

DRAIG WERDD – THE WELSH SOCIETY IN IRELAND

www.welshsociety.ie

MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Location: held on line over zoom

Date : 19 October 2022

Attendees:

Committee: Geraint Waters (Treasurer), Anne Buttimore (Secretary), Gareth Llwyd Jones, Andrew Thomas,

D.W. members : Greg Owen, Ann Walsh, Robin Smith and Janice Johnson

Apologies : Richard Morgan (Chairman), Angharad Williams and Justin Smith (Committee Members)

Chairman's report

GW chaired the meeting, and read out RM's report, who was not able to attend due to a family bereavement.

RM said that he had been grateful for the support of members at cultural events and online during Covid 19. He noted the huge growth of Facebook followers, and was pleased to report that Welsh Tutors had been provided where there had been a need. His Welsh classes are continuing online. He commented on the problem with erecting a plaque on the Welsh Chapel, and hopes it can be resolved soon. He would now like to end his term as Chairman, and wishes the society “ Pob Llwyddiant”

We wish to record a vote of thanks to Richard Morgan for his hard work as Chairman,

Treasurer's Report

Geraint Waters presented his financial report on the screen.

The opening balance from 01/09/2019 was € 3258, which included

€ 2772 (chapel plaque)

St David's Day party 2020, after food and drink expenses etc; the loss was only €16.

Website hosting which is shared with the Goethe Institute choir is now halved. 2019/2020- €31, 2020/2021-€27, 2021/2022- €37

Domain Registration 2019/2020-€31, 2020/2021-€34, 2021/2022-€34

Closing Balance €3144 31/08/22

As there were no matters arising, the report was proposed by Gareth Llwyd Jones and seconded by Janice Johnson.

Secretary's report

This was given by Anne Buttimore (Full report is available)

AB reported on :- 'Wales Week Initiative World Wide'- March 9th - 13th 2020

March 10th Draig Werdd together with Global Welsh Dublin hosted a very successful social evening to celebrate St. David's Day at the Dome near Epic at Custom House Quay. Members enjoyed food, drink, and were treated to music from the Dublin Welsh Male voice choir, and from Ann Jones Walsh on the harp. There were also readings- GW, and Welsh language lessons- RM. A raffle was held too.

March 11th At the Epic Museum (CHQ), Eluned Morgan AM (Welsh minister for International Relations for Wales and the Welsh language) hosted an evening to celebrate a taste of Wales and Welsh Culture. Over food and drink, guests enjoyed a film of The Other voices festival in Cardigan, Singer Kizzy Crawford, and special guests Philip King and Radio 1 DJ, Huw Stephens. DW committee members were invited and very much enjoyed the event.

No other events were held that week because of the emergence of Covid 19.

November 2020 A successful Welsh Conversation hour was held over zoom , with people tuning in from different parts of Ireland. This Conversational hour was repeated in January 2021.

March 1st 2021 St David's Day celebrations on zoom, with Children's Art competition, a Welsh quiz, music videos, readings etc;. All enjoyed by many Welsh people around the country and ended with the singing of the National Anthem,

July 2022 (Gareth Llwyd Jones added that many members had attended Adam Price's (head of Plaid Cymru) talk in Dublin either at the venue or online.

No other formal events have been held since then.

AB stated that she wished to stand down as Secretary after this year.

As there were no other matters arising, the report was proposed by Greg Owen, and seconded by Ann Walsh.

St. David's Day 2023 (Wednesday)

GW wondered whether there was anyone interested in a formal dinner, but were they more in favour of something more informal these days.

It was generally thought that it was good to keep up the link to the Welsh Government office, and AT is in touch with Rhiannon Evans (External Relations Manager with the Welsh Government). AT will get in touch with Rhiannon to ask her to inform us if there are any events planned that we could link up with for March 2023.

AT felt that there was a lack of interest out there to attend an AGM and members would prefer a casual arrangement, and for St. David's Day preferably meeting in person for a drink or a meal, again on a casual basis. GO suggested O'Shea's as a possible venue.

? Talks included with the evening. Two were mentioned :-

AT said that Mike Ruddock came over from Wales to see his family in Dublin, and would be happy to give a talk, but wondered whether we would get the numbers. There is a need to be flexible.

AW said that Elinor Bennett Owen (Welsh Harpist) comes over to Ireland quite a lot and would be happy to give a talk about Early Irish Harpers going over to Wales, and how the music travelled. There is a strong link of Harpers from the School of Music in Dublin, with the Harpers in Caernarvon.

GW wondered whether these talks could be incorporated in separate social functions.

Bethel Chapel

GLIJ said that sadly there were no updates on the sale of the chapel. The main problem is the bad condition of the walls of the chapel, making it impossible for the County Council to erect the plaque, Many Draig Werdd members have contributed to this plaque.

RS said that there is an obligation by the owners to protect the building and it would be worthwhile investigating this with the County Council re: monitoring the condition of the building, and restoring its character. GLIJ and GW will again approach the CC regarding all of this.

JJ mentioned that Huw Edwards (broadcaster) was very interested in Old Welsh Chapels. It was suggested that someone could possibly tweet him about Bethel, or put it up on his web page.

Future of the Society

GW queried whether there was enough interest for a formal committee, and would there be enough people to form a new committee. Maybe it should be disbanded in favour of an

informal society, as new blood is needed on the committee. In order to do this, an EGM should be called with a proposal to either disband, or elect a new committee. If it is disbanded, Trustees would have to be appointed to take over the Bank account containing the plaque money etc; It would be important to keep the website going. There are over 450 Facebook members at the moment ,which would continue.

It was proposed to meet for an EGM on line in November to discuss the interest of members and to appoint trustees if the formal committee is disbanded.

GW will put a wording out about the proposed EGM on Facebook and in an email to members.

It was proposed by GW that the present committee would stay on until after the November EGM. This was agreed and approved, and seconded by GLIJ.

Any other Business

GLIJ said that the Dublin Welsh Male voice choir was doing well with concerts etc; but could always do with more choir members. They now have a new conductor- Mary Walsh.

As there was no other business, the meeting was ended by Geraint Waters (acting Chairman) at 9.45pm.

Anne Buttimore October 19th 2022