

ARTICLE RE: WELSH FESTIVAL

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CROESO! Welcome to the 16th annual Malad Valley Welsh Festival! After two years of the Festival being cancelled due to COVID, the organizers are hoping everyone will come back and enjoy the Welsh and pioneer traditions featured at the Festival. Come and learn about the history of Malad Valley!

If you had been living in Malad Valley in the late 1800s, you would be well acquainted with Malad's version of the Welsh *eisteddfod*. Held in Wales since the 1100s, the *eisteddfod* is the most prestigious poetry and choral competition in the world. Welsh pioneers brought those traditions with them, and Malad Valley hosted its own *eisteddfod* – one year in Malad and the next in St. John or Samaria – until World War I. Participants, spectators, and judges came from as far away as Salt Lake City to be part of the Malad Valley *eisteddfod*.

The 16th annual Malad Valley Welsh Festival will be held June 24-26, 2022, and will include something for everyone, whether or not you have lived in Malad all of your life or just moved here or just passing through, whether or not you have Welsh blood, and whether or not you know anything about Wales.

This year's Festival will be presided over by Cory Webster, the "2019 Bard of the Malad Valley Welsh Festival." Known as the Haywire Cowboy, Cory will preside over the Festival from the decorative Bard's Chair after being led into the Festival during the opening ceremony by the Knight of the Welsh Festival. He will perform his original cowboy poetry and songs throughout the Festival.

Poetry readings and competitions for youth and adults began weeks before the Festival with judges reading over 300 poems before determining the youth semi-finalists, who are invited to read their poems at the Festival and vie for cash prizes and the first place crowns in each grade category.

Nearly 20 poems have been submitted by accomplished adult poets, and they, too, will be competing for cash prizes and the opportunity to be the "2022 Bard of the Welsh Festival" or to receive the "Patsy Price Scott Poetry Prize." The carved "Bard's Chair" resides in Malad City Hall throughout the year, and plaques engraved with the names of winning Bards and Patsy Price Scott Poetry Prize winners hang on the wall there.

Similar to the larger Welsh *eisteddfod*, music is a huge part of Malad's Welsh Festival. Celtic musicians, including the Katie Jane Band from Portland, Fiddle Express from the Treasure Valley, and Teton Skye from Idaho Falls, will perform on the outdoor amphitheater on both days of the Festival. The Haywire Ranch String Band will bring western pioneer music to the Festival.

The Friday evening concert will open with the Malad Men's Welsh Chorus welcoming everyone with the traditional Welsh song "We'll Keep a Welcome in the Valley" (with words altered to fit Malad Valley). Cathy Clayton, professor of music at the University of Utah, will give a short presentation on the importance of music and the Welsh harp in Welsh culture and then perform on her harp. Cory Webster, the 2019 Bard, and sisters Christie Oja and Kathryn Fossum will also perform.

Twenty talented young musicians will perform vocal, piano and instrumental numbers at the youth concert on Friday. Adult pianists will perform at the piano ensemble concert on Saturday, concluding with Mack Wilberg's rousing 2-piano, 8-hand arrangement of "Stars and Stripes Forever."

Art will be on display at the Festival. The Oxford Peak Arts Council is sponsoring its "Art on Main" where local artists will display their works in businesses along Main Street on Friday afternoon and evening. Youth artists submitted their Welsh-themed works of art before school was out. The winning art will be displayed in the 2nd Ward throughout the Festival.

Events on Friday, June 24, and Saturday, June 25 – Malad City Park and LDS 2nd Ward Building:

- Opening ceremony with 2019 Bard being led to the Bard's Chair by the Knight of the Festival, welcome from the Malad Men's Welsh Chorus, and introduction to the importance of music and poetry to Wales and Malad by Jan Crowther Myers, the 2017 Bard of the Festival
- Presentation by Lucie Thomas Washburn on "Cardiff's Hall of Heroes," including legendary heroes like King Arthur and real-life heroes like Owain Glyndwr, who led the Welsh in their last battles against the English
- Presentation by Jill Morgan, who is coming from Wales to talk about and show pictures of sites important to the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 19th century Wales
- A "Walk Through Wales" to remind those who have visited Wales of the historic sites and beautiful sights of the country and to make those who have yet to visit Wales yearn to make the trip
- Displays of family history trees and census information of early pioneer families that settled Malad Valley
- All-day performances by Celtic musicians on the amphitheater
- Displays of winning youth works of art at the Church
- Quilt show and bake sale at the Co-op Building, sponsored by the Oneida Quilters
- Wagon tours of historic routes on North Main and Bannock Street

- LOTS of activities in Samaria (6 miles southwest of Malad), including self-guided tours of historic sites and pioneer-era cabins in Malad Valley Heritage Square, displays about the Welsh migration, Welsh children's farm, pony rides, and Welsh pancakes (crempogs)
- Displays at the Oneida Pioneer Museum
- Tours of historic 140-year-old Presbyterian Church
- Huge book sale at the Oneida County Library, sponsored by the Friends of the Library
- LOTS of food and craft booths, including the Taste of Wales booth (sponsored by the Malad High School Consumer and Family Science students), and the Welsh Country Store

Events only on Friday, June 24

- "Art on Main" art walk on Main Street, sponsored by Oxford Peak Arts Council
- LOTS of activities for kids with face painting, castle and dragon coloring, and Welsh games, sponsored by the Malad After-School Program
- Youth poetry reading and competitions with winners in each age category being crowned
- Youth concert, featuring pianists, vocalists, and instrumentalists
- Evening concert, featuring Cathy Clayton performing Welsh harp music

Events only on Saturday, June 25

- Heritage games played by Welsh pioneer children as they left Wales and journeyed across the Plains to Malad Valley, sponsored by the Malad Middle School MathCounts Team
- Piano ensemble concert
- Adult poetry reading, announcement of fiction winners, presentation of poetry prizes, including "Chairing of the 2022 Bard", and *gymanfa ganu* (sing-along) at the finale event

Event on Sunday, June 26, at Presbyterian Church at 5:00 and 6:30

- Celebration of the 140th anniversary of the Malad Presbyterian Church with presentations about the history of the Church, School, and Bell, hymns performed by local vocalists and the Malad Men's Welsh Chorus, and memories of the Church by former members, refreshments

The Malad Valley Welsh Festival will have something for everyone, whether or not you have Welsh heritage! Admission is free although some activities may have a small charge. The Welsh Festival cannot be called an *eisteddfod* (very few

druids reside in Oneida County), but it is becoming an opportunity to celebrate Malad Valley's pioneer heritage.

The Festival is partially funded by the Idaho Humanities Council, Idaho Commission on the Arts, Rocky Mountain Power Foundation, Southeast Idaho High Country Travel Council, Bistline Family Foundation, Malad Valley Welsh Society, Hess Pumice Products, Nell J. Redfield Memorial Hospital, and other local businesses, families, and individuals.

The schedule of events is printed in this paper and on the website: www.welshfestival.com.