



Rhif/No.37

Gaeaf/Gwanwyn – Winter/Spring 2022

On Starters Orders



Were we off to the races for our first meeting of the new year? Not exactly! However, the film we were viewing was about a race horse. The film title was **Dream Alliance** and it was based on a true story of a horse owned by a syndicate in the Welsh Valleys near Blackwood. The horse was bred by a local woman who dreamed of owning a race horse. She reared him on an allotment until he was a yearling and then persuaded 23 local people to join the syndicate, each paying £10 a week to cover the costs of training at a racing stable. Dream Alliance had a successful career but his major success was winning the Welsh National in 2009. As a result of his humble background there was a great deal of media coverage about him and the syndicate. The film starred Toni

Colette, Damian Lewis, Sian Phillips and Owen Teale. It was a very entertaining film and thoroughly enjoyed by us all.

Dream Alliance was retired in 2015 and is stabled in Somerset under the care of his groom who took care of him at the racing yard.

The A.G.M

The topic for the February meeting was the A.G.M. Roger Williams presented his Chairman's Report and also the programme for the coming year. Then Chris Stephen presented the Finances in the Treasurer's Report.

Morfydd Muir advised us that she was standing down from the committee after 52 years of loyal service. She was thanked for her dedication to the society since its formation in 1970. After a request for volunteers to join the committee, Elizabeth Phillips and Beverley Clifford answered the appeal and were welcomed onto the committee.

After the formal business was completed, we moved on to the Quiz. Sue H presented 2 sets of questions. The first required every answer to include "age" e.g. A dwelling ... Cottage, A parcel... Package. The second was based on birds e.g., Batman's partner ... Robin. A female sailor ... Wren. It was a close contest but the top scorers were Gwen Blundy & Elizabeth & Tony Phillips

Dydd Gwyl Dewi Sant

The annual dinner on 1st March was combined with the 50th Anniversary celebration which should have taken place in 2020.

The venue this year was the Hampshire Hog in Clanfield where we enjoyed a three-course lunch.

We were delighted that some past members Lawson Williams and Adele Mallows were able to join us. Lawson is a life member and had travelled from his home in Pontyates to be with us for this special anniversary. He shared with us some of his memories of the society in the early days. Morfydd then recalled her long association with the society as she is one of the founder members.



To end the celebration, we had a slice of anniversary cake made by Sue W and beautifully decorated by her daughter Bethan.



Wales: Bottom to Top

The March meeting was a presentation by our very own Huw Oakley. His topic was an abbreviated version of a noble walk from the Rhondda to Caernarfon.

This was the brain child of the freelance journalist Trevor Fishlock. At the end of 1968 he joined the staff of "The Times" with a roving commission to find out and to report on "What makes Wales tick". One of his bright ideas was to record a walk of discovery that he would undertake from south to north and a very personal, very distinctive and a very intriguing account it became.

Time, naturally, restricted the coverage of people, places and panoramas, as well as of keen observations and comic asides, to carefully selected extracts that would suit a lunchtime audience. Everyone was given an alphabetical listing of specific places to outline the steady progress that the group kept making, so that they triumphantly arrived in Caernarfon just in time for lunch.

The full unabbreviated version was given the splendid title of "A Blistered Eagle" and there certainly had been some hard-earned blisters after that lovely stroll. Huw's presentation was thoroughly enjoyed by all the members who attended the meeting.

Memory Lane

As part of the 50th Anniversary celebrations it was essential to acknowledge the past 50 years. Some of the events and celebrations had been photographed and stored in

several photograph albums.

Nowadays we are able to record everything digitally and store information in a variety of ways.

Sue H had scanned the photo album which contained photographs from 1989-1992. There were photos showing members enjoying events such as A Victorian Evening, A Travellers Evening, A Treasure Hunt Car Alley and several 1st March Dinners. There were some familiar "young" faces in those photos.

Moving into the digital era Sue then showed photos from some outings (all involving food of course!) There were the afternoon teas at The Chocolate Frog, The Alton Lavender Farm and the 19Fourteas Tea Room. There were photos of a Canal Trip on a very wet day and an unforgettable pantomime performed entirely in Welsh (with English subtitles!). Part 2 of Photographic Memories will be shared at the November meeting.

Next Meeting: 19th May @ 7.30

The Solent Male Voice Choir
performing
"Thoughts of Wales"