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Incorporating Y DRYCH™

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Cole Cymru performs a concert in the Teatro Saponi, Telre, Patagonia, Argentina, under the direction of Mari Morgan. Cole Menedigol de Telre (The Municipal Choir of Telre) also performed at the October 23rd event. Story on page 12.



Mari Davies accepts the Bardic Chair at the Chelva Barddod in representation of the poet 'Gwanidol', Bardic name of Graham Williams. Abercromby, Rhys, who was awarded the Chair for his winning poem 'Rhyd', Mr. Williams was unable to attend from Wales, but was ably represented by Mr. MacDonald, who himself had won the Chair in 1972 and 1973, but had not been present at either ceremony. Photo by courtesy of TV Regional. Story on page 18.

## The National Eisteddfod

My English Chyd  
For the third time within my memory the Eisteddfod visited Cardiff our capital city. I was born in 1952 when I became a grandchild of the late Donald of Bards and again in 1972 when the crowd's disappointment at hearing that the Chair was being withheld was studied by the playing of Sir Donald's. Commended by the Welsh.

I have been saying one of the poems that it is a real sign of things when one visits the Eisteddfod in the main place for the second time. This year was my third visit to Cardiff but I decided to keep it quiet. I was a lovely setting this year on the banks of the river Tŷ and I spent two days of horseless riding, we were able to enjoy the music. Considering that we have just experienced the worst August in living memory.

My sister and I were staying with a cousin in Skidmore, a charming area of Cardiff originally built as a garden village and where many, including me, did - W I Gwynedd and Kate Roberts to name but few. My

Nadolig Llawn - Merry Christmas

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## Children's Books from Wales

Reviewed by Gertrude Clancy



An interesting variety of books for readers from 8 to 12 this month. *Shawn Sheldan* was first published in Welsh by Gomer Press in 2004. Now an English language edition by the author Anwen Francis is published by Troil Creative, with illustrations by Pamela Cernigoi.

This is a story for horse lovers. Becca is nine years old and for her birthday she is given a Skottland pony. Becca is delighted to have her very own fezzie, black pony, one which she discovers has its own series of adventures. The relationships within Becca's family are well presented, including that with her brother Rhys, who is interested only in sport. For anyone who likes horses this is a special title.

From Post we have *Isabella Walls and the Knight of the Red Dragon* by Rob Jeffries, with black and white illustrations by Nicola Robinson. Isabella Walls is staying at her grandmother's house for the Easter vacation. She has a friend next door, Pily, and the two of them love playing hide and seek in Maw's old house. One day they discover a box in the attic which leads them into an exciting adventure, trying to find a pirate's hidden treasure. Told in lively language, with a bit of rhyme

thrown in now and then, it should be enjoyed by all readers.

Also from Post is *Shawn's Tail Tale (Ponies of the Past)* by Mary Madgett, with black and white illustrations by Jac Jonas. A foreword by the author, who grew up with the stories in the family, tells us that Shawn was a real person who lived selling tales of incredible, laughable adventures. The real Shawn died in 1897, but he has lived on in the stories that were passed on through generations in Pembrokeshire and beyond. To quote from the jacket of the book about the illustrator: "Shawn's tall stories have finally

lost their magic, perhaps, in too many illustrations. Jack's eye for detail and wicked sense of humor are themselves the stuff of legend."

Brystroie Press gives us *The Story of Ann Griffiths*, written and illustrated by Ann Griffiths. Rhys, Ann Griffiths may not be well-known by name in America, but many of us, Welsh, English, American, will know her hymns. The daughter of a farming family, she was a free-spirited girl who loved to dance, and was not very church minded. However, at the insistence of a friend she went to hear a Methodist preacher and found herself turned around. She became very involved with the Methodist church and began her hymn writing. This is a lovely, inspiring account of life in Wales at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The attractive illustrations by the author recapture the background of the period. When they are studied closely, many details bring the story to life. This is a book which holds interest for readers of all ages.

Enjoy your books. Nadolig Llawn, Happy Christmas. The Welsh Books Council, which can supply information on all Welsh books, whether in Welsh or English, may be contacted on [www.wbcs.org](http://www.wbcs.org).



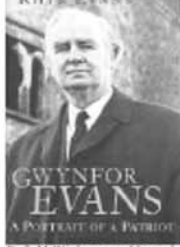
Shown here are Martha Morgan accepting the book on behalf of the National Library and Mariha Davies of Lincoln, Nebraska.

## Martha Davies Presents New Translation to National Library of Wales

By our Special Correspondent  
Martha Davies presented a copy of her new translation of *House Cyrry America 1872 A History of the Welsh in America to the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth on 22 October 2008*. This book contains valuable information about Welsh immigrants and Welsh

## Gwynfor Evans - A Portrait Of A Patriot

By Rhys Evans - Reviewed by Bob Roser



"Gwynfor: Rhag Fob Iead" was originally published in 2005 and won the Welsh Book of the Year Award in 2006. This is the author's English translation of the daunting 456 pages on the life and times of Gwynfor Evans.

In many ways this book is not just a biography of Gwynfor Evans, long time president of Plaid Cymru and Plaid Cymru's first member of Parliament. It is also a mini biography of some of the creators known as Plaid Cymru. I say this with all respect as a "hard carrying" member of Plaid Cymru. But Plaid Cymru is more than just a traditional political party, something Mr. Evans I believe there is no relation with the earliest make clear.

The original Welsh title means "Aga-Trafford". This is a bit of a misnomer with the title to the book "The Patriot". And the remainder of the title reading of the 15th Welshman Gwynfor at Agawort fighting V and who fought Gwynfor Gwynedd in the Welsh War of Independence considered "Patriot" by being the sign king. Gwynfor's heraldic a patriot became loyal to his land as And that is what the Harry, an Anglophone Wales today and on whom Gwynfor was 1 Wales was worth the worth struggling for.

One of the hardest do is to find a sense of the author's life. I suppose it is true that about the author on 6 but without success

born in Carmarthen, Gwynfor's adopted constituency, and raised in Aberystwyth. He is a journalist by trade and BBC Wales Deputy Head of News and Current Affairs. But this book shows Gwynfor - and Saunders Lewis and many of the early leaders of Plaid Cymru as well as many of their opponents with words and all. If Gwynfor was foolish or inconsistent or stubborn, and he was, there it is pointedly described. The reader also comes away with a sense of Gwynfor's hatred and mistrust of Labour was strong and the actions of his opponents in the Labour Party trivialised anything that Lee Abbot or Cliff Booth has been

plight of the farmers of Egypt I had always read that support was withdrawn in the face of "harsh" English bureaucrats. It was not so and Gwynfor suffered terribly from what he saw as a Welsh lack of national identity, of British (his English) identity rather than a Welsh one.

But of course, in the end, the legacy of Gwynfor Evans can be seen in 21st century Wales; more confident, sure of itself as a nation, with a strong policy for the language of heretofore. As the author ends the book: "From Quarterly to Chapter, there is a line to the west of that line the Welsh live, but they are not here Welsh. They are Welsh because they have chosen to be

more than Gwynfor in the twentieth century. It is not the Welsh-speaking - Christmas Wales that Gwynfor dreamed of, but it is still Wales. Wales, the nation he loved with such passion, has survived, despite it all".

This book is very detailed. It is not for the faint of heart or those who only want a quick overview of who Gwynfor Evans was and why he was important. You can get that from the new Encyclopedia of Wales. But if you want to know the man and his times, this book is well worth the effort.

"Gwynfor Evans: Portrait of a Patriot" is published by Y Lolfa. I suppose it is a good sign when books are on Amazon.com to see

## Mari Davies Is First Among Welsh Learners

Mari Davies of Washington DC was first prize at the National Eisteddfod of Wales held in Cardiff in August, in the competition *Lleuafau Unigol* (Open Recitation for Welsh Learners). The poem, entitled "Yr Eidd" by Cyril Jones, is about the growth of the Welsh language in the Cardiff area through the establishment of Welsh-medium schools.



Mari Davies at the National Eisteddfod in Cardiff after winning the winners competition.

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