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■ ■ Est. 1962 ■ ■  
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# N E W S L E T T E R

L y t h e r - n o w o d h o w

## Bodmin jail

The jail in Bodmin was built in 1779 and remained in use until its closure in 1927. Designed by Sir John Call, it was the first jail in Britain to house inmates in individual cells. In its time, it may have been a leader in progressive incarceration, but it also saw its share of gruesome cruelty. More than 50 public hangings were held there giving it a reputation of being one of the UK's most haunted places.

In the 1930s, considerable effort was made to demolish the building but it was built strong to contain its occupants. The external stone walls were a metre thick and the attempts to blow it up resulted in destroying only the roof. The internal wooden floors have subsequently rotted away. It is now a Grade II listed building even if it is extensively damaged and the walls overgrown.



The current accommodation suits some special occupants; 7 different species of bat are known to be resident. Four more species have been seen in the immediate surrounds suggesting that more species make the ruins their home. The jail is particularly important for its colony of Greater Horseshoe and Lesser Horseshoe bats, including a maternity roost of the latter species. Horseshoe bats are among the rarest of Britain's bat species, being restricted to south-west England and Wales, and estimated to have declined by 90% during the twentieth century. All of Britain's bat species are protected by law as a result of their historic declines and threats to their habitats.

The resident and valuable wildlife is posing a problem for the developers who are planning a complete transformation to give the historic buildings a new lease on life. The builders have had to work with ecologists to time the work so as not to disturb the bats. When they cleaned the building out they had to be careful because the bats actually hibernate behind the plaster on the

walls. As each cell was cleaned there was an ecologist in the room overseeing the work and, when they found a bat, work stopped until the bats awoke from hibernation. Once awake, the bats are being relocated to a purpose built "bat bungalow" nearby. The stone-walled building is fitted out with various nesting options and a hibernaculum which, it is hoped, the discerning bats will use for their longer stays.



It is planned to turn the ruins into a 63-bedroom hotel and visitor centre. The prison is currently operated as a tourist attraction by the Mallino Group based in Eastern Europe. To design the restoration they engaged Twelve Architects a firm whose main office is in London but has also carried out projects in Eastern Europe. It will involve converting two derelict cell blocks into use as the hotel. Guests will be able to sleep in the former cells, which will be knocked through to create less cramped sleeping quarters than the prisoners would have enjoyed. The roof will be replaced with glass over the central atrium to create a light and stylish interior to the buildings. A state of the art 'Dark Walk' immersive experience will be created in a new 1200m<sup>2</sup> building. Teaching and learning will be a focus and the upgraded facility when complete in 2020 will provide an economic stimulus for the local economy.

Thanks to Graham Harry for alerting me to this story.

## Cornish pies

Cornwall has a reputation for its pies. The pasty is a classic example even if it is not traditionally baked in a dish. There are many other famous (and not so famous) recipes that demonstrate a willingness to put almost anything in a pie; starry gazey pie with its fish heads and tails for instance.

According to an 1890 book by M A Courtney called *Cornish Feasts and Folk-lore*, "A sweet

giblet pie was one of the standing dishes at a Christmas dinner - a kind of mince pie, into which the giblets of a goose, boiled and finely chopped, were put instead of beef. Cornwall is noted for its pies, that are eaten on all occasions; some of them are curious mixtures, such as squab-pie, which is made with layers of well-seasoned fat mutton and apples, with onions and raisins. Mackerel pie: the ingredients of this are mackerel and parsley stewed in milk, then covered with a paste and baked. When brought to table a hole is cut in the paste and a basin of clotted cream thrown in it. Muggetty pie, made from sheep's entrails (muggets), parsley, and cream."

A local greengrocer in Wellington was selling beautiful large bunches of fresh parsley the other day and it reminded me of Cornish parsley pie.

The pie crust is standard shortcrust pastry:

300g flour, 75g butter, 75g lard.

Rub in the fat to achieve a consistency like course breadcrumbs and then mix with cold water until the pastry comes together. Allow to rest for a while in the fridge. You could always use ready-made pastry from the supermarket.

Roll out about 2/3 of the pastry to line the base of a 20cm, deep pie dish and then add the filling:

- ■ three generous handfuls of parsley leaves removed from the stalks
- ■ some tasty meat diced – smoked bacon would be most traditional (but not thin Danish bacon) or lamb
- ■ finely chopped onion
- ■ 4 eggs

Put half of the parsley in the bottom of the pie and then add the onion and meat. Make 'nests' for the eggs and break them in keeping them whole if possible.



Finish with the rest of the parsley and season well with salt and pepper. Roll out the remaining pastry and place on the pie, sealing the edges and making a hole in the centre to let the steam escape. Brush on egg or milk to glaze and bake in the oven at 190 °C for an hour.

James Orchard Halliwell (a nineteenth century literary researcher who specialised in Shakespeare and nursery rhymes) wrote in his 1861 book, Rambles in Western Cornwall by the Footsteps of the Giants, "I am told that as many as two or three hundred varieties of pies could be enumerated. In fact so universal are the contents of Cornish pasties, a local proverb states that the devil will not venture into Cornwall, for if the inhabitants caught him, they would be sure to put

him into a pie".

The proverb has even inspired the following traditional song.

### Fish and Tin and Copper

Old Nick, as he was wont to do  
Was wand'ring up and down  
To see what mischief he could brew,  
And made for Launceston-town.

Chorus between each verse:

For 'tis fish and tin and copper, boys,  
And Tre and Pol and Pen,  
And one and all we may rejoice  
That we are Cornishmen.

Across the Tamar he had come,  
Though you might think it strange,  
And having left his Devon home  
Tried Cornwall for a change.

Now when to Launceston he grew near,  
A-skipping o'er the sod,  
He spied a rustic cottage there  
With windows all abroad.

And in the kitchen might be seen  
A dame with knife in hand,  
Who cut and slashed and chopped, I ween  
To make a pasty grand.

"Good Mornin', Missus, what is that?"  
"Of all sorts, is a daub.  
'Tis beef and mutton, pork and fat,  
Potatoes, leeks, and squab."

"A Cornish pasty, sure", says she,  
"And if thou doesn't mind,  
I soon shall start to cut up thee  
And put ye in, you'll find!"

In fear he turned and straight did flee  
Across the Tamar green  
And since that day in Cornwall  
He has never more been seen!

You can hear the song online by searching on YouTube.

### Add a little Cornish to your meals

Here are some words to add a Cornish flavour to your meals:

Kernewek	Sounds like	English
Hansel	<i>han sell</i>	breakfast
Kroust	<i>croust</i>	morning tea
Livyow	<i>liv yo</i>	lunch
Kinnyow	<i>kin yo</i>	dinner
Soper	<i>soap er</i>	supper
Prys soper	<i>preese soap er</i>	supper time

## Poldark series 4

Filming in Cornwall for the fourth series of Poldark finished last year and the first episode is scheduled to start on BBC1 in UK on Sunday, 10 June. But there was excitement in Redruth on 5 June when a red carpet premier was held at the Regal Cinema of the first episode. Four of the stars were there: Eleanor Tomlinson, (Demelza) Jack Farthing (Poldark's nemesis George Warleggan) Luke Norris (Dwight Enys) and Christian Brassington (Reverend Ossie Whitworth). All four took questions from the audience after the showing.

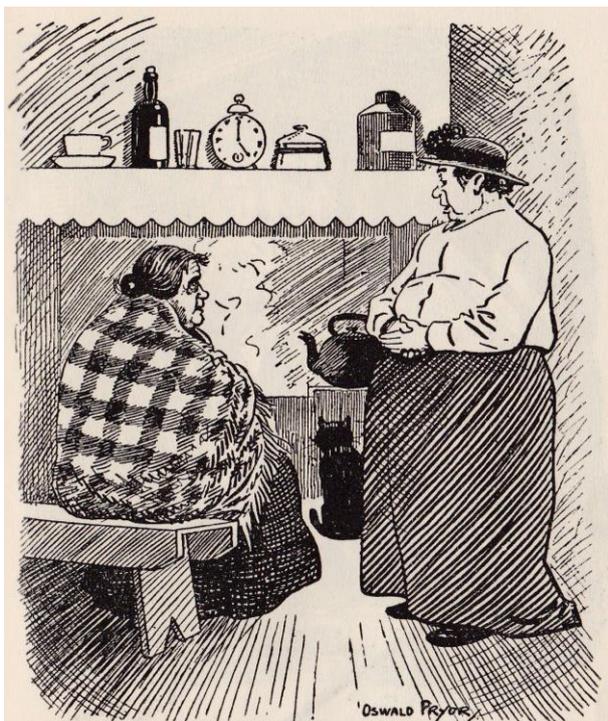


According to the BBC, in the new series, Ross must defend Cornwall from an empowered George Warleggan and risks everything he holds dear as he embarks on a political journey which takes him to the nation's capital. Demelza finds her loyalties torn, Elizabeth tries to strengthen her marriage, Morwenna continues to be oppressed by husband Reverend Ossie Whitworth and the Enyses are tested as never before.

Filming for eight episodes of series 5 is due to begin in September.

## An Oswald Pryor cartoon

Mr Pryor manages to capture the distinctive lack of logic of the Cornish idiom that still makes perfect sense! It also seemed quite seasonal as we feel the first colds and sniffles of winter.



*"If I d' live 'til mornin' and all's well, I'll stop in bed sick with the doctor"*

## Ooops!

I have an apology to make for some careless spelling mistakes in the last newsletter. While I can't avoid the responsibility, I have to apportion some of the blame on Microsoft. I relied too much on its spelling checker which, due to its origins in the US, did not detect the idiosyncrasies of Cornish and NZ place names. I had spelled St Columb as Column and Lyttelton as Lyttleton. Thanks to the keen-eyed readers who pointed out the errors of my ways.

## Taranaki Branch

On 12 May there was a small gathering of members in New Plymouth where they heard stories of immigrants obtained from the Research Centre of Puke Ariki Library including a number of letters read by Elaine James. Elaine's reading then stimulated discussion and reminiscing about the experiences of the early immigrants to the area.

One of the stories involved Mary Williams. Born in Helston in 1803 into a mining family, Mary married William Marshall. In 1840 they decided to seek a better life for themselves and their three sons in New Zealand. They undertook a 122 day voyage from Plymouth, Devon, to the Sugar Loaf Islands off Moturoa, now part of New Plymouth city. They had travelled steerage so endured horrible conditions for the four months of the voyage. There was no hope of owning land in Cornwall but they had been allocated a plot in NZ.

Their living conditions on arrival aren't known. It could have been communal sharing in one of the raupo huts built for the purpose or possibly a tent. Neither would have been ideal for a family of growing boys with the seasons turning to autumn and winter, not to mention Taranaki's high rainfall.



Neither do we know how William made ends meet while they were getting established. He had a fondness for farm animals and may have worked as a farm labourer. When a horse arrived by boat from Kawhia for Mr Creed, the Wesleyan Missionary, it was William who jumped on its back and rode up and down the beach. We can easily imagine his glee at being on a horse again. There were only two in the district at the time.

But in October when the horse fell ill, Creed took it to a surgeon with veterinary skills to be

bled - a cure-all for every ailment at the time. William held a foreleg to keep the horse steady. It lashed out, catching him so hard in the abdomen he would die within two days.

His family must have been swamped in sorrow as they watched him pass away after coming all the way by ship from England to be buried so soon. There were no relatives to help with the funeral arrangements or provide a shoulder to cry on. An offer was made 'to pass the hat' for enough money to pay for Mary and her children to return home. Mary refused. "It was William's wish to come here," she said. "For William we will stay." There is a stone cairn beside Ngamotu Beach to mark his resting place.

Mary later married Samuel Mathews from the Amelia Thompson, after his wife Susannah died, leaving him seven children to raise. Together they had a daughter, Jane.

*This article was based on the Puke Ariki website page written by Rhonda Bartle [no relative, as far as I know!].*

### **Christchurch Branch**

Acting President Dorothy Drew welcomed 26 members and 3 guests to the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Christchurch Branch on Saturday, 14 April. Apologies were received from several other members.

The Secretary read the minutes of the 2017 Annual General Meeting then the Treasurer reported a satisfactory balance sheet and recommended a small increase in the annual subscription from \$20 to \$25 per annum, the first increase for some years.

Jeanette Beaumont was declared the new President filling the vacancy left after the passing of long-time incumbent Val Moore.

The sitting vice - presidents Dorothy Drew, Les Mitchell & Mac Reynolds were joined by Heather Gladstone who replaced Judy Wright who now lives in the Bay of Plenty.

Les Mitchell was re-elected as Secretary and Mikki Micklesson became the new Treasurer. The Committee to assist the other office holders was to be made up of Margaret Swaney, Jean Piper, Joyce Doney, Rose Donald, Adrienne Parton, Bruce Moore and Barbara Reed.

The Acting President proposed a vote of thanks to Jeanette Beaumont for her outstanding service as Treasurer over many years.

Heather Gladstone proposed that Doug Lamb, Nadine & Craig Williamson be invited to become honorary members of the Christchurch branch in recognition of their help with the entertainment over the years. This was greeted with loud applause.

After the formalities, Sue & Doug McKay spoke on the second half of their European trip that had taken them through Turkey, Greece, Italy and France. The afternoon was completed with refreshments and a raffle.

On 5 May, the new President Jeanette Beaumont welcomed 36 members and guests to the annual pasty lunch.

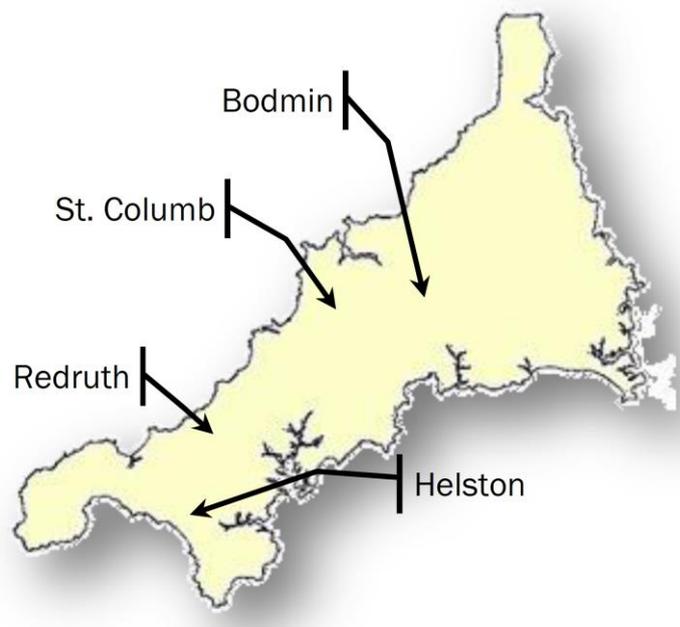
Before the meal there were the traditional toasts to The Duke of Cornwall, to "Kernow" and to Absent Friends and grace was sung in the Cornish language.

After lunch, while members enjoyed a cup of tea, Les gave the latest news from Cornwall and some notices of future meetings.

Heather with her guest artists provided a varied programme of entertainment. They then led the singing of some well-known Cornish songs, finishing with a rousing rendition of "Trelawney".

There was a special presentation of membership badges to Doug and Nadine.

### **Places mentioned in this newsletter**



That's it for this newsletter. - All the best, my 'ansomes!

*Nide*