** graduated from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama gaining a distinction in MA Opera Performance. During her time there, she gained a first class honours undergraduate degree along with the Aneurin Davies memorial award, The Mansel Thomas prize, The Margaret Tann Award, the Elias Soprano award and was the 2016 Prince of Wales Scholar. As an oratorio and concert soloist, she regularly appears in concerts across the UK, and performed in performed in New York, China, Switzerland and Italy. In June 2023 Jessica represented Wales in the prestigious Cardiff singer of the world, she won her round thus gaining her place in the Final round, a fete Wales had not managed in 27 years and the first time for a

Welsh Female to ever reach the final.

The **Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama** attracts the best creative talent from across the globe. As Wales' national conservatoire, we fire imagination and drive innovation, offering training to more than 800 actors, musicians, designers, technicians and arts managers from more than 40 countries. An ensemble of 16 students, including two Urdd ambassadors, will join the line-up for the 'Voices of Wales' concert.

Directed by Tim-Rhys Evans and accompanied by Zoe Smith; two of the college's prestigious faculty members, the concert will no doubt wow festival attendees and introduce first time attendees to the power of music from Wales.



NAFOW 2026 Seminars

THE HOUSE OF YALE: WELSH ROOTS AND COMPLEX LEGACIES

Presented by Robert Humphries and Laurel Bradshaw

A discussion of Thomas Yale and an overview of his notable descendants. Also, a discussion of the complicated legacy of British colonial administrator and slave trader Elihu Yale, benefactor of the university which bears his name, and its present-day implications.

THE WELSH IN NEW ENGLAND: TALES FROM Y DRYCH

Presented by Robert Humphries

Robert Humphries, historian of Y Drych, will share how the newspaper recorded the Welsh presence in New England, reporting on how Welsh immigrants thrived in the region, building successful careers and communities.

IOLO MORGANWYG [1747-1826]: FORGER OR VISIONARY?

An illustrated talk by Phil Cope

Iolo Morganwg's life and works are currently experiencing something of a radical review from unreliable narrator to national prophet. Phil's illustrated talk will explore the myth and the man, and his real legacy for Wales, examining in the process the natures of history and of truth.

THE HONEST FORGER

Presented by Phil Cope

The US launch of an important new book of photographs and poems for Iolo Morganwg, in the year of the bicentenary of his death. *The Honest Forger* includes poems by some of Wales' poetry greats as well as contributions by school children.

MEET THE PARSONS: WITCHCRAFT IN EARLY SPRINGFIELD

Presented by Elizabeth Kapp

Witchcraft was real to Welsh-born Mary and husband Hugh Parsons. The pair married in 1645 at Springfield's first Meetinghouse, but six years later they stood in the same place and faced the town's accusations of witchcraft. Join Springfield Museum's Curator of History Liz Kapp as she explores the world of witchcraft in early Springfield.

THE SLATE QUARRYMAN IMMIGRANT IN THE 19TH CENTURY: NORTH WALES, VERMONT AND NEW YORK

Presented by Meredith Rehbach

Learn what 19th century north Wales immigrants left behind in the quarries and their villages to settle in the Slate Valley of Vermont and New York. Hear the vivid immigrant stories that make history come alive.

PLYGAIN—A TRUE WELSH CAROLING TRADITION

Presented by Andrea Wild and Stafford Wild

Plygain is an ancient and unique Welsh carol singing tradition. Learn its history, when, where and by whom these carols were performed.

BROTHER AND SISTER: BETWEEN TWO WORLDS, A POETRY READING

Presented by David Lloyd and Margaret Lloyd

Brother and sister poets and Utica NY natives David Lloyd and Margaret Lloyd read poems drawing on their relationship to Wales. Margaret will read poems from her recently published collection, *Sleeping in the Same World*. David will read poems from several of his published collections.

"DAFYDD AWENYDD WIW NYF" - DAFYDD AP GWILYM, POET OF FINE DESIRE

Presented by John Bollard

An introduction to the life, work and world of poet Davydd ap Gwilym. Short passages in Welsh and English translations of complete poems will be read from John's "Cymru Dafydd ap Gwilym / Dafydd ap Gwilym's Wales" along with photographs by Anthony Griffiths.

PRESERVING THE WELSH HERITAGE OF NORTH AMERICA

Presented by Robert Humphries, Dave Williams, Fred Long

Items of Welsh heritage that are hidden in people's attics or, worse still, thrown in the dump when people move house, are not accessible to the wider community. In this workshop, Robert Humphries, Director of the Great Plains Welsh Heritage Centre, will showcase the work of the Centre and its Archive. Then Dave Williams and Fred Long from the St. David's Society of Pittsburgh will discuss how to upload material to the People's Collection Wales website.

SONGS WITH AND WITHOUT WORDS

Presented by Zoe Smith and Jess Robinson

An exploration of Welsh piano music and its connection to Welsh song. Piano music by Welsh composers forms only a small part of Welsh classical music, and most of it is written by art song composers, many of whom were expert pianists.

THE MADOC MYTH AND THE WELSH FOUNDING FATHERS

Two dominant narratives persist about the Welsh in early America: that Welsh Prince Madoc discovered America resulting in a legacy of 'Welsh Indians', and that 16 signers of the Declaration of Independence were Welsh. Primary and secondary sources point to only six signers having clear Welsh links, including the Welsh-speaking Francis Lewis who once referred to an Indigenous language as "similar to Welsh." Just as recent works highlight the settler colonial dystopia of the supposed Patagonian Welsh utopia, this seminar provides archival evidence to complicate the often-glossy narratives of peaceful Welsh Quakers as bystanders to the American experiment.

FORTY-THREE YEARS OF "CYNEFIN" AND COUNTING

Presented by Pam Petro

A look at the Welsh idea of cynefin, "the sudden sense you have that you belong to a place though you may never have set foot in it before." What makes us feel at home in any place, and why so many of us who aren't Welsh feel at home in Wales.

SUNDAY GYMANFA GANU SESSIONS



This year we are pleased to have **Tim Rhys-Evans**, MBE, FRWCMD as our director. He was appointed Director of Music at the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama in 2020 and is also a highly sought-after choral conductor, arranger, composer and TV presenter. After beginning his career as an opera singer, he realised his passion lay in facilitating the best possible vocal performances from others through conducting. After a period working as the Associate Chorus Master of Welsh National Opera, Tim left to begin his own organisation, based on his passionate belief in the transformative power of music and that everybody should be given the opportunity to engage in the arts. He created the award-winning Only Men Aloud in 2000, with the aim of reinvigorating the Welsh male choir tradition. In 2010 he established The Aloud Charity which runs the choirs Only Boys Aloud, Only Girls Aloud and Only Kids Aloud, in order to try and affect real change in the

lives of young people from areas of social deprivation; these initiatives have improved the lives of thousands of children from some of the poorest communities in Wales.

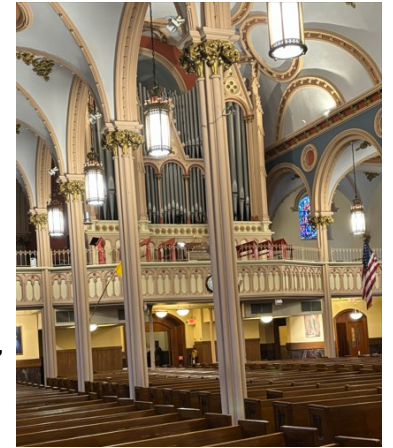
As a presenter, Tim has fronted Arts programmes for the BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and S4C on radio and television including BBC Proms, BBC Radio 3's The Choir, and as a long-standing member of the presenting team for BBC Cardiff Singer of the World. In addition to his fulltime role at RWCMD, Tim is proud to be the current conductor of the National Youth Choir of Wales. He is also an outspoken advocate for mental health issues and the documentary programme he made about his own mental crisis, 'Tim Rhys-Evans – All in the Mind', won a BAFTA Cymru award following its network broadcast on BBC One.



David Enlow, organist, is based in New York and active in North America and Europe. David has taught church music, service playing, improvisation, and organ repertoire master classes for local, regional, and national events of the American Guild of Organists (AGO), the Royal Canadian College of Organists, and at the Juilliard School, from which he received two degrees.

David also received the Fellowship diploma, with both prizes for highest marks, from the AGO, which resulted in his joining the committee on professional certification, which sets the standards for the national organist examinations and grades them. David then served two terms as Dean of the New York City Chapter AGO.

David serves as Assistant Conductor and répétiteur to the Clarion Choir and has appeared in most all of New York's major concert halls as an accompanist at the piano with choruses, solo singers, and in performances of chamber music. In early music, David is also organist of the Clarion Music Society, and appears with various groups at the organ, harpsichord, and fortepiano. David has been one of the North American Festival of Wales accompanists since 2012.

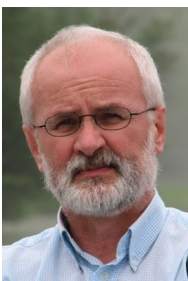


GYMANFA GANU SESSIONS



Sunday's Gymanfa Ganu sessions will be held at 2:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, 361 Sumner Avenue in Springfield MA. A complimentary tea will be served at the church from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. between sessions. It is a 10 minute drive from the hotel and there is plenty of parking. If you wish to take the bus, be sure to purchase a ticket for your ride to and from the church.

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE



Pastor **Kevin Adams** was born in Llanelli, south Wales where he attended Ysgol Dewi Sant and Llanelli Boys Grammar school. He earned his degree in Theology at Bangor University and served as the pastor of Ammanford Evangelical church for 18 years. He is the author of two books and a documentary film on the Welsh Religious Revival of 1904. Kevin moved to Massachusetts in 2004 to marry Dr. Gwenfair Walters Adams, daughter of the late Gwyn and Mair Walters and is now senior Pastor at East Baptist Church in Lynn MA. He is also pastor of The Welsh Congregation of New York City. He is bilingual and his interests include writing both poetry and prose with a Welsh flavor, studying church responses to totalitarianism while also seeking to read as many classical authors as possible. He still suffers from an infection of Monty Python during his teenage years, but it seems to have done him no harm.

2026 ANGLESEY ROOTS NETWORKING SESSION



Something new and exciting is planned for NAFOW 2026.—the Anglesey Roots Networking Session, sponsored by the Welsh Society of Western New England Genealogy Group.

Anglesey is our heritage and making connections is the goal. Please join us at this networking session to meet kindred souls and “lost cousins” with connections to Anglesey.

We will hand out a Hiker’s Guide with a map for the trek. This guide lists towns in six regions. If possible, come prepared with family surname(s) and where they’re from in Anglesey. We will divide attendees into seven “FAN Club” groups – one added for those who don’t know their Anglesey location. Members of each club will then “speed date” so that they can meet their fellow Monwys.

Geographic areas for the FAN Clubs (Friends, Associates and Neighbors) are West (Llifon), Mid-south (Malltraeth), Menai (Strait), Northwest (Talybolion), North (Twrceilyn) and East (Tyndaethwy).

Although we won’t discuss DNA, bring your DNA or GEDmatch results and ancestry.com username if you have them. You may make some connections this way. Also, bring your family tree and/or family history. If you wish, be prepared to share your contact information with other researchers - fill out some index cards ahead of time with your name and contact information to share with other researchers.

Come for the meet-up. Stay for the fun and save a smile for the Family Reunion photo. A kind-hearted “Help Team” is available!



NAFOW 2026 Tours

Please visit the festival website, festivalofwales.org, for a complete description of each tour.

Tours fill up fast so if you’re interested, register for NAFOW very soon and make sure you select the tours of your choice. After arriving at NAFOW, be sure to confirm departure and return times in the NAFOW program booklet.

THURSDAY—HISTORIC CONNECTICUT

A full day tour with lunch included. Tour leaves the hotel at 8:15 a.m. and you will visit the Old State House, which has been restored to its original Federal style; learn about the Charter Oak; and visit the Mark Twain House (first floor accessible only) for a tour, 23-minute film and time to shop. After lunch at the museum in Wethersfield, visit the Webb-Deane-Stevens Houses and return to the hotel by 4:30 p.m.



THURSDAY—NORMAN ROCKWELL MUSEUM AND STOCKBRIDGE



A full day tour with time for a lunch stop. Tour leaves the hotel at 8:45 a.m. and you will visit the Norman Rockwell Museum containing full-size paintings, all his Saturday Evening Post covers and many special exhibitions on the 1.5 hour self-guided tour. After arriving at Stockbridge and finding lunch on your own, there is time to shop and see the Red Lion Inn. Tour returns to the hotel by 2:30 p.m.

THURSDAY—WALKING TOUR OF SPRINGFIELD

This one-mile walking tour is guided by local historian Dave Robison. Tours depart at 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. The first stop is the Miles Morgan statue, then on through Court Square to the First Church; then to The Puritan, the Deacon Samuel Chapin statue.

The tour ends at the Museum Quadrant where you may self guide through as many of the five museums you’d like to see. Admission to these museums is separated from the tour price. These museums are: The Amazing World of Dr. Seuss, George Walter Vincent Smith Art, Springfield Science, Michele and Donald D’Amour Museum of Fine Arts, Dr. Seuss National Memorial Sculpture Garden and the Lyman and Merri Wood Museum of Springfield History.

MONDAY—OLD STURBRIDGE VILLAGE



A full day tour which leaves the hotel at 9:00 a.m. Tour visits Old Sturbridge Village which depicts a rural New England town of the early 19th century. There are more than 40 historic buildings, all situated on the Quinebaug River on the homeland of the Nipmuc peoples. Begin at the Visitor Center or Museum Education Center. Explore the village and find lunch on your own. Tour returns to the hotel at 4:00 p.m.

NAFOW 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

In no particular order, here are some of the highlights of NAFOW 2025 in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance numbers were great and feedback on the festival was very positive. One-third of the attendees were new to the festival, and one-third of the attendees attended five or more seminars.

OUTDOOR EVENT



Despite indescribable downpours of rain, the Thursday evening outdoor event was a great success—well received by festival-goers as well as Ottawa residents.

NAWF MEDALLION

The 2025 North American Wales Foundation Heritage Medallion Winner was David Matthews.

SURPRISE AWARD TO MYFANWY DAVIES

The Order of Ivorites surprised 2025 NAFOW organizer Myfanwy Davies with its Order of Ivorites Award which recognizes individuals and institutions whose activities bring honor to the overall Welsh tradition and heritage. This award was revived by the North American Wales Foundation in 2006.



*David Matthews and Myfanwy Davies
Photo courtesy of Beth Landmesser*

SILENT AUCTION AND TEA ROOM

The silent auction never disappoints in its collection of Welsh items—there’s always something for everyone. Revenue on the bids was substantial and goes toward the WNAA’s mission of promoting Welsh culture and scholarships.

Local Ottawa volunteers ran the tea room which was adjacent to the marketplace and silent auction.

WELSH DRAGON COCKTAIL

The ever-popular Welsh Dragon Cocktail was once again available in Ottawa. Will it make a return in Springfield?

EISTEDDFOD WINNERS

Recitation: Nancy Wright NY (French), Geraint Lewis ON (Welsh), Betty Cullingworth (English)

Harp: Sofia El-Chaar ON (Beginners), Savannah Kylie OH (Advanced), Ottawa Youth Harp Ensemble ON (Ensemble)

Solo Hymn Singing: Owain Bishop—Wales

Solo/Voice Semi-Professional: Autumn Brooke QC

Visual Arts (“Cydeillgawch” quilt): Kristin Fuller NY

Limerick Composition: Ellen Weber WA

Many thanks to:

Stage Competition adjudicators: Anastasia Llewellyn, David Roberts, Edward Morus Jones, Hefina Phillips, Mary Glassman Jones (recitation); Gwennan Gibbard, Siân James (harp); Caleb Rhys Jones, Rhys Meirion, Manon Ogwen Parry and Meinir Wyn Roberts (singing)

Piano accompanist (singing competitions): Steve Jensen

Host - Harp Performance Competitions: Katherine Crusi

2025 Eisteddfod Committee members & helpers: Betty Cullingworth, David Matthews, Danny Proud, Ian Samways (Chair); Gerri Baker Parry, Jan Batty, Myfanwy Davies, Dilys Rana, Dan Rowbotham, Megan Williams



WNAA BOARD MEMBERS HAVE FUN IN SPRINGFIELD MA



At the festival planning meeting in October 2025, board members had the opportunity to enjoy some of the local sites.



The Amazing World of Dr. Seuss Museum is approximately four blocks from the host hotel. There are many interactive exhibits—perfect for the younger visitor.

At MGM Springfield a few blocks from the hotel, boardies took some time to test their bowling skills at TAP Bowling. Winning scorer was Megan Williams.



Above right: Bowlers Jack Williams, Peter Jacobs, Dan Rowbotham, Dilys Rana, Diane Owen and Megan Williams

Left: Dan Rowbotham meets Thing 1 and Thing 2; Diane Owen meets The Cat in The Hat at the Dr. Seuss Museum

2026 HERITAGE AWARDEE—PHILIP DAVIES



The board of the WNAA is delighted to announce that the 2026 award will be presented to Philip Davies.

Philip played an integral part of running the NAWF for over forty years, serving as a board member, Secretary, President, and carrying out day to day tasks to ensure the Foundation continued. It was the personal connections he made during his time with NAWF that stand out; especially in his work to stabilize and grow the endowment, ensuring that funds would be available in perpetuity to support educational exchanges between Wales and America.

In addition to supporting the NAWF, Philip has been a supporter of many Welsh American activities; including a member of the Welsh Congregation of New York City, a director of Ninnau & Y Drych, a representative of Cymry Gogledd America at the National Eisteddfod in Wales and a regular attendee of the North American Festival of Wales.

Philip’s commitment has previously been celebrated in Wales. In 2006 he was invited to lead Cymru ar Wasgar at the National Eisteddfod and in 2011 was inducted into the Gorsedd.

In 2022, Philip was given the Robert Morris award from the Welsh Society of Philadelphia, recognizing his on-going work in maintaining cultural ties with Wales and North America, particularly in the work of giving scholarships and grants through the NAWF.

Most recently, Philip served on the merger committee for the WNAA and NAWF and helped to facilitate the transfer of over 40 boxes of Ninnau archival material from New Jersey to the Archives of Welsh America in Wymore, Nebraska.

Philip works quietly behind the scenes with a strong sense of caring about the Welsh North American community.

BUT WAIT .. THERE’S MORE!

Plans are still under way for presentations from:

- The National Library of Wales
- Amgueddfa Cymru
- Historic Welsh families in the New England area
- A view of contemporary Welsh politics
- Entertainers from Urdd

And don’t forget:

- Welsh Language I and II presented by Dan Rowbotham. Brush up on your Welsh language skills.
- Ysgol Gan presented by Edward Morus Jones. Learn the words and tunes of the most popular Welsh hymns.
- Welsh Folk Dancing

Be sure to check back at the festivalofwales.org website for a complete description of each seminar, and any new additions to the lineup.

MERGER OF WNAA AND NAWF

Excerpted from the November-December 2025 Issue of Ninnau

As of September 30, 2025, the future of Welsh North American activities looks even stronger. After 20 months of discussions, the North America Wales Foundation and Welsh North American Association have merged. The new organization will retain the name, Welsh North American Association (Cymdeithas Cymru Gogledd America).

The WNAA organizes the annual North American Festival of Wales and its scope of charitable activities will now include an annual festival that promotes Welsh culture and heritage in different locations in North America; support for educational exchange programs; historical preservation; recognition of leadership in these and other activities relating to Welsh culture; preservation of the Welsh Language; fostering closer ties between other organizations with Welsh connections in North America, Wales and elsewhere; and awarding grants and scholarships to individuals and organizations that advance the mission of the association.

The NAWF was founded in 1980, with the focus to provide scholarships and bursaries; host events that create awareness of historical and ongoing trans-Atlantic links; continue to develop a network of people on both sides of 'the pond' to support its work; and make awards to commemorate individuals who have, by personal example, furthered Welsh-American relations.

The WNAA, formerly the Welsh National Gymanfa Ganu Association, traces its history back to 1929 when the first National Gymanfa Ganu was held on Goat Island in Niagara Falls. The annual gathering has evolved and is now a five-day event promoting Welsh culture and language in North America.

The organizations are part of the Cymry Gogledd America stand at the National Eisteddfod and since 2005 co-hosted the Awards banquet at the festival where the Heritage Medallion award is presented. Since 2014, the NAWF supported the travel of the Osbourne Roberts winner to the festival. These traditions will continue with the new merged organization.

