

# The Cambrian



A Publication of the Welsh Society of Fredericksburg VA Inc.

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A 501c3 organization

**We Are Still Here**

**April/Ebrill 2019**

**Rydyn Ni Yma O Hyd**

## **April Meeting**

Our next meeting will be Sunday, April 14th in Faulkner Hall at St. George's church in Fredericksburg from 7:30-9 PM

## **Welsh Festival**

Scott Harris confirmed that UMW officials decided to move Parents' Weekend to the first Saturday in October (the 5th) permanently. Scott was not consulted, just informed. How this will affect vendors, entertainment etc. for the Festival is still unclear and Jeanette and the committee are working on the problem now

## **Wales wins Grand Slam**

Wales captain Alun Wyn Jones has been unveiled as the 2019 Six Nations Player of the Championship.

The experienced secondrow captained his side to their first Grand Slam since 2012.

Before going to a public vote, a shortlist of six players - four Welsh and two English - were chosen by a panel of rugby writers and broadcasters from across the six participating countries. Along with the Welsh lock, they was Hadleigh Parkes, Josh Adams, Liam Williams, and English duo Jonny May and Tom Curry.

Jones led his country to a first Six Nations title for six years, while Wales climbed to second in the world rankings behind New Zealand.

He also became only the fourth Wales player to win three Six Nations Grand Slams, following Ryan Jones, Gethin Jenkins and Adam Jones.

On receiving the award he said: "I'm very flattered. For me as the captain, it's a validation of what we've done as a squad throughout the campaign. To be up there as a nominee with three other Welsh players and two outstanding players from England would have been more than enough and I'm very grateful to the people who have taken the time to vote."

It's not all been good news for Jones however, he sustained knee-ligament damage during last weekend's Grand Slam winning match against Ireland, while his team-mate George North broke two bones in his hand during the 25-7 victory.

Both players' regional team the Ospreys confirmed their injuries, although they have not ruled out Jones and North being back for the Pro14 clash against Cardiff Blues on April 27th. Wing North went off early in Wales' Six Nations title-clinching victory at the Principality Stadium, but player of the tournament Jones continued after receiving first-half treatment.

The Ospreys' final regular-season game is against the Blues, although they still have a chance of securing a title play-off place.

Wales, meanwhile, do not play again until August 11th, when they face England at Twickenham in a World Cup warm-up match.

In a statement, the Ospreys said: "Alun Wyn suffered knee-ligament damage last weekend and is currently rehabbing."

“He won’t travel to South Africa with the squad at the start of April (the Ospreys face league games against the Cheetahs and Southern Kings), but at this stage we haven’t ruled him out of the game against Cardiff Blues.

“George fractured two metacarpals in his left hand early in the Ireland match.

“Having seen a specialist this week, he needs time for the bones to heal, but we are optimistic about the potential for him to be involved on judgement day (against the Blues).”

### **Minister for culture attempted to stop ‘Welsh essential’ advert for head of National Library**

A Welsh Government Minister is under fire after trying to stop the job of National Librarian being advertised as requiring Welsh language skills.

90% of the National Library’s staff in Aberystwyth speak Welsh and the body works internally through the medium of the language.

In a response to a freedom of information request from Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg, it was revealed that an official noted in an internal note in October last year that Minister Dafydd Elis-Thomas was ‘adamant’ that the post of National Librarian should not be advertising with Welsh speaking as an essential skill. The civil servant added that he feared “it could prompt a damaging public row”, given that the Library was determined to make Welsh a requirement.

After asking the Minister again, another official said that Culture Minister Dafydd Elis-Thomas had said “this [post] should not be advertised as Welsh essential. He wants to attract the broadest field possible”.

In the end, the National Library President, Rhodri Glyn Thomas, ignored the pressure from the Minister to drop the requirement that candidates should be able to work in Welsh.

But the civil servant responded by warning the Library that they shouldn’t do that as the Minister would be “very unhappy” and “it could make things more difficult in terms of other

National Library issues on which they are hoping to secure our support (e.g. the Broadcasting Archive)”.

Another civil servant noted: “Hopefully this won’t be another Sport Wales situation but...”

Welsh speaker Pedr ap Llwyd was appointed to the role in December.

### **‘Disgrace’**

Responding to the news, Bethan Williams from Cymdeithas yr Iaith commented:

“The Minister’s behaviour is a disgrace, and it raises many serious questions that need answering. The National Library is one of those very few organisations which works internally through the medium of Welsh. If the Welsh language is to thrive, we need more of these types of bodies, not fewer.

“Appointing someone who doesn’t speak Welsh to the role would significantly undermine the status of Welsh and the language of work in the Library.

“That’s why it’s very concerning that the Government Minister has gone out of his way to intentionally threaten the Welsh language in this way. It also appears that the Minister has acted inappropriately in dealing with an independent body.

“The suggestion that making the language a condition in a job description would restrict the standard of candidates is insulting and seriously mistaken.

“In a body that uses Welsh as the main language of work, it’s obvious that someone who’s not Welsh speaking could not manage and lead the organisation.

“More generally, the Welsh Government has a very poor record when it comes to increasing the internal use of the Welsh language in the civil service and other public bodies. Creating and protecting Welsh language jobs and ensuring that more bodies work through the language is essential in order to reach the million Welsh speakers.

“We congratulate the National Library, and its President in particular, on standing up against the Minister’s inappropriate pressure on them

to undermine the use of Welsh. It's likely that there wouldn't be many other bodies that would have firm enough leadership to reject the Government's efforts.

### **Llangollen priest to bless beer for 'real ale train'**

A real ale steam train event will boast the holiest beer after it is blessed by a priest.

Llangollen Group of Churches' priest-in-charge Father Lee Taylor will say a prayer and splash holy water before the Llangollen Railway Real Ale Train departs.

Fr Taylor said the tradition of blessing beer can be traced back to 6th Century monks.

As a beer fan and former publican, he hopes to bring the practice back.

"It's totally fun and something quite different," Fr Taylor said.

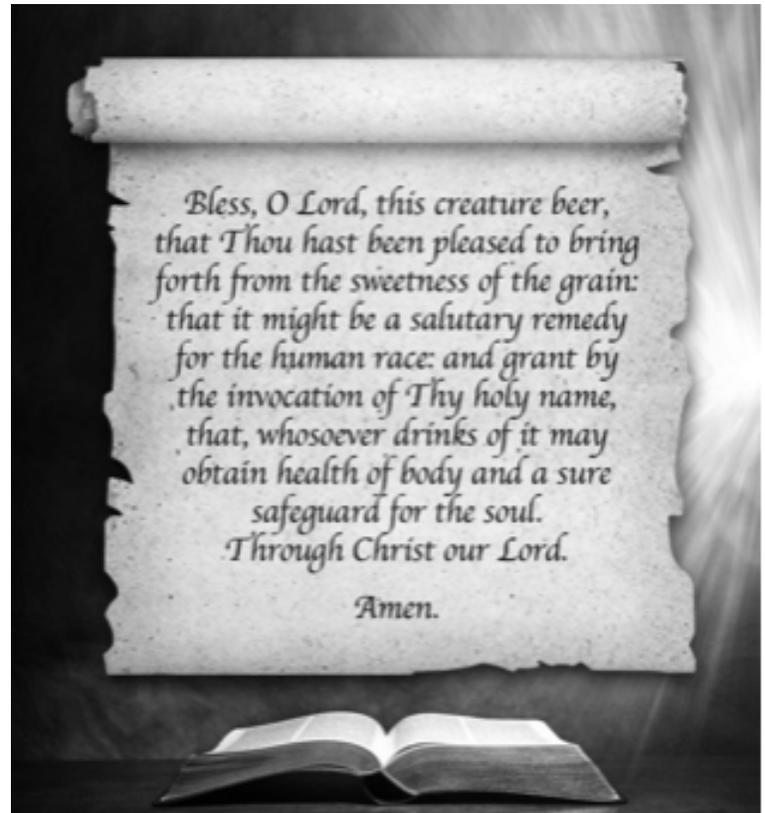
"Here in Llangollen we've got a heritage steam train and it's quite popular with tourists and three times a year they have a real ale train, which I'm quite interested in because I do love real ale.

"What I'm going to be doing is blessing the beer in a ceremony that goes back centuries before it sets off."

Fr Taylor said his mother was a publican, and he had always played piano in pubs and helped behind the bar.

"My background was pubs before I became a priest," he said.

"The church has always blessed things, Sunday morning we bless beer and wine. The church is central to the community and the way the church responded and celebrated the community was to offer blessings for things."



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