

## London Welsh Supporter's Club

LWSC continue to support London Welsh in many ways.

Every penny we raise goes towards supporting London Welsh Rugby Club, from the Firsts down to the Minis. We also enable live music with Rob (Squeak) Weekley to be enjoyed after home games at Old Deer Park and we sponsor Supporters' coaches for every First XV away game.

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**Visit the Supporters Club table in the Pagoda Room at every home game.**

We are always looking for new members to help out at the Supporter's Club functions. Please contact us if you can help.



The London Welsh Supporter's Club Committee season 2006/7. Left to right: Brian Jones (Membership Secretary), Graham Davies, Robert Mills, Mike Hynd (Chairman) Pete Lowe (Treasurer) Alan Hanford (Secretary) and Keith Ford (Vice Chairman). Inset: Martyn (Joe) Jones (Publicity). We need more supporters to join this committee for next season. Please email the Editor if you are interested on [throgs@zoo.co.uk](mailto:throgs@zoo.co.uk)

Join the London Welsh Supporter's Club and help make a difference.

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It only costs £10 a season to be a member of the Supporters Club although more generous contributions are most welcome.

Pick up a form in the Pagoda Room or ring one of the committee above.

If you haven't already paid a visit, make sure you go into the Pagoda Room at any home game to have a look at the Supporters Club table.

You will find an array of exclusive LWSC polo shirts, tops, badges, song-books and, more importantly, a friendly welcome.

# THE LONDON WELSH SUPPORTER



# 'X'ILES MAGAZINE

Newsletter of the London Welsh Supporters Club, supporting London Welsh RFC, Welsh Sport, Culture and Activities

Issue 5

## Roller coaster of a season



One of the highlights of the season has been the form of our on-loan players. Here George Robson powers through against Coventry. Photo: Dave Jackson

## Brighter times ahead for London Welsh?

### Supporter's Club AGM

We give notice that the Annual General Meeting of the London Welsh Supporter's Club will be held at Old Deer Park on 23rd May 2007 at 7.45 pm

## Blue Peter goes Red for St David's Day



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Now that our season is over it provides me with an opportunity to take look back at what I am sure you would all agree has been a roller coaster of a season. Our position in National one is secure and following two successive away wins this leaves us with a record of 11 wins 1 draw and 18 losses.

The season started on a unexpected high with a hard fought Victory over Leeds at Headingley after that injuries and retirement took its toll on the squad and despite an encouraging win away at Coventry in October, our season continued its seemingly downward spiral, for me reaching its lowest point in the loss to Moseley on that dismal December day. Up until then there had been glimpses of what we were capable of but too many games slipped away from us.

So what was it that turned our season round? I am sure that some of you will have differing views and there isn't a simple answer but

one thing for certain is that our loan signings made a significant impact, that combined with the return of key players from injury gave us the impetus to move forward and to show what we are really capable of.

Our record since January has been 7 wins 1 draw and 4 losses, 3 of those by the narrowest of margins. So it is with some optimism that I look towards next season.

We will face new challenges and Northampton's relegation will ensure that the bar for promotion will be raised and I am certain that overall standards will be significantly higher.

There will be new faces at the club, we are in the process of recruiting new players and of course there will be a new forwards coach, Mark Langley having taken the decision to take some time off from the game and we thank him for his efforts over the years and I know his presence will be missed (if not by the match officials). There is also a new medical team.

Continued on page 2

**The Ridgemount Hotel**  
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The Ridgemount Hotel is conveniently situated in the Bloomsbury area of central London. Family run for the last 36 years, the hotel is part of a Georgian Terrace, still owned by the Duke of Bedford. It is an excellent location for business or for pleasure.

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Continued from Page 1

There are many people that I need to thank and we should all be grateful for the way that Jon Mills, George Robson, Tom Guest and Lorne Ward have committed themselves to the cause. I know many of you will be disappointed but Lorne will be joining Bath next season and we wish him well.

I would like to thank all the players and backroom staff who have worked so hard this season but I have to pay particular tribute to Howard Quigley who has been an inspiration, he has continued to give a 110% in every game he has played, Sam Ulph who's kicking has helped us on our way in so many games, Tom Marks who continues to grow into that 10 shirt, Chris Ritchie who has put his body on the line game after game, Richard Griffiths who's has worked tirelessly and Dorian Williams who never gives anything less than his all.

Martin Jones of course has masterminded our recovery, Jan and Morlais Evans ensure that our match days both home and away go without a hitch. The ever present Pete Lowe who not only looks after our kit but provides constant support both on and off the pitch and of course Dave Jackson who does so much and provides us with those wonderful photographic reminders of our games.

We must not forget the work of the Board of Directors of London Welsh particularly Kelvin Bryon and David Hammond whose continued support allows us to compete at this level.

Of course I must also pass on my grateful thanks to our supporters, particularly to that loyal band that we see regularly at our away games.

Let's hope next season we can continue the form that we have shown since the New Year. I look forward to seeing you all next season.

*Diolch yn fawr I chi gid.*

*Peter Thomas*

## The Coaches View...

It was a season of two halves for London Welsh, but a season that ensured we remained playing National One rugby for at least another year.

Early season form was as good as I have witnessed at the club, with three wins from our first six matches. We will all remember the tremendous start at Leeds Tykes, but for me the performance away at Coventry showed the character within the squad and reinforced my opinion that our development programme was starting to nurture some top quality talent. At Coventry we asked our younger players to stand up and be counted - they delivered to record a vital win.

London Welsh completed the double over Waterloo a week before Christmas, but there had been a number of defeats culminating with the end of the year loss to Moseley. However the tide turned with key loan signings and the return from long term injury of players continues,

Things were looking good on the road but we struggled to hit any form at our beloved Old Deer Park. Although we maintained our ambitious open style of play, what was evident was a lack of ballast up front, which culminated in heavy defeats by the Pirates, Leeds, Plymouth and Newbury. I maintained the belief that we were a much better team than we were given credit for and in time our fortunes would change.

Early season injuries to a number of key players plus the announced retirement of Jim Brownrigg was always going to place tremendous pressure on our squad. A review of our playing strengths highlighted the need for some support players to be introduced to the squad and urgent talks were held with some of the Premiership clubs in England and one or two of the regions in Wales to see if we could use their pool of players to support us through this demanding time.

A phenomenal amount of players

were used through the season which only goes to prove the demands of this division.

We have used over 60 players this season. The current structure within the playing section of London Welsh needs overhauling to ensure that this great club has the opportunity to keep playing our brand of rugby football at the highest possible level. Our opposition are moving the league forward at an incredible rate and we have to ensure that we are proactive and have an agreed strategy and forward plan to ensure a positive future for our club.

With next season being a World Cup year, media attention to this great game will be at an all time high. Our opening fixture will be at Franklins Gardens against Northampton Saints. What a start and something to keep you all motivated during the close season.

*Diolch yn fawr,*

*Martin Jones*



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## The Chicago Tafia Welsh Society



*As part of our outreach programme to bring London Welsh to the rest of the world, we contacted The Chicago Welsh. We see them here enjoying a quiet night - and a cup of tea!*

Famous Chicago architect Daniel Burnham once said, "Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men's blood."

The Chicago Tafia began as an idea in 1999 after I emigrated to Chicago from Aberystwyth, married my wife, and then met a fellow expat from Merthyr at a Chicago Celtic festival which was desperately lacking Welsh flavour. After a few brainstorming sessions, and quite a few more pints, The Chicago Tafia was officially formed by 2000 to meet the needs of recent Welsh and other British immigrants to the Chicago area. In no time at all, the group evolved to be what it is today; a group which celebrates its heritage, promotes Wales and all things Welsh, and has great fun meeting for social events. Since it's meager beginnings of three, it's rapidly grown every year and now boasts over 200 members.

The Chicago Tafia meets up at least once a month to watch Welsh rugby or football, catch a Welsh musician in town, or gather for a pub night or holiday celebration.

In 2006 the Tafia held three different gatherings for St. David's day and raised money for

Chicago's Children's Memorial Hospital and Cardiff's Children's Hospital, arrived with flags in hand to watch Tom Jones play at the massive outdoor Ravinia festival, welcomed Narberth's own Julia Jones and her "Brit Bus Tour", organized five concerts in Chicago for the Penrhyn & Bangor Male Voice Choirs, helped with behind-the-stage advice and support on a Chicago play about Johnny "The Matchstick Man" Owen, arranged a pan-Celtic pub night with our Irish, Scottish, Cornish and Manx friends in the area, held numerous summer BBQ's and our annual Bonfire Night and Halloween party.

The Tafia welcomes everyone, whether from Wales, of Welsh descent, or just a friend. The majority of our membership continues to consist of recent expats, but also includes many second and third generation Americans who are striving to keep in touch with their roots. It makes for a great diverse combination, with our members ranging in age from 1 month to 75 years.

In 2007 aside from holding all of our usual social events and representing Wales at Chicago's

colossal Celtic Fest we are looking to expand and start a couple of new events, including entering a Welsh float in the South Side St. Patricks Day Parade in March, and joining in with many other Welsh societies around the world in holding a Dylan Thomas Night party in late November.

If you are ever in Chicago, please be sure to get in touch and join us at one of our events!

We offer a website, group message board, and a quarterly newsletter to keep our members up to date with the latest happenings. Please visit us at [www.geocities/thechicagotafia](http://www.geocities/thechicagotafia) or our MySpace page at [www.myspace.com/chicagotafia](http://www.myspace.com/chicagotafia). You can also email us at [WelshChicago@aol.com](mailto:WelshChicago@aol.com) for more information.

*Hwyl*

*Dave Parry*

*London Welsh Supporter's Club were delighted to donate a polo shirt signed by John Dawes, John Taylor, Mike Roberts and actor Windsor Davies, who was visiting the club, together with some song books and CDs to the Chicago Welsh fundraiser for Chicago Children's Hospital.*

## SHIP TAVERN

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## London Welsh Dragon Academy U19 Colts



*Alun Rise is the coach of London Welsh Academy. We asked him for some personal information...*

**Name:** Alun Rise

**Nickname:** Risey

**Welsh Connection:**

Born and Breed in the Dulias Valley

**School:**

Seven Sisters Secondary Modern

**Favourite Rugby Team:**

London Welsh RFC

**Rugby Hero:** Graham Price

**Toughest Opponent:** Staff Jones (Pontypool/Wales/Lions)

**Favourite Position:** Tight Head Prop

**Favourite Rugby Moment:**

Seven Sisters RFC beating Maesteg in Welsh Cup then running Bridgend close (9-3) in the final of the same cup 1976 at the Brewery Field

**Honours:** Gaining my Seven Sisters Club Badge/Neath School Boys/ Welsh Junior Union Cap/ Surrey County

**Previous Clubs:**

Seven Sisters RFC, Camberley RFC, Basingstoke RFC

**Favourite Food:** My wife's cooking

**Favourite Drink:** Reverend James

**Favourite Actor:** Stanley Baker

**Favourite Film:** ZULU

**Worst Habit:**

Flatulence, especially after a couple of Rev James's!!

**Perfect Partner:** Lydia my wife

**First London Welsh Memory:**

Being asked to help with the U19s when we beat Harlequins U19s in the Middlesex U19s Cup Final 2001 at Ealing Trailfinders

In general, this season has been difficult to say the least, hindered mainly by the lack of access to quality players for training and matches. Many of the boys who are registered with London Welsh Under 19s, range from Under 17 to Under 19, this totalling over 50 boys, the majority of them attend rugby playing schools, colleges and universities and these boys play their rugby on Saturday mornings with our Welsh Under 19 Premiership League games being played on Saturday afternoons, so of course this rendered the boys unavailable to play, hence a number of our games were either cancelled or postponed. A large number of our boys at Under 19 age level tend to have Welsh Ancestry and this is promoted and recruited through the Welsh Exiles Organisation and this must be seen as one of our pleasing scenarios.

When we started pre-season training mid July at Pools in the Park, we were having good attendance numbers of approximately 15 to 20 boys, unfortunately there always seemed to be a different 15 to 20 boys attending every session. If all the boys attended together we would have had over 40 boys. August arrived and we moved back to Old Deer Park but numbers dwindled as we had to commence training at 6.30 to have maximum use of the facilities. Training was changed to Thursdays only, this did help, but numbers were still quite low.

The playing season started at the beginning of September with friendlies against Maidenhead and Amersham & Chiltern both of these games were wins. Unfortunately, we were unable to field a side against Blackwood (League) and this game had to be postponed to later in the season.

October saw us lose a friendly at home against Llandovery College and later in the month we lost away to Bedwas and Newport HSOB. Both of these league games were competed for up front but unfortunately we lacked the fire power in the backs to complete our dominance.

November and December were total disasters with a number of friendly and league games having to be postponed or cancelled, but we did manage to get in one game in early

November against Newbury (Friendly Away – win).

January saw an upturn in numbers at training and availabilities for games, as a large number of the boys from rugby playing schools had finished their school rugby season. Matches against Blackwood (League – home win), Pontypool (League – away lost) and Bedwas (League – home lost) took place. Now a large majority of the boys available for selection came in from the London Welsh Under 17 squad. The boys that turned up, trained, played and gelled well with the older boys in the squad.

February was again a bit of a wash out, but this time it was the weather. Consequently, our league fixture at home against Newport HSOB had to be postponed and our friendly against Blackheath cancelled.

Now we were into March with slightly better weather and good numbers and more commitment from the players, this resulted in our league matches against Pontypool (Home – lost) and Blackwood (Away – lost) being played. Our league game against Cross Keys away had to be postponed due to bad weather.

April saw us almost drawing to the end of the season. We have already played Cross Keys (League – home win) with fixtures against Newport HSOB (league – Home) and Cross Keys (League – away) left to play.

Although the season as been difficult, one can see that the talent is there with our vast representative honours list. Special mention must go to Dan Underhill who made the Wales U18s National Squad and Will Browne who has just returned from competing in the AER U18 European championships with England U18s.

Looking back on this past season I draw these conclusions:

Could we have had a better season? Probably, yes, but what we did, how we got through it, was down to a core of players, coaches and management pulling together and wanting to be part of the London Welsh experience, you know who you are. On behalf of myself, I would like to thank everyone who turned up for training, played and enjoyed the experience. I only hope that next season will see us in a better situation than this season.

*Alun Rise*

## JPR reminisces about London Welsh

It was a great pleasure and privilege to play for London Welsh from 1968 to 1976. The Club and players involved at that time epitomised to me all that is good about Welsh Rugby!

I played my first game against Richmond in 1968 following the unsuccessful Wales tour of Argentina. How ironic it was that I came in as a last minute replacement for my great friend - the injured Gareth James.

I must have done OK because I kept my place and remember some memorable home games against Cape Town University and Llanelli.

However, there were still many sceptics in Wales regarding the London Welsh (English) players. I think I earned the respect of those critics when we beat Ebbw Vale in the mud in 1969.



*JPR in full flight against Ebbw Vale in 1969. In support are Billy Raybould and John Taylor. It was this game which silenced the critics in Wales about London Welsh players*



*The Occies team in 1974 with JPR playing at wing forward to 'prove his fitness'*



*Surviving members of that game meet at the Club Awards in April. Left to right: Myself, JPR, John Sharkey (captain of the Occies in 1974) and Gordon Lock*

Eventually we achieved 'superstar status' by having seven players in the only victorious British Lions tour to New Zealand in 1971 - Gerald Davies, John Dawes, Mervyn Davies, John Taylor, Mike Roberts, Geoff Evans and myself - a record that will never be beaten in spite of inflated squads nowadays.

Touring with London Welsh was always memorable. Christmas and Easter Wales Tours, Sri Lanka in 1972 and the Mid West USA in 1976 - what great memories!

During my time at London Welsh we pulled in tremendous crowds - many non Welsh! It showed that we played entertaining as well as winning rugby.

On my return from South Africa in 1974 I played for the London Welsh Occies to prove my fitness to the Welsh Coach John Dawes\*. Without doubt the only Occies player to play for Wales v New Zealand the Wednesday after playing for them on the Saturday!

**PS. To all supporters and players, please keep it up - we need a Welsh Club in London!**

*JPR*

*\*Editor's note: This is probably the only time that the words fitness and Occies have appeared in the same sentence. I played in that game against Old Paulines which the Occies won 28 - 4 though one report in the Western Mail said that it was so dark by the time the game finished that only the referee knew the score, but the truth of it was that we were all enjoying the game so much that no one wanted it to end.*

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# London Welsh Cricket Club



London Welsh Cricket Club completed a highly successful season in 2006 by winning promotion to Division Four of the Surrey League. The season was built on a series of outstanding individual performances backed up by a great team spirit.

London Welsh supporters will recognise a few famous names among the roll call for 2006. Earl Wilkes, one-time flanker for London Welsh, who reputedly packed down with William Webb-Ellis, turned out on a regular basis for the club last year. Apart from one unscheduled visit to West Middlesex Hospital, Earl has a fine season at the top of the order and is scheduled to return to the colours in 2007 despite his burgeoning rugby coaching career. Peter Shaw also turned out for the club despite having a young daughter to care for and we hope to see more of him this year.

Jim Cruise was a solid representative of the Cardiff fraternity and will begin his 30th season in the LWCC colours in May.

Chairman Bill Jenkins is the club's most ardent supporter. Bill threw down the gauntlet with High Court Judge Sir Ronald Waterhouse of Ross-on-Wye at the Llangollen Festival a few years ago and as a result the club make a regular end of season tour to Ross-on-Wye to compete for the Jenkins/Waterhouse Trophy. I'm glad to say LWCC emerged as winners this year and we are scheduled to return in 2007 to pick up where we left off.

The club is grateful for the contribution of some overseas

players in the last few years. Stewart Andrews took his 100kg frame back to Perth after three successful seasons with the club as an all-rounder. We wish him well and give thanks for the fact he was 12,000 miles away during the Ashes debacle. Kiwis Nick Mather and Andy Wellings both made huge contributions to the club in 2006 and as well as their individual performances their competitive edge was infectious.

The club will no doubt face a challenge in the rarefied atmosphere of Division Four. No doubt the standard of cricket will be higher, but on the other hand we will play on better wickets and the squad is optimistic that it will give a good account of itself.

On behalf of the club can I make two pleas: firstly if anyone is interested in playing, please contact me. The standard is good, but accommodation for players of all standards is made. And the social element is also good with accommodation made for drinkers of all standards. And the second plea is for money. The cost of cricket in the London area has rocketed in the last few years. Any London Welsh Supporter who feels he or she can make a contribution to the running of the club, small or large, is also asked to contact me.

Results and match reports as well as forthcoming fixtures can be found in the Richmond and Twickenham Times.

Duncan Grant  
[duncangranthome@hotmail.com](mailto:duncangranthome@hotmail.com)

## Supporter Profile

Here we feature some regular London Welsh supporters who can be seen at both home and away games.



Name: Pam Hastings

Welsh connection:  
 Mother from Cwmcarn, Father from New Tredegar

London Welsh Supporter since:  
 1980

Best London Welsh Memory:  
 Too many to mention!



Name: Bruce Whitton

Welsh connection:  
 Father from Resolven and Grandfather hailed from Neath and played rugby union for Swansea and rugby league for Hull Kingston Rovers

London Welsh Supporter since:  
 1992

Best London Welsh Memory:  
 Several, but in recent years the 30 all draw up in Orrell, the great comeback and Andy Lee try up in Wakefield, beating Bristol away with a late try from James Strong, me falling on my \*rse up in Manchester, nilling Plymouth away and this year's 20 all draw at Doncaster.

## London Welsh Women

After a slow start to the season, London Welsh Women took the time over the Christmas break to concentrate on improving their defensive technique. A home fixture against Chesham found Welsh sleeping at the start and the women let through 15 points in the first ten minutes. Welsh kept their head up and regrouped enough to put 10 points on the board after half time, but Chesham held firm to take the victory. A break in the fixtures list gave Welsh further opportunity to rest and the beginning of February saw the Welsh women take on league leaders Blackheath. A clear day at Old Deer Park saw Welsh slightly intimidated at the start and a well drilled Blackheath took the opportunity to run in three tries. Welsh fought back hard, but were unable to score and lost the game 15-0.

Two weeks later Welsh met with Hove. After the previous win, Welsh were looking forward to the return home fixture. The women started strongly and their new defensive system came into its own preventing Hove from contesting the game. Despite facing a stronger pack, Welsh romped home with a 24-3 win. March saw Welsh take on locals Harlequins. Having won all the previous meetings, Welsh had something to prove. Sunday dawned with torrential rain. The only local pitch not flooded was next to Richmond pools. The mud was sticky, but Welsh worked hard to grind out a 10-0 win.

In the penultimate league match of the season, Welsh took on old rivals Camberley. In the previous game Camberley dominated, but Welsh felt confident. The Welsh pack played hard and strong rucking and set pieces meant that Camberley gained no possession. The backs played well and some great phases of play with wonderful changes of pace allowed Welsh to take home four tries in a 20-0 victory. A jubilant Welsh felt they had turned a corner in this new division.

With only the return Blackheath fixture left, and lying in fifth place, just one point behind Hove, Welsh were hoping to finish their first season in Division 1 in fourth place, cementing their position in this new league. However Blackheath had a league to win. On the hottest day of the year so far Welsh rocked up to East London feeling quietly confident. Half time saw the game in similar waters as the previous fixture with Blackheath leading by 15 points to 5. However in the second half the Blackheath experience won through, Welsh put in a great effort, but the Blackheath tries were relentless and the Welsh defence was no match for the pace of the Blackheath fullback and wingers. Blackheath won the game convincingly at 41-5; however the women kept their heads up and are still pretty happy with their performance throughout the season.

Off pitch the London Welsh women showed they could still enjoy themselves with a successful round of pub golf. The victor's spoils went to Leah Morley, who beat off the competition in a "drink" off that included marshmallows and fizzy snakes! The women are also looking forward to their rugby tour of Prague in May followed by a weekend at National 7s in Leighton Buzzard. London Welsh will then take a well earned break for the summer before starting the preparations for the 2007/8 season.

London Welsh women would also like to take this opportunity to announce the step down of Maria Thompson as captain. The team would like to thank Maria for her years of hard work and dedication. Maria will keep playing for the women, hopefully for many seasons to come.

Thank you to all our supporters for this season. If you wish to continue following the women's progress or are interested in joining the club then please visit [www.lwwrfc.org.uk](http://www.lwwrfc.org.uk)

## Player Profile - Ruth Barton



Name: Ruth Barton

Nickname(s): Dewi Morris, Rootie

Date of Birth: 9 March 1979

Nationality: Welsh

Profession: Rugby Development Officer (Women & Girls)

Position(s): Inside Centre, Scrum Half

Honours: Gloucester County, Welsh Exiles

Other Clubs: Bristol University, Clifton Ladies, Weston-Super-Mare, Cardiff Harlequins

Playing Since: Aged 16 (1995)

Welsh Connection: Grew up there and Welsh family

Best Rugby Moment: Wales winning the Grand Slam 2005; personal one still to come (I hope!)

Worst Rugby Moment: Falling over during try celebration University Varsity Match in front of 2000 people!

London Welsh Women's RFC  
 Training: Monday and Wednesday nights at 7.30pm  
 Contact: via email  
[info@lwwrfc.org.uk](mailto:info@lwwrfc.org.uk)

### Advertise in the London Welsh Supporter

If you would like to support the Club by placing an advertisement in this newsletter please contact:  
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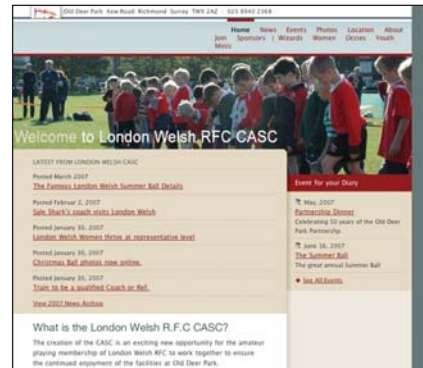
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## CASC Update

The CASC volunteers have been busy of late and we are proud to launch our own website [www.londonwelshcasc.com](http://www.londonwelshcasc.com). This contains an overview of each section, latest news items, events, membership details and a photo gallery. Check it out and let us know what you think. Any feedback or items you wish to include will be very welcome.



The CASC has also put together an introduction brochure to encourage sponsorship and donations. This is on the website along with a Gift Aid form and details of the sponsorship packages available. If you or anyone you know is interested in making a donation or exploring sponsorship then please contact us via the website.

Organisation is well under way for the CASC summer ball to be held on the 16th June. It will be in a marquee at Old Deer Park and includes a 3 course meal, wine, entertainment and a disco. If you would like more information or a booking form just go to the "events" on the website.

### Holdfast

COUNTRY HOTEL AND RESTAURANT

This 17th Century cottage was enlarged in Victorian times, sits in its own grounds surrounded by woodland and open farmlands, with spectacular views of the Malvern Hills. Privately owned and personally run by Guy and Annie Dixon (ex Chairman of London Welsh Supporter's Club. Guy not Annie that is!)

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### About the London Welsh R.F.C CASC

To ensure the security of the London Welsh amateur sections it was decided that they should be set up as a separate entity. It is to be financially self sufficient and have its own governing body and committee. Application was made and CASC (*Community Amateur Sports Club*) status was granted in 2004.

Sports clubs play a valuable role in their communities. The CASC scheme recognises this important role by distinguishing between clubs and businesses for rates and tax purposes, ensuring money is kept in sports clubs. **Please support this essential part of London Welsh!**

## Occies just miss out

Danny Griffiths reports

In some ways a bittersweet end to the season, the Occies Ones finished joint top on points but had an inferior points difference to London WASPs in the Middlesex Merit League and in a howling gale went out in the semi final of the competition play off to London Scottish, with the loss of our out half Gareth Moore after only 5 minutes being a cruel blow as Gareth being such an accurate kicker would have slotted the fairly easy penalty we missed that would have put us into the lead with minutes to go, instead in those dying minutes we missed it, they countered and got a try as the game ended.

The Vets also just missed out on Top Spot in Surrey Vets 2nd division to Old Paulines vets who won via a walkover win they took at

the start of the season, we played all our games in the league and are starting now to form a strong vets team that we hope to continue to develop into a team with its own unique identity for those of us of mature years too stubborn or stupid to hang up our boots.

All in all though another good season for a team that, although it doesn't train, punches above its weight against other sides that do. Having the likes of Ravers (Steve Ravenscroft), Pete Shaw, Ritchie Elliot and Jonathan Davies - all ex 1st and Druid players - running out for us, as well as several boys who have played senior rugby in Wales, playing along side players that have played no higher than London league and in some cases Occies only, is what continues to give us that unique mix of a great social outfit but with a standard quite a bit above Monkey Tennis (on most occasions).

There have been a few lows this season though and we did take a thumping on two occasions from a Kew Occasionals side that seemed to be a lot stronger when we played them than usual, I then realised I had stupidly taken the fixtures on the weekends the varsity and the easter holidays were on and we had many players missing, so a team made up of Oxbridge Players who were very well trained ran out against an Occies side with all sorts out of position which led to us losing by quite a lot. Not a disaster in itself but we were being watched by Welsh prop Adam Jones who had popped up for the day to watch his brother (Nathan) play for us.

The tour this year is going to be to Madrid, where we shall be playing the Spanish side of ex Occie Mike Powell, who moved out there several years ago, and we will be having one or two beers with him as well as doing many cultural visits to monuments, churches and we may take in a few shows. If there is any time then we may even try to visit one of the bars out there.

[www.londonwelshoccies.com](http://www.londonwelshoccies.com)



Danny Griffiths presents JPR with an Occies jersey and polo shirt at the Players Awards night.

## Windsor gives 'Grand Slam' stag his blessing



Actor Windsor Davies, star of the cult Welsh film 'Grand Slam' as well as 'It Aint Alf Hot Mum' was a welcome visitor to the Club in February and was delighted to hear that some of the Occies were planning a 'Grand Slam' themed stag weekend for the France v Wales game in Paris for Occie Richard Marsh.

**The London Welsh Rugby Club Choir** recently helped to raise more than £1,700 for the Shipley Church Stained Glass Window appeal by performing in concert at the Shipley Festival in Sussex. The choir are also due to perform for cricketer Ian Botham and the Leukemia Research Fund at the Royal Courts of Justice in May.

Other confirmed concerts are:  
 Sat June 9 Egham, Surrey  
 Sat July 28 Concert Cockfosters Church.

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## Cymraeg yn y Clwb - Welsh lessons at the Club

The Welsh lessons on Tuesday evenings have now been running since September 2005 with 13 enthusiastic students. Everyone has progressed from the beginner stage to a solid intermediate level in conversational Welsh. Gone are the days of not being able to say much more than "How are you"; "I'm fine" and "it's raining". The students will now give their opinions on club matches on the previous Saturday in Welsh. Opening gambits for conversations at the bar can now be "Did you see the game on Saturday" or "How was your week end" and references to the weather could include "it hasn't rained much recently has it. Do you think that this is because of global warming?"

Class activities are varied and interactive and include role-play exercises; board games; group discussions and much more. We are also following a Welsh Learners soap opera and sometimes our class conversations will revolve grappling with the plot and the actors haircuts! In between classes, many students can be spotted putting all their learning into practice with Welsh speakers in the Club. Also, the students have all got involved in helping Jo Jones put together words of welcome in Welsh to visiting sides in the match programmes such as "let's sink the Cornish Pirates" (and they were). The learners also attended this year's excellent St David's Day celebration dinner and dance at Pembroke Lodge, Richmond Park as a group and look forward to further group social activities in future.

The Tuesday evening sessions are always enjoyable as a varied group of people with very different occupational skills and backgrounds come together with a common purpose - to learn Welsh using humour wherever possible to aid the learning process. The group intends to carry on meeting and to make even further

progress. Since September 2005, there has been a small group of learners taught by Mari on Monday evening. If anyone wishes to join one of the existing groups, then you are most welcome. If there is sufficient interest, consideration will be given to starting up a new beginners group.

*Mae grwp o ddysgwyr wedi cwrdd nawr ers Mis Medi 2005 yn y Clwb. Erbyn hyn, maent yn gallu siarad yn hyderus am sawl pwnc ond yn enwedig y rygbi wrth gwrs. Dw i'n mwynhau dysgu'r grwp yn fawr iawn. Mae'r myfyrwyr i gyd yn alluog ac yn frwdfrydig iawn ac yn hoff o ddefnyddio hiwmor i helpu gyda dysgu'r iaith. Dyn ni'n bwriadu cario mlaen ac i fynd o gryfder i gryfder yn y dyfodol. Mae croeso i fyfyrwyr newydd i ymuno a ni.*

If you are interested in joining the Welsh Classes please contact Keith Ford Tel: 01932 402294 Email: keith@kewford.co.uk

Alison Granger, Welsh Tutor.



Alison Grainger Mari Davies

## A winter scene December 2006

*The trees so dark, Tar is the nightly scene,  
The bark covered moss cloaked branches  
creak and groan,  
Winter wind howls, deserted grave,  
cold breath cwm,  
Gushing ghoulis icy stream thaws  
ice-cracking scream,*

*Cold angry waves crash on a lonely ice  
frosted shore,  
The foaming mass roars tiger like  
magnetic drawn gargling into the cold  
swirling grey coal like turbulence of the  
winter storm,  
On the wet cold breath seashore  
lighthouse lit with ghostly shadows,  
Awaits the freezing seagull squawking  
filled winter dawn.*

Alan Hanford

Alan is Secretary of the Supporter's Club. We welcome any other offerings from promising poets.



Two great servants of London Welsh, Chris Ritchie and Mark Langley.

## Awards night at London Welsh

Photos by Dave Jackson

The Player's and Supporter's awards evening was held at the Clubhouse on Wednesday 4th April. The Player's Awards were presented by Guest of Honour, the incomparable JPR Williams, who ended the evening in style with an entertaining 'Question and Answer' session with his ex London Welsh, Wales and Lions colleague John Taylor.

The Supporter's Club Awards were presented by Supporter's Club Chairman Mike Hynd, while Occies Chairman Danny Griffiths presented JPR with an Occies jersey and polo shirt.

'Supporter's Club Player of the Year' was full back Sam Ulph while 'Clubman of the Year' was the evergreen Edgar Thomas. Prizes were also given to Richard Griffith and Steve Millard on reaching 100 league games for London Welsh.

The Player's Awards went to Matt Cannon (Druids), Aaron Hopkins (Young Player of the Year), Dorian Williams (Most Improved Player), Richard Griffith (Player's Clubman of the Year) and Howard Quigley (Player's Player).



Supporter's Club Chairman Mike Hynd presents Edgar Thomas with 'Clubman of the Year' award



Richard Griffith receives his 100 league games presentation



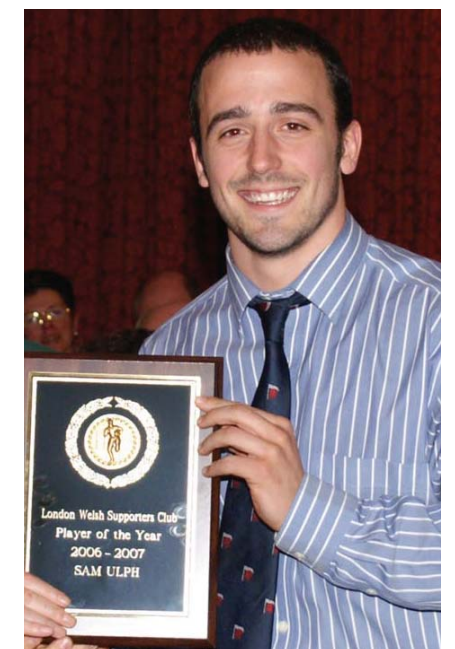
Dorian Williams, most improved player



Steve Millard receives his 100 league games presentation from Mike Hynd



'Player's Player of the Year' Howard Quigley receives his award from JPR



The London Welsh Supporter's Club 'Player of the Year' Sam Ulph

## CAFE PORTIOLI

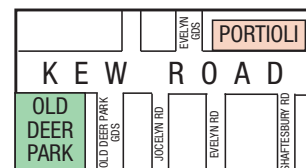
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The first team squad in pre-tour end of season mood. Photo: Dave Jackson

**Cherry Lodge Cancer Care present  
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Accompanist: Mari Williams  
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Freston Gardens, Cockfosters  
Saturday 28th July 2007, 7.30pm  
Tickets £12  
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Tel: 020 8441 7000**

## Obituaries



We were saddened to hear that Clare Evans, who will be remembered from her time as landlady of 'The Cock Tavern' in

Great Portland Street, the London Welsh West End Headquarters in the 60s and 70s, passed away recently.

Clare, whose husband Doug later became President of The London Welsh Male Voice Choir, was a member of the Dutch Resistance in WWII and she met Doug while tending his brother's grave that she and her family had 'adopted' at the end of the war.

Also remembered are faithful members John Leighton Thomas who died in early March and Lillie Mildren who left us in April.

## London Welsh Minis

With the season finally over, after eight months of training, inter club matches and festivals, players and coaches of the mini section can look forward to a well earned rest over the summer months.

Nearly 200 players from 6-12 years of age have trained and played for London Welsh this season and everyone can look back and be very satisfied with what has been achieved. The U12, arguably our best performing team throughout their mini careers, leave us for the youth section next season having finished Middlesex Champions yet again. We wish Adrian King and his coaching team all the best for next season as U13's.

The U11 only lost one interclub match and won the plate at Winchester RFC festival, bronze at Middlesex Championships. Some very impressive rugby was played this season and with a squad of 44 players the future looks very good.

The U10 again had an excellent season and will look to build on their successes next season.

The U9 had the difficult season of playing contact rugby for the first time but will no doubt be looking



*Barnaby Hayward wins the ball against London Scottish*

forward to next season as U10.

The U7/8, still playing tag rugby had a successful season with the U8 going on to play contact rugby for the first time next season.

This season was the first the minis section played with their new LWRFC shirts which not only looked very smart but fired the children with enthusiasm when wearing them. We also had for the first time this season a sponsor and we are very grateful for the financial support from David Phillips of Bluebird Construction.

The LWRFC festival was huge success this season with nearly 700 players participating from 8 clubs. John Taylor very kindly presented the prizes. Next season we shall revert to the old format of only 5 clubs but will introduce an A and B festival with over 800 players! We are also very lucky to have the festival sponsored for the first time by Knight Frank Estate Agents.

Finally, I have now completed my time as Chairman of the mini section and will be handing over to Mike Talbot next season. I would like to thank all the players, coaches, mums and dads for their support. I would like to give special thanks to Ron Holley, David Thomas and Stacey Morely for all their help during the seasons and to Martin Jones, Gerald Davies and Alun Rise. Thanks also go to Mike Hynd and the rest of the Supporters Club for their generous donation of the gazebos and to the board members of the CASC. Last but not least to Mick, Jerry and Julie for all their invaluable help.

Here's to another successful season next September!

*Geoff van Klaveren*



Jubilant London Welsh Under 11s retain the Celtic Cup

The London Welsh Supporter's Newsletter is supported by Keith Thomas and Deborah Dennison

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## Celebrating St David the London Welsh Way



*The London Welsh Rugby Club Choir outside The Auld Alliance in Paris where they sang before the France v Wales International*

St David's Day is always a busy period for the London Welsh. The week started off with France playing Wales in Paris. The London Welsh Rugby Club Choir went to the French capital to sing at the request of Steve and Maggie of 'The Auld Alliance' Scottish pub. They hosted the choir who sang to a delighted crowd in the pedestrian precinct outside the pub in St Paul's before moving inside to give some more songs before the Scotland v Italy game.

The Choir were also recorded by LBC Radio for their St David's Day programme and sang in Isleworth to raise funds for St Vincent de Paul Church.

Pembroke Lodge in Richmond Park was the venue for the London Welsh Supporters' Club superb St David's Dinner. Guests were entertained on arrival to traditional Welsh songs by Mari Williams, accompanied by London Welsh Academy player Ifor Capel on the viola. Tenor soloist Huw Rhys Evans contributed to a memorable night with his rendition of Welsh songs.

A three course traditional Welsh meal was served to a packed audience who were received by Supporter's Club President, John Dawes. Rob 'Squeak' Weekley completed the entertainment.

Congratulations to all who made this night such a success!



*Soloists Huw Rhys Evans and Mari Williams at Pembroke Lodge*



*Multi talented Ifor Capel who is also a British Judo Champion*



*President John Dawes welcomes diners to Pembroke Lodge*



*Rob 'Squeak' Weekley gets the dancing going to round off a great night at The Supporter's Club Dinner*

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*The London Welsh Male Voice Choir with Blue Peter Presenter, Gethin Jones. The Choir sang Cwm Rhondda with Gethin on the St David's Day broadcast*



*Rosie Owen and Catrin Jones in Welsh Costumes welcome guests at the Supporter's Club Dinner*



*Cardiff singing legend Frank Hennessey performs before the Wales v Ireland game*



*The Gwalia Male Choir with a little help from The London Welsh Rugby Club Choir, entertain before the Wales v Ireland game at City Hall in Cardiff*

### **The Gwalia's forthcoming concerts are:-**

Sunday, 29th April at 3.00 p.m. - St. Mary's Church, Horton Kirby, Kent. Tickets can be obtained from Peter Flewin, tel:- 01322-864054

Saturday, May 12th at 7.30 p.m. - Garda Boat Club, Islandbridge, Dublin. Guests of Dublin Ladies Garda Choir. Tickets - obtainable from Angela Coyle - [acoylebrennan@eircom.net](mailto:acoylebrennan@eircom.net)

Friday, June 8th at 7.00 p.m. - Lensbury Centre, Teddington. Annual Ball - Private Engagement

Saturday, June 30th at 7.30 p.m. - St. Mary's Church, High Halden, Kent. Tickets can be obtained from David Hurlbut - 07763 768 499

Saturday, July 7th at 3.00 p.m. Wedding in Pinner. Private Engagement

## The Welsh Exiles

TWO boys were capped by Wales at U16 level this season. Both boys attend Wellington College in Berkshire. Rhys Howells is a Centre and is the son of Paul Howells who played for London Welsh sides in the early 80's. The other capped player is Christian Lewis Pratt who played at Fly Half. Congratulations to both boys and let us hope we see them in the red of London Welsh very soon.

Also, Will Browne, from Hampton School, who plays for London Welsh U18/19 has been capped by England at U18 level on the Wing.

*Terwyn Williams*

## City Hall is a hit with supporters

When we at LWSC decided to instigate a venue for London Welsh Supporters in Cardiff before Wales' home Internationals, little did we foresee how popular it was going to be. This season has seen two occasions - Wales v New Zealand and Wales v England where the tickets for these events have been harder to come by than the games themselves.

Introducing entertainment in the form of choirs and soloists has only made the functions more attractive to rugby fans who find pubs in Cardiff increasingly difficult to get into.

Frank Hennessey of the Hennesseys folk group was one of the very welcome artistes who appeared. Others this season were the Gwalia Male Choir and Cor Meibion De Cymru.

The London Welsh Supporter's Club is committed to bringing hospitality to fans not only in Cardiff but also at Old Deer Park after all London Welsh Home games.

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