

Tune Up Your Voice And Head For Venedocia!

It's Time For A Gymanfa Ganu!

by Del Gasche

In Van Wert County, it's Gymanfa Ganu time again.

Gymanfa Ganu?

Maybe those words look a little strange.

So how about something that's a little more familiar?

Something like ...

Ein Tad, yr Hwn wyt yn y nefoedd, Sancteiddier dy en-w.

Deled dy deyrnas, gwneler dy ewyllys, megis yn y nef, felly ar y ddaear hefyd,

Dyro i ni heddiw ein bara beunyddiol, a maddau i ni ein dyledion, fel y maddeuwn ninnau i'n dyledwyr;

Ac nac arwain ni i brofedi-gaeth, Eithr gwared ni rhag drwg;

Canys eiddot Ti yw y deyrnas, a'r nerth, a'r gogoniant, yn oes oesoedd.

Amen.

Familiar?

It's the Lord's Prayer ... in Welsh.

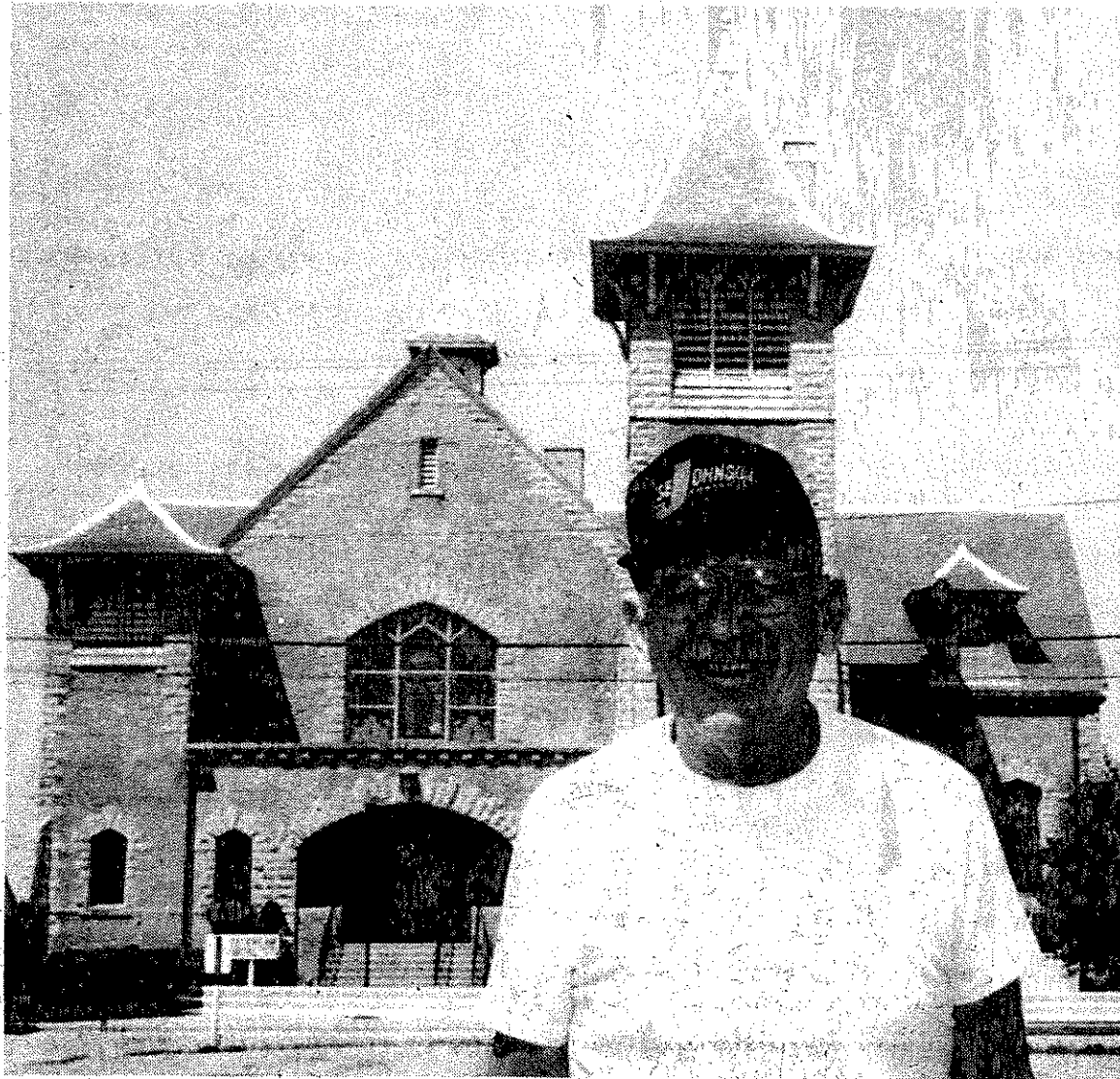
And Gymanfa Ganu is Welsh for an Assembly or Festival for Sacred Song.

But what does all this have to do with Van Wert County?

Well, at one time, there was a considerable number of Welsh immigrants there.

And even today, there are still enough of their descendants living in the area to host not one but two annual Gymanfa Ganas.

Marvin Evans, a retired farmer from Venedocia, is third-genera-



Marvin can't help smiling as he looks forward to the annual Gymanfa Ganu and the filling of the Venedocia Salem Presbyterian Church with parts-singing voices.

tion Welsh on both sides of his family.

And this year, he's the chairman of the Gymanfa Ganu for the Salem Presbyterian Church in Venedocia ... which used to be the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church.

"This is about the 50th year for the Gymanfa Ganu at our church," Marvin says.

"And I'm not absolutely sure, but I'd say I've probably attended every one 'em!"

An Independent People

Wales lies directly east of England, bordered by the Irish Sea, St. George's Channel and the Bristol Channel.

It covers 8,000 square miles and its population is 2,600,000.

It's a land of mountains, rivers and coastline.

Wales was settled in about 1800 B.C. by Iberians from southwest Europe.

The Celts arrived in about 500 B.C. from central and northern Germany and later in greater numbers from Switzerland.

Beginning in 43 A.D., the Romans made sporadic attempts to conquer Wales but finally gave up about 400 years later.

In about 500 A.D., the Anglo-Saxons spread through Britain and pushed the Celts back into their mountain strongholds.

The Anglo-Saxons called the