

# The Welsh Language Project in Chubut

## Annual Report 2019



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***Academic Monitor and Chair of the Patagonia Welsh Language  
Project Committee***

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## **OVERVIEW**

The Welsh Language Project was established in 1997 with the purpose of promoting and developing the Welsh language in the province of Chubut, Patagonia, Argentina.

Each year, three Language Development Officers from Wales spend a period of ten months – from March to December – working in Patagonia. They develop the language in Welsh-speaking communities through formal teaching in classes for young people and adults, in the classes of the three bilingual primary schools, in Spanish-medium Primary and Secondary Schools and through informal social activities. A permanent Teaching Co-ordinator from Wales, responsible for the quality of the teaching, is also based in Patagonia.

Another aspect of the project is the network of Welsh language tutors based in Chubut Province. Many of these local tutors work for the Project having attended Welsh for Adults classes themselves in recent years. By applying for scholarships and having opportunities to visit Wales to attend Welsh language courses, the Project can help maintain teaching standards and the use of the latest methodologies in Patagonia.

The Patagonia Welsh Language Project is a grant agreement, operated by British Council Cymru in collaboration with the Welsh Language Committee. The Committee is made up of members of the Welsh Government, British Council Cymru, the Wales-Argentina Society, Urdd Gobaith Cymru, Cardiff University's School of Welsh and the National Centre for Learning Welsh.

We would like to thank the National Centre for Learning Welsh for funding three annual scholarships to enable students from Patagonia to come to Wales to study on summer courses. We are also pleased to acknowledge the valuable contribution of Learn Welsh Ceredigion-Powys-Carmarthenshire and Learn Welsh Cardiff in offering students from Patagonia free courses on their Summer provision. In addition, this is a welcome opportunity to acknowledge the assistance of Bangor University's Department of Welsh with elements of training.

### **Method and syllabus**

The Project works in three catchment areas in the province of Chubut: the Andes, Gaiman and Trelew.

The Project also offers a wide range of courses from beginner level to language improvement courses and speaking sessions for fluent speakers. We run these courses in the nursery, primary, secondary and adult sectors.

The Welsh Language Development Officers employed by the Project teach a variety of courses including Taster, Entry, Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced and Mastery. Until recently, the Project used adult courses prepared by Learn Welsh Cardiff University and adapted for use in Spanish/Welsh contexts. The Project has now started to use the National Centre for Learning Welsh's new courses. In due course, the courses will all be translated and adapted for use in the Wladfa [the Welsh settlement in Patagonia].

The Project Committee recognises the generous and important contribution of the National Centre for Learning Welsh to the work of the Project in Patagonia.

### **Funding**

The Project has seen little change in its total funding over the years. In effect, therefore, our funding has declined in real terms, year on year, although this is somewhat eased by the significant depreciation in the value of the Argentine Peso over the years.

This project is part of the Welsh Government's International Education Programme, and is jointly funded by the Welsh Government, British Council Cymru and the Wales-Argentina Society. Support for the Project's work is also received from the National Centre for Learning Welsh; Cardiff, Aberystwyth and Bangor Universities; and Urdd Gobaith Cymru.

However, the Project's relatively small budget cannot pay for every element of the work to support the Welsh language and culture in the Wladfa. The financial and practical contributions of our partners are extremely important in enabling the provision of a wide range of Welsh language classes, services and activities in the province of Chubut.

Patagonia's Welsh Language Project pays for three Welsh Language Development Officers who work in the Wladfa for ten months each year. In addition, approximately 22% of the Project's funding is used to pay for the service of local tutors in the adult classes as well as classes in the bilingual schools.

The government of Chubut Province pays for 100 hours of Welsh language teaching in the schools and in Welsh for Adults classes. The financial position of each of the three bilingual schools is different, of course, but they all pay from within their own funds for elements such as the cost of teachers, pensions, teaching materials and so on. Some local councils – such as Gaiman Council – also pay for Welsh classes in some Spanish-medium schools. Without these additional contributions, there would be fewer activities to support the Welsh language and culture in Patagonia.

### **History**

In May 1865, around 153 travellers from Wales sailed to South America on the *Mimosa* in an attempt to avoid oppression and violence in their homeland. Their hope was to create a new Wales on the vast desert lands of Patagonia. The Welsh immigrants first landed on the Argentine coast on 28 July, 1865.

Today, the descendants of that first journey, and of the many other travellers who arrived in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, live in several communities across Chubut Province.

Wales and Patagonia are thus united by tradition and history, and the Welsh language is still heard in the Wladfa to this day. Similarly, many cultural traditions such as the Gymanfa Ganu and the Eisteddfod are also still practised and enjoyed.

No reliable figures are available for the number of Welsh speakers in the Wladfa, but at the beginning of the 21st century, it is estimated that around 50,000 of Patagonia's population were of Welsh descent.

### **The 2019 Observation Tour**

The observation tour gives the Academic Monitor the opportunity to experience and observe the teaching in the Wladfa. It is also an important opportunity to discuss with staff, tutors, local committees and the wider community to gain a full picture of the situation on the ground.

In 2019, meetings were held with partners and a number of local committees, and Welsh classes were observed in the Bilingual Primary Schools, the Secondary Schools (those offering Welsh as a subject) and a large number of Welsh for Adults classes. The 2019 observation tour was funded entirely by the Wales-Argentina Society, and the Academic Monitor would like to acknowledge this important contribution to the Project's work.

### **The Academic Monitor's Report**

This report is intended to reflect the wide range of Welsh language teaching and extra-curricular activities provided in Chubut Province. The main aim, therefore, is to celebrate the success of the whole range, variety and energy of Welsh language and cultural activities, rather than restricting the report to activities funded by the Welsh Language Project. The relatively small funding of the Project cannot deliver all of the important work done across the communities. One of the key signs of the Project's success is that it has prompted the establishment of three bilingual schools but also so much varied activity in recent years.



**Welsh class for staff at Ysgol y Cwm, Trevelin with Clare Vaughan**

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2019

1) Three Development Officers were sent to Patagonia in 2019: one teacher/tutor sent to the Andes, 90% of the time teaching and 10% of the time assisting with the work of Menter Patagonia

One person to Dyffryn Camwy, teaching for 90% of the time and 10% of the time spent on the work of Menter Patagonia.

One person dividing their time between the Andes and Dyffryn Camwy, spending 90% of their time on the Menter's work and 10% assisting with the classes

2) A total of **1411** people on Welsh courses, representing growth of **14.1%** on last year.

3) Growth of **13.9%** in the numbers of children at KS1 (ages 6 to 8) and KS2 (ages 9-11), and growth of almost **30%** in the number of teenagers. Growth of **14%** has also been seen in the number of Adults learning across the Province.

4) Progress at Ysgol y Cwm, Trevelin, Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman and Ysgol yr Hendre Trelew.

5) Scholarships worth **£2000** each, funded by the National Centre for Learning Welsh, to enable students from Patagonia to study Welsh courses in Cardiff and/or Aberystwyth.

6) Contributed to a large number of events held by various organisations and groups e.g. the Urdd, Chapels in Dyffryn Camwy and the Andes



**Welsh class for some of the younger children at Canolfan Esquel, the Andes with Glenda Powel**

## 2019 TARGETS

1) Send three Development Officers to teach and undertake language socialisation with Menter Patagonia – two Teaching Officers and one Menter Officer

In Dyffryn Camwy, appoint one teacher/tutor to teach across several sectors – primary, secondary and adult

In the Andes, appoint one teacher/tutor to work with primary age, teenagers and adults.

Appoint one Menter Officer to work on planning and implementing language socialisation events across the province of Chubut – five months in the Andes and five months in Dyffryn Camwy

2) Employ one full-time Teaching Co-ordinator in the Wladfa.

3) Assist students from the Wladfa to attend the Summer Course at Cardiff University or Aberystwyth University.

4) Maintain and increase the number of learners in Welsh lessons

5) Continue discussions with the National Centre for Learning Welsh about adapting and translating the new Welsh for Adults courses for Patagonia

6) Continue to develop a structured scheme of training for the Wladfa's tutors

**All of the above targets were achieved during 2019**



***Sinead Harris, the (Menter) Development Officer in an activity with a group of pupils from Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman***

## **IMPACT OF THE PROJECT**

### STATISTICS

1 Teaching Co-ordinator – Clare Vaughan (the Andes)

1 Administrative Coordinator – Luned González (Dyffryn Camwy)

2 Teaching Development Officers (1 in Dyffryn Camwy and 1 in the Andes):

Gruffydd Evans (the Andes) Children/Youth/Adults

Geraint Ashton (Dyffryn Camwy) Children/Youth/Adults

1 Menter Development Officer – Sinead Harris, divides her time equally between the Andes and Dyffryn Camwy

31 teachers/tutors teaching Welsh – 21 responsible for teaching children and 10 for teaching adults.

**Number of classes:** There were **114** (115) classes in 2019 – 81 of which were children and young people's classes, and 31 of which were adult classes.

<i><b>Gaiman (including Dolavon)</b></i>	<i><b>Trelew (including Porth Madryn and Comodoro)</b></i>	<i><b>The Andes (including Esquel and Trevelin)</b></i>
<b>68</b> (63)	<b>23</b> (30)	<b>23</b> (22)

### **Number of learners:**

	<i><b>Gaiman (including Dolavon)</b></i>	<i><b>Trelew (including Porth Madryn, Comodoro)</b></i>	<i><b>The Andes</b></i>	<i><b>TOTAL</b></i>
<b>2019</b>	<b>965</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>1411</b>
2018	831	210	195	1236
2017	758	165	203	1126
2016	873	185	212	1270
2015	739	200	281	1220
2014	722	251	201	1174
2013	657	171	157	985
2012	607	145	225	977
2011	582	133	131	846
2010	527	85	150	762



### Numbers by age group and areas:

	<b>Gaiman (including Dolavon)</b>	<b>Trelew (including Madryn)</b>	<b>The Andes (Esquel and Trevelin)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Nursery (under 5 years)</b>	<b>99</b> 110	<b>44</b> 45	<b>51</b> 57	<b>194</b> 212
<b>Post-nursery (KS1)</b>	<b>141</b> 109	<b>54</b> 59	<b>53</b> 50	<b>248</b> 218
<b>Primary school children (KS2)</b>	<b>238</b> 235	<b>58</b> 37	<b>71</b> 50	<b>367</b> 322
<b>Teenagers</b>	<b>423</b> 315	<b>0</b> 10	<b>0</b> 2	<b>423</b> 327
<b>Adults</b>	<b>64</b> 62	<b>70</b> 59	<b>45</b> 36	<b>179</b> 157
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>965</b> 831	<b>226</b> 210	<b>220</b> 195	<b>1411</b> 1236

### Comments:

It is good to note that learner numbers have increased again this year. This success is due to the hard work of our Development Officers, local tutors and teachers, the host of volunteers and our staff at grassroots level. Congratulations to everyone for achieving so much once again in 2019.

This is all the more remarkable considering Argentina's fragile social and economic situation throughout 2019.

According to public statistics, Argentina's inflation rose to 53.8%, with prices increasing 3.7% during the year and the economy as a whole shrinking 2.7%.

Due to the fragile economic situation and the squeeze on wages, a large number of public sector teachers in the province of Chubut went on strike several times during the year. This did not directly affect the Welsh-medium/bilingual schools as they are considered private schools, but since many parents were concerned about the disruption to their children's education in the public sector, many decided to move their children to the bilingual Welsh-medium schools. While this is excellent news in terms of the numbers and income, it will be important to ensure for the future that these additional numbers do not unduly weaken the resources of the bilingual schools.

Following a presidential election in Argentina in October 2019, it is hoped that the appointment of a new President and government will bring a more stable period at a social and economic level.

The number of classes across the province has remained almost the same during 2019.

As the figures show, the number of pupils at the three bilingual primary schools has remained fairly constant and, apart from the nursery sector, there has been an increase at all ages. In KS1, for example, a **13.7%** increase was seen and a **14%** increase in KS2. However, the biggest growth was in the teenage years – an increase of almost **30%**.

It is no surprise that the primary and secondary sectors are continuing to sustain their numbers. The consistent hard work from the schools themselves – along with the important contribution of the Project Officers – has ensured continued success and growth.

The success and confidence of the schools themselves is now evident as they manage to increase their numbers and employ teachers from Wales themselves. In the case of Ysgol yr Hendre in particular, two teachers from Wales were employed during 2019. One was an expert in folk dancing and music, which is bound to have enriched the pupil experience. The schools intend to continue to employ teachers from Wales during 2020, something that is to be celebrated and welcomed.

We must also acknowledge the contribution of Spanish-medium schools – Escuela 24 in Esquel, Escuela 100 in Gaiman, Escuela Bryn Gwyn and Escuela Aliwen in Dyffryn Camwy – for the important contribution they make by supporting Welsh language classes and workshops. All of this is a great help in spreading understanding and improving attitudes in society more widely. These contributions will ultimately help to normalise the language and culture in the lives of the people of the province of Chubut.

The Nursery sector now represents **13.75%** of the Wladfa's learners, while the Primary sector (KS1 and KS2) represents **43.6%** of learners.

The teenage sector's percentage is **30%**.

Back in 1997 at the beginning of the Project, the number of adult learners was 279. At that time, it was of course adults who were prioritised, and they represented **49%** of all learners.

By now, of all the learners in the Wladfa, the Adults represent **12.7%**.





*Marina Cid, a local teacher in the Andes with a Welsh class for children at Canolfan Hazel  
Charles Evans, Esquel*

### Adult numbers by language level

	Entry (Wlpan 1)	Foundation (Wlpan 2)	Intermediate (Further)	Advanced and Mastery	Proficiency (Improvement)	Total
<b>Gaiman</b>	<b>32</b> (26)	<b>6</b> (0)	<b>4</b> (6)	<b>11</b> (5)	<b>11</b> (10)	<b>64</b> (62)
<b>Trelew</b>	<b>39</b> (27)	<b>16</b> (15)	<b>9</b> (10)	<b>3</b> (1)	<b>3</b> (6)	<b>70</b> (59)
<b>The Andes</b>	<b>16</b> (12)	<b>5</b> (9)	<b>7</b> (6)	<b>14</b> (6)	<b>0</b> (3)	<b>42</b> (36)
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b> (65)	<b>27</b> (24)	<b>20</b> (22)	<b>28</b> (12)	<b>14</b> (19)	<b>176</b> (157)

The number of Welsh classes in Dyffryn Camwy are still holding up very well, and it is good to see an increase in adult numbers in the Andes this year after a period of decline. It is hoped that this growth will continue during 2020 and that classes at the higher levels will see the same increase.

The teenage sector remains challenging for the Andes; one of the reasons for this is the lack of a secondary school in the area that supports Welsh as a subject. The fact that Welsh is compulsory during the first three years of Coleg Camwy secondary school in Gaiman is a great help in attracting and sustaining the teenage sector in Dyffryn Camwy.

As there is no bilingual primary or secondary school in Esquel, a number of Welsh classes are offered to the younger and older children at Canolfan Hazel Charles Evans in the town, as well as several Welsh for Adults classes. It is also good to hear that the Welsh language workshops run by Diana Jenkins at the (Spanish-medium) Escuela 24 in Esquel are going from strength to strength.

As in Wales, the numbers of learners in the Wladfa progressing to the higher-level classes (Intermediate level and up) are still rather disappointing. The encouraging numbers seen at Entry and Foundation level are not seen progressing to Intermediate, Advanced and Mastery levels. However, there is a glimmer of hope that this sector will see an increase in the future, in Gaiman and the Andes in particular.

Gradually, the new courses by the National Centre for Learning Welsh are being introduced to Chubut's Welsh classes, and there is hope that these colourful and appealing courses will attract more learners to the classes and encourage them to continue studying for longer periods and go on to the higher levels.



**Diana Jenkins, a local tutor in the Andes with an Entry level class at the centre in Esquel**

### Number of Welsh language contact hours by level and area – 2018 hours in brackets

	<b>Nursery (under 5 years)</b>	<b>KS1 (6-8 years)</b>	<b>KS2 (Ages 9- 11)</b>	<b>Teenagers</b>	<b>Adults</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Gaiman</b>	<b>94 hours 40 mins</b>  (93 hours 5 mins)	<b>40 hours 50 mins</b>  (52 hours 40 mins)	<b>33 hours 40 mins</b>  (10 hours 15 min)	<b>33 hours 50 mins</b>  (26 hours 45 mins)	<b>12 hours 15 min</b>  (17 hours 45 mins)	<b>215 hours 15 min</b>  (200.40)
<b>Trelew</b>	<b>33.5</b>  (75)	<b>41</b>  (72 hours 30 mins)	<b>32</b>  (32)	<b>0</b>  (1 hour 30 mins)	<b>33 hours 50 mins</b>  (20 hours 45 min)	<b>140 hours 25 mins</b>  (201hrs 45 mins)
<b>The Andes</b>	<b>40 hours 40 mins</b>  (52.5)	<b>31 hours 30 mins</b>  (24)	<b>6 hours</b>  (3)	<b>0</b>  (1.5)	<b>23 hours 30 mins</b>  (22)	<b>101 hours 45 mins</b>  (103)
<b>Total</b>	<b>168 hours 50 mins</b>  (220 hours 40 mins)	<b>113 hours 20 min</b>  (149 hours 10 mins)	<b>71 hours 40 min</b>  (45 hours 15 mins)	<b>33 hours 50 mins</b>  (29 hours 45 mins)	<b>69 hours 35 mins</b>  (60 hours 25 mins)	<b>457 hours 15 min</b>  (505 hours 10 mins)

The contact hours of the bilingual schools remain fairly consistent across the province, but it is good to note an increase in KS1 and KS2 hours in the Andes. This reflects the growth of classes at Ysgol y Cwm.

The increase in the teenager hours in Gaiman shows the consistent good work with the Welsh classes at Coleg Camwy and Escuela Aliwen secondary schools in Gaiman.

It is also a pleasure to see an increase in the hours of the Welsh for Adults classes in Trelew this year. This reflects the expansion of provision at many levels including the establishment of new classes there during the year.

The table above shows a significant reduction in the total number of Nursery and KS1 contact hours in Trelew. This is due to a change in how hours are recorded.



**Ana Chiabrandu Rees and Romina Herrera (standing), two of Trelew's Welsh for Adults tutors**



**Geraint Ashton, the Project's 2019 Teaching Officer in Dyffryn Camwy teaching a new Welsh for Adults class at the St David's building, Trelew**

### **WJEC Exams**

Thanks to the co-operation of the WJEC Welsh for Adults examinations unit, the Wladfa's students are able to take the opportunity to sit these exams annually, and it is good to note that 23 students from Patagonia sat the exams once again this year.

Offering the possibility of working towards the WJEC Welsh for Adults examination gives the teaching purpose and status, in a society where a great deal of emphasis is placed on the First Certificate in English. It is therefore important to be able to offer standard language exams within a European framework in order to provide evidence for the level they have reached and the work they have achieved.

Here are the figures for this year.

It is fair to note that – as in 2018 – only students from Dyffryn Camwy sat the exams in 2019.

<b><i>Level</i></b>	<b><i>Registered</i></b>	<b><i>Sat</i></b>	<b><i>Passed</i></b>	<b><i>Failed</i></b>
<b><i>ENTRY</i></b>	<i>23</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>1</i>
<b><i>FOUNDATION</i></b>	<i>11</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>8</i> <i>6 Passed</i> <i>2 Distinction</i>	<i>0</i>
<b><i>INTERMEDIATE</i></b>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>
<b><i>ADVANCED</i></b>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>

### **Report by Clare Vaughan, Patagonia Welsh Language Project Teaching Co-ordinator.**

The question arises quite frequently. Has the Wladfa's Welsh Language Project been a success?

The evidence over the years undoubtedly confirms that the Project is, and has been, a success. No matter which criteria we use, the answer is always positive. Once again this year, the total number of learners exceeded the 2018 numbers, and we now have the highest numbers ever learning with the Project.

In terms of contact hours, the number of hours is among the highest ever in the history of the Project, and more learners are now introduced to the language and given access to it, either through Welsh for Adults classes, the bilingual schools, the Province's Schools or via extra-curricular activities.

Of course, the next question is, 'Will the Project continue to succeed?'

The Project's objectives in the early years – based on the research of Professor Robert Owen Jones – were clear enough; provide opportunities for descendants of the original Welsh settlers to reconnect with their roots, culture and language.

The nature of society has changed significantly since the original studies, and change is the only constant. Communities have become more multicultural, the idea of migration has become part of the pattern of life, and economic factors have added to the pressure on communities. Similarly, global communication has brought both advantages and disadvantages.

We must pay tribute to those people across the province of Chubut who have worked tirelessly for many years to establish, maintain and fund the bilingual schools which were opened as a result of the Welsh Language Project.

There is no doubt that the schools have succeeded, but they need continuous support, and one of the areas that need strengthening is teacher training. Teaching pupils and adults a second language is very specialised work, especially in a society that, by several measures, is fairly uniform in terms of language and culture. The concept of bilingualism is also poorly understood. Specialist support in these areas would be extremely useful in improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Due to the economic squeeze in Argentina in recent years, it is increasingly difficult for the government of Chubut Province to maintain Spanish-medium education services, let alone offer additional resources for second language learning. Until the situation in the country improves, Chubut residents will continue to look to Wales for specialist help with teaching Welsh.

The scholarships for learners to travel to Wales to study on Welsh courses have been an important part of the Project since the beginning, and it was great to see so many applying for the 2020 scholarships. With only three scholarships available, the competition was clearly fierce.

We would like to see more interaction between the two communities in Wales and Patagonia: seeing the young children's reaction to the visit of the clog dancers from Wales during the winter of 2019 was an inspiration.

That the Project exists after over 20 years feels like a miracle in itself, and its success has been tremendous. By continuing to support it, bridges will be built between Argentina and the motherland in Wales for many years to come.

**Clare Vaughan, Welsh Language Project Teaching Co-ordinator, Trevelin, December 2019**



***Ana Chiabrando Rees and Romina Herrera, two of Trelew's Welsh for Adults tutors with an Intermediate class***



## **PATAGONIA'S EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

***Coleg Camwy, Gaiman (secondary school)***



**Coleg Camwy, Gaiman**

Coleg Camwy was established as an 'Intermediate School' in 1906 and was the first secondary school in the Wladfa. It is widely believed that it was also the first Welsh-medium secondary school in the world.

The School accepts children who have been attending the bilingual schools in Gaiman and Trelew and offers provision at two levels. The Year 1, 2 and 3 classes are run by Caren Jones and Gabriel Restucha, and the most fluent children receive extended lessons from Esyllt Nest Roberts. During 2019, Geraint Ashton, the Welsh Language Project's Teaching Officer in Dyffryn Camwy, also assisted with the language improvement classes.



***Gabriel Restucha teaching the Year 3 Welsh class at Coleg Camwy, Gaiman***

At Coleg Camwy, Welsh is compulsory during Years 1, 2 and 3 and optional in the final three years. In 2019, 90 young people chose to study Welsh in years 4, 5 and 6.

In all, 49 pupils will be starting year 1 at Coleg Camwy in 2020; 9 of them will be from Ysgol yr Hendre, Trelew. As Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman does not have pupils in the final year yet, we will need to wait until 2021 before children from Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman start attending.



**Caren Jones teaching a Welsh class at Coleg Camwy**



**Eysyllt Nest Roberts with extended lessons in Welsh at Coleg Camwy**

## THE WLADFA'S BILINGUAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS

There are now three bilingual primary schools in Patagonia; Ysgol yr Hendre in Trelew, Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman, and Ysgol y Cwm in Trevelin. The schools offer a high standard of education, and staff are hardworking and enthusiastic, working in challenging economic circumstances once again in 2019.

### Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman



Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman started as a Nursery School in 1993.

Such was the increase in demand for bilingual primary education that it opened as Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman in 2013.



Angélica Evans with some of the children of Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman

**Report by Rebeca White and Esyllt Nest Roberts: Background.** Ysgol Feithrin y Gaiman (YGYG) was established in 1993 as a Welsh-medium nursery school that offered unofficial Welsh language 'workshops' for young children. In 2013, the school received official status as a Nursery School from the province's government, and since then we have been able to provide official education for children aged 4 and 5 (the compulsory age to start attending school in Argentina) and for toddlers aged 1½-3. In 2019, we had children attending up to year 5, so in 2020 the school will be complete for the first time. In 2014, we also received official consent to provide bilingual primary education.

**Staff.** The school has 21 teachers altogether, including daily teachers and specialist teachers (music, physical exercise, cookery, folk dancing and art). As a result of receiving the official status mentioned above, it became mandatory to have qualified nursery and primary teachers to teach at the school. The work of Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman is divided into two sessions. Details of classes and numbers in 2019 can be seen below.

**Morning:**

Infant Class (1½ and 2 years old): 13 pupils, 1 teacher

The 3-year-old class – 15 pupils, 1 teacher

The 4-year-old class – 20 pupils, 1 teacher

The 5-year-old class – 16 pupils, 1 teacher

Year 1 – 22 pupils, 1 teacher

Year 2 – 10 pupils, 1 teacher

Year 3 – 18 pupils, 1 teacher

Year 4 – 14 pupils, 1 teacher

Year 5 – 9 pupils, 1 teacher

**Afternoon:**

Dosbarth Abertawe (5-year-old class) – 18 pupils, 1 teacher of Welsh only

Dosbarth Llanelli – 14 pupils, 1 Welsh teacher

Dosbarth Pwllheli – 12 pupils, 1 Welsh teacher

Dosbarth Tregaron – 12 pupils, 1 Welsh teacher

Dosbarth Betws-y-Coed – 11 pupils, 1 Welsh teacher

Dosbarth Caernarfon – 14 pupils, 1 Welsh teacher

Dosbarth Caerffili – 10 pupils, 1 Welsh teacher

The presence of Spanish-speaking teachers during the mornings presents a challenge, but we are very fortunate that they are supportive and keen to learn some Welsh to use in informal situations and to encourage the children to use the language in the classroom.

Geraint Ashton, the Project's Teaching Officer in Dyffryn Camwy this year, has done a very valuable job teaching non-Welsh speaking teachers and support (kitchen, cleaning) staff. He has also prepared notes to ensure a continuity of this work during 2020. It would be pleasing to think that some of these dedicated teachers might receive a scholarship to study on an intensive course in Wales in the future. They have very little time to study here since they work in other schools in the afternoons after working at YGYG.

The afternoon classes receive their education in Welsh only. Although they only receive two hours, it is amazing how well the children are responding. They know that only Welsh should be spoken with teachers, since teachers use only Welsh with them. We should bear in mind that a number of the children in the primary did not receive their nursery education through the medium of Welsh, so they have learned all of their Welsh in primary school with us. This shows the success of the immersion model.



**Rebeca White, Head of Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman, with the immersion class**

**General use of Welsh:** Apart from the lessons themselves, we are working continually to present Welsh visually in school by putting posters and signs and vocabulary on the walls, e.g. many of the classes have 'word of the day/week' signs to expand vocabulary; there is a 'sentence of the week' in the hall for the whole school, etc. In informal situations, we encourage non-Welsh speaking teachers to use only Welsh language resources (CDs, DVDs, games and books) and to say greetings and lower the flag, make announcements etc. in Welsh.

Similarly, we believe it is extremely important to attend local activities in the community, e.g. participating in eisteddfodau and concerts, marching in official ceremonies, holding stalls at the book fair and agricultural fair, sending and receiving invitations to joint activities with other local schools etc, ensuring that Welsh is used extensively in all of these activities.

**Staff training:** As mentioned previously, it is vital that the good work done by Geraint Ashton to teach Welsh to non-Welsh speaking staff continues. In terms of the development of existing Welsh-speaking staff, we strongly believe that receiving training from specialists in linguistic 'immersion' and teaching through a second language would be very beneficial. We have also made regular use of the innovative Tric a Chlic scheme in school to develop our pupils' literacy skills. It would also be valuable to receive training on other specific resources of a similar nature.

Like the other two bilingual schools in the province of Chubut, we believe that it would be very useful if the Patagonia Welsh Language Teaching Project could send qualified Welsh-speaking primary school teachers to work specifically in our bilingual schools. The presence of teachers who do not speak Spanish is vital to the success of our schools, as we know from experience.



**Some of the pupils of Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman**

**The future:** Next year's challenge will be to manage the number of pupils at the school as we are almost full. We need to provide quality lessons that immerse pupils in Welsh, but it will not be possible to achieve this with so many pupils in our lessons.

Unfortunately, due to class sizes, we anticipate a shortage of teachers at the school for us to be able to achieve the goal of successful immersion in the afternoons. We feel it is important to keep the Welsh lessons together in the afternoons in order to immerse all classes at the same time and create a 'Welsh language atmosphere' across the school.

As Welsh-speaking staff, we must continue to raise the standards of Welsh across the school, and in order to do so, we will continue to rely on the support of the Project which worked in the past and has worked again this year. It has become more difficult to meet the demand for Welsh-medium education – which is growing across the province – since the number of teachers at the school will be lower next year.

Thanks to the Ddraig Goch Rugby Club, we were able to employ two teachers from Wales this year, one full-time teacher at the school, and one who divides his time between the school (working with Dosbarth Caernarfon class in the afternoons and running other sessions every Tuesday) and the other half of his timetable at the Club. Due to the school's finances, this will not be possible next year.

So as you can see, we are continuing to work tirelessly to ensure that the Welsh language endures in Gaiman, and we are very grateful to the British Council, the Wales-Argentina Society, the Welsh Government and other friends for all their support to ensure that we succeed.

**Report by Rebeca White (Headteacher of Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman) and Esyllt Nest Roberts (Welsh Teacher at Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman)**



**Physical education lesson through the medium of Welsh with teacher Florencia Zaldegüi**

## **Ysgol y Cwm, Trevelin**



**Ysgol y Cwm building, Trevelin**

### **Ysgol y Cwm report, December 2019, by Clare Vaughan**

The work being done at Ysgol y Cwm is a natural progression of the work of the Welsh Language Teaching Project which has been taking place officially in the Andes and in the village of Trevelin since 1997. The school opened its doors in 2016. Since then, a dedicated group has been committed to providing bilingual Welsh/Spanish education for nursery and primary school children in a brand new building designed specifically by an architect for providing children's classes in a village at the foot of the Andes in Chubut Province, without the support of local government. The funding for construction was provided by the local Welsh Language Society, and the school Committee is responsible for finding the funding needed to maintain the school.

#### **A brief history of the school**

The school was officially opened on 9 March 2016, when 50 children between the ages of 3 and 6 started attending nursery school.

Today, the building is nearing completion, although some details remain, such as guttering and painting, gardening and the construction of a concrete entrance, all things the school committee will need to pay for.

Nursery work in the afternoon is integrated with a language assistant in the classroom for the first few hours of the afternoon working with the nursery teacher who has been trained under the Argentine system (since we are an official school within the Province's system, a Spanish teacher in each class is vital). We work with themes, and each month there is a new theme. Each teaching day begins with Circle Time where pupils raise the flags of Argentina and Wales and sing in both languages.





**The new extension to the rear of Ysgol y Cwm's building**

Year 1, 2 and 3 now have an extended morning, with an hour and a half of additional Welsh. We also try to take advantage of music and folk dancing lessons as a way of getting more incidental Welsh into the curriculum. Year 2 class teacher Judith Jones was fortunate enough to win a National Centre for Learning Welsh scholarship to go to Wales to study on an intensive course. We hope she will be able to increase the amount of Welsh she uses in the classroom with the children.



***Jessica Jones with some of Ysgol y Cwm's nursery pupils***

Jessica Jones and Ximena Roberts from Argentina work with children aged 3, 4 and 5 while Nia Jones (who was one of the Project's officers in 2015 and 2016) has stayed in the area, and works with all of the primary school children every morning. Gruffydd Evans, our Welsh Language Project officer this year, has also been assisting with children in the primary, which has enabled Nia to be more creative and to divide the children up by ability to focus on specific skills. During the first half of the year, the Menter Project Officer Sinead Harris planned some additional activities such as cooking for the children.

We would stress how fortunate we have been this year to have the presence of two volunteers; Manon Lewis, who was with us until the winter holidays in July, and Margo Martin, who was with us from September until the end of term. Manon was on a gap year before going to university and Margo was on a gap year as part of her degree in International Politics and Spanish. Although they differed in age and skills, they both brought a great deal of enthusiasm and were happy to contribute to all activities. The children's experiences would not have been as enriching had it not been for the contributions of these two, so we are very grateful to them.

There will be even more children attending in 2020, and resources must be made available to provide high quality education in both languages to preserve the language and traditions of the first immigrants and safeguard them for the future.

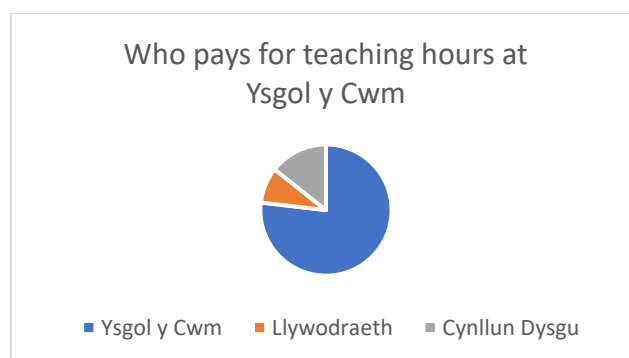
<b>Class</b>	<b>Spanish teacher</b>	<b>Welsh</b>	<b>Number of children</b>
Age 3	Jessica Hopkins	Jessica Jones	15
Age 4	Evangelina Davies	Ximena Roberts	12
Age 5	Daniela Limache	Ximena Roberts	19
Year 1	Claudia Mazziotti	Nia Jones/Gruffydd Evans	17
Year 2	Judith Jones	Nia Jones/Gruffydd Evans	18
Year 3	Laura Barrera	Nia Jones/Gruffydd Evans	13
<b>Total</b>			<b>94</b>



**Gruffydd Evans, the Andes Project Officer with Year 1 pupils at Ysgol y Cwm**

## Ysgol y Cwm staff 2019

Name	Role	Paid by
Erica Hammond	Headteacher of Nursery School	On unpaid sabbatical April – November 2018
Claudia Mazziotti	Primary Headteacher Temporary Nursery School Headteacher Year 1 Spanish teacher	100% Ysgol y Cwm
Margarita Green	Secretary	100% Ysgol y Cwm
Jessica Hopkins	Spanish teacher for the 3-year-olds	100% Ysgol y Cwm
Jessica Jones	Welsh teacher for the 3-year-olds	50% Government 25% Ysgol y Cwm 25% Project hours
Evangelina Davies	Teacher for the 4-year-olds	100% Ysgol y Cwm
Ximena Roberts	Welsh teacher for the 4-year-olds	65% Government 35% Project
Daniela Limache	Spanish teacher for the 5-year-olds	100% Ysgol y Cwm
Nia Jones	Primary Welsh Teacher	50% Ysgol y Cwm 50% Project
Claudia Mazziotti	Year 1 Spanish teacher	100% Ysgol y Cwm
Judith Jones	Year 2 Spanish teacher	100% Ysgol y Cwm
Laura Barrera	Year 3 Spanish teacher	100% Ysgol y Cwm
Maria de Oro	Music	100% Ysgol y Cwm
Camila Itxassa	Physical Education	100% Ysgol y Cwm
Lihuen	Special Needs Assistant for a boy with ADHD	100% Government (few hours)
Silvia Roa	Caretaker	100% Ysgol y Cwm
Nancy Cardenas	Caretaker	50% Ysgol y Cwm 50% town council



■ Ysgol y Cwm     
 ■ Government     
 ■ Teaching Project



**Ximena Roberts and volunteer Margo Martin with the 4-year-old class at Ysgol y Cwm**

In 2020, the nursery and primary schools will be merged meaning that only one Headteacher will be needed. Erica Hammond will be responsible for both levels and Claudia Mazziotti will be a class teacher.

**Clare Vaughan on behalf of Ysgol y Cwm, Trevelin 2019**



**Some of Ysgol y Cwm's pupils**

## Ysgol yr Hendre, Trelew



### Report by Ana Chiabrando Rees

There were only 22 pupils at Ysgol yr Hendre when the school originally opened back in 2006. There are now over a hundred pupils, and they receive 3 and a half hours of education through the medium of Welsh each day.

#### Nursery School:

In 2019, there were 44 children attending the Nursery.

There are 3 nursery teachers:

1 fluent Welsh speaker – Romina Herrera

1 who speaks Welsh quite well – Mariel Jones

1 who has just started attending the Welsh for Adults classes in Trelew.



**Mariel Jones (kneeling on the right) and Elmer MacDonald (standing) with some of the Hendre's nursery children**

There are 3 assistants: 2 fluent Welsh speakers – Elmer MacDonald and Norma Price  
The other is about to graduate as a nursery teacher.

The Nursery department's policy is bilingual sessions – one teacher speaks Spanish and the other speaks Welsh with the children.

For parents who need to leave their children after 12pm, extended hours are offered, until 2pm.

Norma Price is responsible for the extended sessions – she only conducts activities through the medium of Welsh during these hours. There are 47 children enrolled for the Nursery in 2020.

Nursery 3 years old – 10 children

Nursery 4 years old – 17 children

Nursery 5 years old – 17 children



**Norma Price (sitting in the middle) with some of the pupils at the Hendre's nursery section**

#### **Ysgol yr Hendre primary school:**

There are 100 children in the primary school this year, with three teachers teaching through the medium of Welsh:

Alcira Williams – Year 3 in the morning and Year 4 in the afternoon

Edith Lizondo teaching Year 2 in the morning

Romina Herrera – Year 5 in the afternoon.

During 2019, the school employed two teachers from Wales to work at the school:

Rhidian Rees to teach Year 1 children in the morning and Year 6 in the afternoon and Siwan Evans as teacher of folk dance and music.

In all, 97.5 hours a week are taught through the medium of Welsh in the primary school.

Primary – Key Stage 1 – 54 children

Primary – Key Stage 2 – 46 children



**Ysgol yr Hendre's Headteacher, Silvia Almeyra (second from the left) leading the school's Gŵyl y Glaniad celebrations to mark the original landings**



**Romina Herrera, nursery teacher at Ysgol yr Hendre**

## **TEACHING WELSH IN SPANISH-MEDIUM SCHOOLS.**

Welsh is supported and taught in several Spanish-medium schools across the province of Chubut.

### **The Andes: Escuela 24, Esquel**



Diana Jenkins is responsible for the Welsh lessons at Escuela 24 in Esquel. During 2019, Gruffydd Evans, the Andes Development Officer and Sinead Harris, the Menter Officer, assisted with the running of Welsh language workshops.

The workshops include elements of teaching language, cultural themes and folk dancing.



**Diana Jenkins with one of the Welsh classes at Escuela 24, Esquel**



## **Dyffryn Camwy: Escuela Aliwen**

In Dyffryn Camwy, Aliwen secondary school offers Welsh classes for years 1, 2 and 3 (years 7, 8 and 9 in Wales) which are managed by Gabriel Restucha and Caren Jones.



**Escuela Aliwen building**



**Gabriel Restucha with one of the Welsh classes at Escuela Aliwen**

## Escuela Bryn Gwyn, Dyffryn Camwy

Welsh lessons are provided across Escuela Bryn Gwyn and each class receives one 40-minute Welsh lesson each week. Although the provision is relatively limited, the lessons are very much appreciated and enjoy the support of the teachers and the community. The provision of Welsh lessons in Spanish-medium schools is important, linguistically and culturally.



**Celeste Filiponi is responsible for Welsh language provision at Escuela Bryn Gwyn primary school**



**Some of Escuela Bryn Gwyn's pupils**

## Escuela 100 Gaiman

There have been occasional Welsh classes at Escuela 100 primary school in Gaiman over the last few years. During 2018, the Welsh lessons were resumed thanks to the generosity of Gaiman Council's Culture department. Lessons continued in 2019 and Victoria Steinkamp, who originally learned Welsh with the Welsh Language Project, has been responsible for teaching Welsh for around 8 hours a week. The School itself is very supportive of the Project and we are hopeful that the Project will continue in 2020.



*Virginia with some of the pupils of Escuela 100 Gaiman*



## **WELSH CLASSES IN PORTH MADRYN**

The Toshke Centre, Porth Madryn's Welsh Language Centre, is a hive of activity almost all year round, with activities relating to Welsh culture being held weekly, including cookery lessons, folk dancing classes, instrumental and vocal workshops as well as Welsh classes on several levels.

Lorena Peralta is responsible for co-ordinating and teaching the Welsh lessons at the Centre, and 2019 was once again an incredibly busy year.



**Toshke Centre, Porth Madryn**

The classes are held several times a week at the Toshke Centre, and the pattern is that the Project's Development Officers – Geraint Ashton and Sinead Harris this year – assist with teaching and activities on a monthly basis.



***Lorena Peralta (standing by the whiteboard) with one of Porth Madryn's Welsh classes***

One of the major highlights of the year in Dyffryn Camwy in September 2019 was hosting an International Conference for Tourism professionals. Representatives from all over the world attended, and dancers from Porth Madryn Welsh Language Society provided some of the entertainment. Geraint Ashton, one of the Project's Development Officers, along with Lorena Peralta, also gave delegates Welsh lessons during the Conference. It was a great opportunity to raise awareness about the language and culture of this part of the world among tourism professionals from all over the world.



**Porth Madryn Welsh Language Society dancers at the International Conference for Tourism professionals**



**Geraint Ashton and Lorena Peralta giving a Welsh lesson at the International Conference**



**International delegates in the Welsh lesson in September 2019**

# Menter PATAGONIA

The work carried out by the local tutors and teachers as well as the Project's Development Officers in the classrooms is vitally important. This is when the linguistic foundations are put in place and the first steps taken along the journey to becoming fluent in Welsh. Since language is a medium of communication, we need to provide context and opportunities to use it and establish settings in which to speak it. The contribution of the Project Officers in socialising the language in the communities is extremely important, and some would argue that it is every bit as important as the classroom work.

Although Menter Patagonia now exists only in name, the spirit and vision of the Menter is alive and well.

In 2008, Menter Patagonia set its objectives as follows: There must be real efforts to normalise the use of the language in a cross-section of social situations – extend its social use.

The aim should be to hold a wide variety of situations, events and activities where Welsh is used.

Suggested activities could be as follows:

Activities for nursery children and their parents. This could be an opportunity to get parents interested and get them into a Welsh class – at least one session a week.

Activities for primary school children – sports, crafts, painting and handicrafts, games, nature and the environment, folk dancing, singing/acting group, Saturday morning playgroups, holiday clubs, hobbies etc (two age groups meeting twice a week).

Activities for secondary school age children – Urdd youth club, sports, outdoor activities, cultural activities, social activities (two sessions a week if possible).

Regular social activities for adults – quiz, fashion show, cooking, tasting different types of food, discussion or debate groups, conversation groups, various hobby groups, computer lessons for beginners, walking clubs, cycling, mountaineering, skiing, lunch club, informal concerts, talks and lectures, folk dancing, picnics, excursions, movie nights, etc.

Work closely with local Welsh organisations to inspire them – such as the eisteddfod, smaller local eisteddfodau, chapels.

Seek to extend the visual use of Welsh locally – radio, museums, etc.

In recent years, the pattern was that Development Officers divided their time between teaching and Menter work.

In 2019, it was decided to employ one person who would be responsible for full-time language socialisation work. Former Urdd Development Officer Sinead Harris accepted the challenge of going to the Wladfa to act as the Menter Development Officer for the Welsh Language Project. Sinead divided the year into two parts – the first five months in the Andes and the second period in Dyffryn Camwy.

Thanks are due to the generosity of the Wales-Argentina Society for contributing the necessary funding to support Sinead's work during the year. Without this important funding, it would not have been possible to carry out the Menter work during 2019.

### ***Menter Patagonia events in Dyffryn Camwy***

#### **Extracts from the report of Sinead Harris – the Project's Menter Officer**



**Sinead Harris (in grey at the back), the Project's Menter Officer, leading one of Trelew's social activities**

The last ten months have been great fun and it has been a privilege for me to organise events throughout the year. The activities are an opportunity to make it clear to people that Welsh is not just the language of the classroom. Rather, it is an everyday language and a language for socialising. These evenings have been an opportunity for everyone to experience the Welsh language beyond the classroom, whatever their ability level. From non-Welsh speakers to fluent speakers, we ensured there was an event for everyone and an opportunity for everyone to practise and enjoy. Numbers have of course varied depending on external factors, but everything took place through the medium of Welsh with people having the opportunity to practise.

I was not only involved in organising occasional events; I also ran weekly activities. Here is an overview of my weekly work along with relevant photos.

## **The Andes: Ysgol y Cwm**

I worked at Ysgol y Cwm Trevelin four times a week – two mornings a week with the primary children and two afternoons a week with the nursery children. During the sessions with the primary children, I worked with Nia Jones, Judith Jones, Gruffydd and Marga Martin to deliver fun Welsh language sessions for the children. I gave story sessions, games sessions and cookery sessions – with cooking little pizzas being the highlight for everyone! This was also an opportunity to complement the hard work of Jessica, Ximena and the other nursery teachers.



**With Year 3 children at Ysgol y Cwm**



**Celebrating the world's largest Parti Piws/Purple Party. Dewin and Doti – the Mudiad Meithrin characters turn 10.**



**Art session with Yr 2 pupils at Ysgol y Cwm**



## **Trevelin/Esquel children's classes**

I worked with Gruffydd Evans and Marina Cid to help in these lessons. In Esquel, I attended a children's class once a week on a Wednesday morning. Marina Cid teaches the children here and does an excellent job with them. There is a big difference in terms of ability within this class, so having additional support was really helpful.



## **Cooking with Ysgol y Cwm's Nursery children**

### **Occasional events**

A vital part of the Menter role of course was to hold activities outside the classroom. By holding various events during the first half of the year, I very much hope that I have shown various age groups that it is possible to have fun through the medium of Welsh.

At the start of my time at Cwm Hyfryd, I held two welcome evenings. During these sessions, I met many people and got to know them. This was useful in order to see what sort of things would work during my time. I also played a variety of games in these sessions to get everyone talking.

Not only did fluent speakers attend, but at the event in Trevelin there were pure beginners too. This was clearly an excellent opportunity for them to hear the Welsh language.

The work required in order to organise these events was by no means easy. Personally, I found it difficult to organise a date and activity that would attract large numbers of people – i.e., something that beginners would be able to attend. In May, I organised a Quiz Night in Trevelin.

This was a very successful evening, if not the most successful. To advertise the event, a note was sent in the books of the children at Ysgol y Cwm. A few parents came to the evening and socialised and learned new things.



### **Quiz night in Trevelin**

One of the highlights of my time in the Andes was the publication of Llais yr Andes in June. I started collecting material for it in May. My intention was to have a varied cross-section of the activities of the first few months of the year. It contained a variety of articles, including stories, presentations and tributes.

### **Working in Dyffryn Camwy: Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman (YGYG)**

As part of my weekly work, I have been assisting at YGYG. During this time, I have been assisting with physical education lessons and running the Urdd club with Cari and Mike, the two teachers from Wales who work directly for the School. Between 14 and 20 children attend each week. We have been doing a variety of activities, from playing new games to creating a mural for the new school wall. During these sessions, the focus has been on having fun, enjoying and speaking Welsh. The children have enjoyed learning new games and have loved making art after looking at the work of Rhiannon and Sioned Glyn. Being able to run this club has been one of the highlights of my time in Dyffryn Camwy.

### **'Ddraig Fach' club**

This club is held at Ysgol yr Hendre (Moreno Building). Although the club is open to everyone, it is only Ysgol yr Hendre children who have attended this year. The children vary in terms of age and ability, but the activities can easily be adapted as needed. The children have done a variety of things to strengthen their Welsh. I have been doing the sessions jointly with Norma Price. We have worked well together – choosing a theme to look at and then working on language patterns or vocabulary based on the theme.



**Sinead (in the red shirt on the right) and Norma Price with some of the children of the Ddraig Fach club in Trelew**

### **Trelew Urdd Club (Trelew Youth)**

This club takes place on Friday evenings at Ysgol yr Hendre school site. Those who have been attending regularly this year are all former pupils of Ysgol yr Hendre but are now in Spanish-medium secondary schools. It is therefore essential that this opportunity exists for them to practise their Welsh. We have done many things including a quiz, various challenges and card games, and they have also taught me how to play a dice game from Argentina.



**Porth Madryn Children's Class**

## **Madryn Children's Class**

During the Mimosa Eisteddfod in Porth Madryn in August, I had a chat with some members of the town's Welsh Language Society who were keen to start a children's class at the Toschke Centre. After a bit of organising and working out a timetable, a new class was started on 14 September.

The first session was attended by 15 children, most of whom have been attending regularly every week. This clearly demonstrates the need for children's lessons in Madryn. Many of the children were already involved in the Society as they were part of its folk dancing group. The children are very enthusiastic in their play and learning, and a number of them practise outside the session too.

## **The 2019 Urdd Trip**

The Urdd's annual trip is a big part of our work as officers. I feel I was in a stronger position this year, as I was working with the Urdd in 2018 and was one of the members of staff who came on the trip to the Wladfa. This meant I had a good idea of how things should work. The group arrived in the Wladfa on 24 October and spent five days in Dyffryn Camwy before heading to the Andes and spending five days there too, before leaving for Buenos Aires on 4 November. I was responsible for organising the timetable, booking the accommodation and arranging the activities.



**Urdd Crew 2019**

During the trip, I spent a great deal of time with the group. Being a Menter Officer, it was much easier for me to do this than the Teaching Officers.

The trip was packed with various activities – school visits, white water rafting, a trip to see the penguins, meeting various Welsh language societies and of course a number of concerts.

## **HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE REPORTS OF THE (TEACHING) DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS 2019**

### **Geraint Ashton, Dyffryn Camwy Teaching Officer 2019**

When I arrived, I was immediately welcomed into the community with a St David's Day concert at the start of my time here. A great opportunity to get to know the residents of the village. I was then invited to take part in Luned González's radio show to talk about myself and what I would be doing in Dyffryn Camwy. Every year, officers have the opportunity to go and talk on the radio show. You can listen to the radio online on Radio Chubut, the programme is called *La Hora Galesa*.

At Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman, I was introduced to other school staff. We made a short video wishing people a happy St David's Day from Patagonia, which was broadcast on the programme Heno on S4C. Luned then introduced me to Coleg Camwy members, and there was a welcome evening for the new staff of Ysgol yr Hendre.

This was followed by activities such as a St David's Gala Dinner full of music, dancing and singing. Another great opportunity to meet more of the people of Patagonia, including a good mix of Trelew and Gaiman residents. Once a month, there is a Welsh language service in the chapel, and very early in the year the chapel held a thanksgiving service.



**St David's Day Concert with Meic and Cari (teachers at Ysgol y Gaiman), me (in a blue shirt in the middle), Caitlin, Siwan and Rhydian (teachers at Ysgol yr Hendre)**

This year, I have been extremely fortunate to have been able to come here to the Wladfa and experience life in Gaiman among Welsh speakers on the other side of the world! It has truly been an incredible experience.

### Classes

Below is a table of each class I have been teaching this year:

Location	Building	Class
Gaiman	Coleg Camwy	Entry Class
Gaiman	Coleg Camwy	Foundation Class
Gaiman	Coleg Camwy	Conversation Class
Gaiman	Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman	Dosbarth Caerffili – pupils
Gaiman	Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman	Teachers – various levels
Gaiman	Tŷ Camwy	Intermediate/ <b>Advanced</b>
Gaiman	The Rugby Club	Entry Class – Adults
Trelew	Hendre, Moreno	Entry
Trelew	Hendre, Moreno	Foundation
Trelew	Hendre, Moreno	Intermediate
Trelew	St. David's Society	Conversation Club*
Trelew	St. David's Society	Entry Class*
Trelew	Hendre, Moreno	Ddraig Fach club
Porth Madryn	Tŷ Toshcke	Entry/Foundation

Every class has seen great progress and, more than anything, it has been a pleasure to see them increasing in confidence in trying to use the language over the year.



### Service at Capel Bethel, Gaiman

In July, the Gŵyl y Glaniad activities took place (28 July). This is a major event in the Wladfa to celebrate the original landings. This year, a group of us, teachers from Wales, went to Porth Madryn on the day to celebrate with them and to carry the Welsh flag. I also took part in the second performance of exchanging bread and meat with the native people. On the Saturday, many chapels held afternoon tea. I attended the tea at Capel Bethel to support the work of the pupils of Coleg Camwy. It was a delight to see them working there. I also read in an Acto (a ritual, i.e. a special service or celebration with the flags) for Gŵyl y Glaniad in Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman. It was also great to see the school pupils performing in a lovely concert at the Methodist Church in Gaiman.





**Carrying the flag at Madryn**



**Marching in Madryn – Cari, Rhydian, me and Sinead**

The following month was a very busy one! I was invited to be an adjudicator for recitation competitions at the Mimosa Eisteddfod in Porth Madryn. It was a privilege to watch pupils from different schools perform – a good number had competed, and there were preliminary rounds in the morning as well. It was a great pleasure to see the standard! In the evening, I competed in the dancing (again for the first time!!) with Gwanwyn Dim Problem – a group that trains in the evening in the St David's Society building in Trelew.

During the Welsh language service that month, I read part of the service. It was prepared for me and I read the words including the verses. Following the service, there was a social evening with a group of Welsh clog dancers and cawl. A number of Welsh songs were sung, and it was an opportunity to socialise and welcome the clog dancers to Gaiman.

Students from Cardiff University arrived in August. Five students annually receive a scholarship from Santander bank to spend a month doing work experience in Patagonia. I took them from Porth Madryn with Sinead to a number of activities in Gaiman, and the three of them shadowed me in lessons, introducing themselves and taking part. One of the first things they helped with was Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman's Birthday Party. An outstanding success with the students helping us to serve tea at the event.



**Sinead and me getting ready to dance**



**Gaiman Concert**



It was a very busy year, but it has been an incredible pleasure and privilege to be part of the life of the Wladfa and to share these experiences with people of all ages and Welsh language ability over the last 10 months. This was undoubtedly one of the busiest years of my life but also one of the most rewarding.

### Gruffydd Evans, Andes Teaching Officer 2019

#### Timetable

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Ysgol y Cwm 9.00-12.45	Ysgol y Cwm 9.45-12.45	Ysgol y Cwm 9.00-12.00	Children (Esquel) 9.30-11.00
13.30-15.30 Escuela 24				
16.00-18.00 Mastery	Entry (Trevelin) 15.00-17.15	Entry/Advanced II (Esquel) 16.00-17.30	Entry (Trevelin) 15.00-17.15	
18.00-19.30 Entry (Esquel)	Children (Trevelin) 18.00-19.30		Children (Trevelin) 18.00-19.30	Further (Trevelin) 19.00-20.30



**Gruffydd teaching one of Trevelin's Adult classes**

It has been a very busy year in the Wladfa, and it is great to see so many people taking part in Welsh language events and attending Welsh lessons.

#### Ysgol y Cwm

It has been a privilege to work at this school over the last year. The staff are very friendly, and the children are happy. They enjoy their Welsh lessons and are very keen to learn.

I felt very privileged to be part of this close knit family, and enjoyed being part of the children's learning, the school staff and being part of the events within the school – the important rituals such as the 25 May celebrations, Flag Day, Children's Day, and the Reading Marathon to name but a few. I also enjoyed helping the other teachers prepare the children for all the Eisteddfodau by helping with the homework tasks in the classroom and with the performance entries in the hall.



**Gruffydd with a class at Ysgol y Cwm, Trevelin**

### **Entry II/Advanced Class, Esquel**

I shared the class with one of the local Andes tutors, Grisel Roberts, and this year the class finished the Entry II course and started the Advanced course. Two members of the class want to do the exam next year. Since I saw early on in the year that they needed more conversational practice, we decided to use the last half hour of each lesson exclusively for conversation.

I took flash cards with me to stimulate conversation or sometimes we would have unprompted conversations about current affairs. They all have a good vocabulary, but we need to continue to practise using the language naturally. Class members show enthusiasm for learning Welsh and enjoy their lessons and being part of Welsh culture. Class members also attended social events organised by the Menter in Esquel and said they had enjoyed the Welsh atmosphere felt in these evenings.

### **Trevelin Advanced Class**

I shared this class with Gwion, another local tutor in the Andes, and I feel this class made progress throughout the year.

During this time, we started teaching the class contemporary Welsh language songs. We learned some songs by Gai Toms and Bryn Fôn among others.

This is an effective and fun way to finish off the class, and they learn new vocabulary without thinking about it. Class members show enthusiasm for learning Welsh and enjoy their lessons and being part of Welsh culture.



**Adult Class at the Centre in Esquel**

### **Social Evenings**

A number of social activities were organised during the year, and it was a pleasure to be involved in some very interesting activities. The activities are an opportunity for people to socialise in Welsh outside the classroom and to see the language as an everyday language. Various evenings were organised to ensure that there was something for everyone – from Cawl a Chân [soup and song] evenings, evenings with local people who have been on scholarships in Wales giving presentations, cake evenings, holding stalls at book fairs and much more. Attendance numbers varied from activity to activity as a result of illness, holidays or other activities people had on with their families. They were wonderful evenings which provided an opportunity to socialise with people of all ages. We were part of the social events from the start, and we saw how important it was to attend every Welsh language activity being organised in Welsh, not just the activities we were responsible for organising.



## **2018 Recommendations: Progress Report**

### **1 Welsh for Adults classes.**

***We will seek to expand the number and range of Adult classes in Dyffryn Camwy and seek to increase the numbers in the Andes classes***

The above hopes have been partly realised this year. Although it has not been possible to expand the number of Welsh classes across the Province, it is encouraging to note that the number of adults learning Welsh has increased by 14.01% across the province during 2019. Gaiman numbers have shown a slight increase, but the increase in the Andes area itself is 25% and the corresponding figure in Trelew and Porth Madryn is 18.6%. This is very encouraging news, and we very much hope that this pattern will be sustained and see a further boost in 2020.

### **2 Supporting the Bilingual Schools**

***Continue to support the Bilingual Schools to the best of our ability with practical and financial support so that the schools continue to grow and prosper.***

The Welsh Language Project has continued to support the work of the bilingual schools – Ysgol yr Hendre Trelew, Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman and Ysgol y Cwm, Trevelin – throughout 2019.

The work timetable of the two Teaching Officers this year – Geraint Ashton in Dyffryn Camwy and Gruffydd Evans in the Andes – included a significant amount of time teaching in the bilingual primary schools in Gaiman and Trevelin. Ysgol yr Hendre Trelew was in the fortunate position of being able to employ two teachers from Wales themselves to work at the school this year.

The Project does not have sufficient funding to support all the work in the schools, so it is particularly encouraging to note once again that the bilingual schools continue to be able to employ their own teachers from Wales to teach at their schools. However, part of the Project's funding does contribute to the salaries of many Gaiman and Trevelin primary school teachers as well as towards some of the Nursery assistants at Ysgol yr Hendre.

### **3 Funding.**

The level of the Project's core funding has not seen any increase in recent years. In reality, the value of the funding falls year on year due to inflation here in Wales and in Argentina. As already noted, inflation in Argentina last year was at **53.8%**, and while there was considerable depreciation in the currency of the country (Argentine Peso) during the same period, it is proving increasingly difficult to support as much activity across the province. In order to boost the salaries of local teachers and tutors working on behalf of the Project, the Wales-Argentina Society's financial contribution to the Project this year was allocated to the local tutors' salary budget. In addition, as noted earlier, additional funding was received from the Wales-Argentina Society to the Project's funding this year in order to fund the work of the Menter Officer.

Due to the fragile economic position of the public sector in Wales, we do not expect any improvement to the core funding we receive for 2020. However, we are hopeful that some funding will be available occasionally for specific projects during the next year. No further news has been received from the Welsh Government regarding the possibility of enabling

the Project to be given a three-year funding cycle. This would be a great help in terms of long-term planning.

#### ***4 Training and quality.***

##### ***We will continue the training programme and the scheme to amend the new courses with Bangor University***

The National Centre for Learning Welsh is now responsible for the training of Welsh for Adults tutors in Wales. It is therefore hoped that the Project will be able to draw on the Centre's expertise in this field in the future. To this end, we have been in discussions with the Centre in the hope of extending the training scheme to include Patagonia's tutors. The Centre has already been assisting us with practical support for some of the Development Officers who have been in the Wladfa working with Adults. We are hopeful that we will be able to reach agreement for the future so that the Wladfa's tutors will be able to make the most of the latest methodology in this specialist area. As part of this process, a representative from Bangor University will travel to Patagonia to conduct tutor training sessions in early 2020.

#### **5 The work of Menter Patagonia**

##### **Continue to emphasise the importance of the invaluable work of giving the language a social context outside the classroom as part of the process of normalising the language in the province of Chubut.**

This year, we were in the privileged position of being able to appoint a full-time Menter Development Officer, who would dedicate all of their time to language socialisation across the province. This meant that the other two Development Officers would be able to focus completely on the teaching.

Creating a context for the language outside the classroom is crucial in the Wladfa, since Welsh is no longer heard on radio or television. Neither is there a regularly printed Welsh language newspaper. In effect, therefore, the language is completely invisible in the communities, and since the language is not the main medium of communication, there is an urgent need for social activities through the medium of Welsh to create opportunities to use the language socially. As seen in the report by Sinead Harris, the Menter Officer this year, this year's experiment was welcomed by a large number of the people of the Wladfa, and it is hoped that this innovative attempt has laid firm foundations for this type of work in the future.



**Welsh class at Escuela Bryn Gwyn, Dyffryn Camwy**

## **Recommendations for 2020:**

### **1 Welsh for Adults classes.**

*Seek to maintain and strengthen the provision for the Adult classes in Dyffryn Camwy and the Andes, seeking to increase the number of classes and the number of learners.*

### **2 Continue to support a wide range of work involving the Welsh language in the Wladfa**

*Continue to use the Project's resources to support a wide range of activities for the Welsh language – the Adult classes, the teenage sector and the bilingual primary schools. It should be remembered that a number of the adults attending the Welsh for Adults classes are parents of children in the bilingual schools, and in attending classes they are showing their support for their children's Welsh-medium education. In addition, as the provision for the Secondary sector is insufficient in most of the province, it is essential that the Project continues to give them sufficient provision. Doing all this gives a clear indication that the Project supports the wider community rather than just one specific sector.*

### **3 Funding.**

*The level of our funding has not changed much in recent years, so we hope to see an increase in the Project's core funding and that better planning will be possible through a three-year funding cycle.*

### **5 Training and quality.**

*We will continue the training programme and the scheme to amend the new courses with the National Centre for Learning Welsh and other partners*

### **6 The work of Menter Patagonia.**

*Continue to emphasise the importance of the invaluable work of giving the language a social context outside the classroom as part of the process of normalising the language in the province of Chubut.*



**Soraya Williams, one of the Andes tutors with an Intermediate level class at the Centre in Esquel**