

Editorial

IT SEEMS MEET AND RIGHT TO US, HERE IN THE OFFICE OF CAMBRIA, that this the year the Eisteddfod was in Bala, and that this is the year when our publisher, Henry Jones-Davies has been elected to the Gorsedd of Bards. His great-uncle was the great Tom Ellis of Bala, a statesman, pioneer and visionary whose legacy is still felt in Wales today, not least through his surviving family, many of whom are still working for Wales. Tom Ellis had four sisters, one of whom was Henry's grandmother, another the grandmother of Ruth Lambert, and great-grandmother of Andrew Lambert who, with his family, has worked incredibly hard over several decades to establish the Museum of Modern Art Wales in Machynlleth - an incredible and unsung achievement. Tom Ellis's son, T.I. Ellis, worked tirelessly promoting Welsh culture and letters, and his daughter Meg Ellis has dedicated herself to the service of her country and its culture.

John Davies in his article on Tom Ellis in this issue writes that Tom Ellis developed, through the Cymru Fydd movement, 'a concept of nationality which connected history, literature, art, social values and political institutions in a single organic whole.' I feel this is a sentiment which perfectly illustrates the ethos Henry has for Cambria and his hopes for the future of Wales. Henry says, and I know many people agree, that membership of the Gorsedd is the very highest honour that can be bestowed upon a Welshman or woman, and he feels as much humbled as he is honoured to be asked to join the Urdd Derwydd er Anrhydedd - the White Robe.

There is an argument that says that the survival of the Welsh language owes something to the very adversity and prejudice that set out to destroy it. Adversity can fuel determination and be a strong force for change and endurance. We have seen this, albeit in a small way, here in Carmarthenshire recently. Our own village post-office closed due to the ill health of its guardian. It is greatly missed and its value became much more apparent after it had gone. Every morning a queue would gather outside waiting for it to open, with people waiting to pick up daily papers, post letters, pay bills, all those little The Editor with Gillian Jones at the Hay Festival errands that now involve a trip into town. Mostly it was the elderly seeing each other daily and being seen, but it gave people a chance to talk to one another and played an important part in creating and maintaining a feeling of community. We still have the school and the rugby club of course but the children no longer have anywhere to go and get an ice cream - which sounds a little thing, but is nevertheless one of the charms of childhood. The post office in Dryslwyn was threatened with closure and the community (joined by others like us) fought to keep it. Dryslwyn was a small, friendly post office serving a large catchment area. Alternatives meant a drive into Llandeilo or Carmarthen with all their parking problems. People for miles around joined the fight which was vigorously championed by our MP Adam Price and AM Rhodri Glyn Thomas. The people won. The post office has now evolved into a vibrant community shop staffed by volunteers. It has broadened its range of produce, and specialises in selling local, Welsh and Fair Trade produce with locally grown vegetables.

The first Friends of Cambria inaugural lunch took place on Owain Glyndwr Day. After twelve years, through Cambria we have made some wonderful friends, many of whom we have never met, but you write to us, telephone us, and email us. I cannot tell you how much this means to us, but Cambria is what it is and will be because of you.

Diolch o galon.

Frances Jones-Davies. Editor