

May / June 444 - mls Me / mls Metheven 2019

**President**

Elaine James  
74 Paynters Avenue  
Strandon  
New Plymouth 4312

Ph: (06) 769 9904  
E-mail: e-james@xtra.co.nz

Web Site: <https://sites.google.com/site/nzcornish/home>

**Secretary & Treasurer**

Nick Bartle  
49 Lohia Street  
Khandallah  
Wellington 6035

Ph: 027 578 8568  
E-mail: nzcornishassociation@gmail.com



■ ■ Est. 1962 ■ ■  
Founder: Cliff Trevelyan  
Trevelyan an Tyrnoweth

# NEWSLETTER

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

## National meeting

The national meeting held in New Plymouth on Saturday, 11 May was a great success. A big vote of thanks to the Taranaki Branch for being such warm hosts.

Proceedings started with lunch. Delicious pasties were provided by Paul Dalton at Traditional Cornish Foods. Paul generously donated pasties for everyone as well as getting them delivered from his Cambridge bakery to New Plymouth.



Next time you travel through the Waikato be sure to make a detour to 19 Victoria Street (entrance off Bath Street) in Cambridge to sample a pasty or two or three...! Paul sells his pasties at various markets in the Waikato

and will also courier frozen pasties around the country. To place your order phone 027 5323618, go online to [www.cornishpasties.co.nz](http://www.cornishpasties.co.nz) or find the Cornish Pasties NZ page on Facebook.

There were over 20 members at the meeting including four national members and two members from Christchurch. Official business got under way at 1:30 with a welcome from Elaine James, Taranaki Branch President. Elaine presented her report as acting national president. She expressed thanks to her local support team and loyal members, sparing a thought for those who have passed away over the last two years.

The secretary's report recorded that membership had declined sharply to only 87 paid-up

members at 31 March 2019. By contrast, thanks to generous donations, the finances were in good health. A copy of the independently-reviewed financial statements is enclosed with this newsletter.

Elections of members. Elaine James was the only nomination for national president so was elected unopposed. Jeanette Beaumont and Janet Grange were elected as national vice-presidents due to their positions in their respective branches. Nick Bartle was also the only nomination for secretary/treasurer so was re-appointed to the role.

Given the financial position, it was decided not to change the national subscription from \$10.00 a year. Branch subs are set a little higher so that the branch can retain some funds to cover costs.



Resolutions were passed unanimously to reimburse travel expenses for out-of-town officers and to cover admin costs of the secretary/treasurer.

There was some discussion around the operation of the Association's bank accounts and it was decided to "future proof" signing authorities by making the Branch treasurers signatories as well as the national treasurer. A further \$1,000 was to be placed on term deposit with KiwiBank bringing the total on deposit to \$7,000.

The representatives of the Christchurch Branch kindly agreed to host the next meeting in May 2021.

When the business was concluded and the meeting closed, Geoff Curson outlined his work so far on the history of the Association describing how he was summarising past newsletter and reading quotes from his draft.



National president, Elaine James, opens the meeting

Then the Phoenix Morris Dancers entertained with traditional dances tunes and songs inside, outside and all around the houses of the Telford Retirement Village. The residents seemed enchanted by their energy and enthusiasm. One of the dances was called the Tinner's Rabbit and depicted the hunting and capture of a rabbit. It was inspired by the three hares symbol common in the West Country of the UK.



Each hare appears to have 2 ears but there are actually only 3 ears shared between the animals. The dance is performed by three dancers using sticks to represent the connection between the hares. The Tinner's Rabbit sounds as if it could be Cornish. Unfortunately, as far as anyone can tell it originated in south Devon.

The afternoon (and what a great afternoon it was!) ended with the obligatory afternoon cuppa and raffle.

### All change!

Those with an eye for detail may already have spotted that my address and phone number in the masthead have changed. I am shifting home to Khandallah in July. If you wish to write to me please use the new address. I have not organised a new telephone connection yet so if you wish to speak to me please call or text me on my mobile.

The move is prompting a change in internet provider so there is a new e-mail address too.

Google is replacing the free website service that the Association has been using. It may mean that there is a new website address in the near future. Developments may require some additional training that could take time to organise. Stay tuned for developments.

### Subscription time

The new subscription year began on 1 April so the subs for 2019/2020 are now due. As agreed at the national meeting, the rate of national subscription is \$10.00 per annum.

**National members:** please complete the enclosed renewal form (which confirms your contact details) and post it back or send me an e-mail with the same information. The new e-mail

address is [nzcornishassociation@gmail.com](mailto:nzcornishassociation@gmail.com)

There are two ways to pay your sub:

- Post me cash or a cheque with your renewal form or
- Deposit the money direct into our bank account at a Kiwibank Branch or by online banking. The account number is 38-9003-0932058-02 and be sure to put your name in the bank reference fields so I know who has paid.

**Branch members:** please see your local treasurer. When you pay your branch sub they will forward part of it to me.

### Party time

May is a month of celebrations and events across Cornwall.

The first on the calendar is Padstow 'Obby 'Oss held on 1<sup>st</sup> May. Two 'Osses parade around the town throughout the day accompanied by dancers, drums, accordions and teasers wearing either red or blue



ribbons. The red denotes the Old 'oss and the blue for the Blue Ribbon 'oss.

The teasers are meant to excite each 'oss into a frenzy of crazy gyrations. The legend goes that any young woman caught under the 'skirt' of one of the bizarre costumes will become pregnant within a year. This year, one lady suffered a neck injury allegedly from the Blue Ribbon 'oss and was air-lifted to hospital.

The Padstow revelry is a bawdy affair driven by beer and fertility rights. In contrast at Helston a week or so later, the citizens dress in their ball gowns, tops hats, white ties and tails to dance through the streets of the town. It is much more polite and refined but also believed to stem from a celebration of Spring and the coming Summer.

Both events draw crowds from all around.



Helston Flora Day is characterised by four dances led by a brass band starting with the morning dance at 7 a.m. The children's dance is held later in the morning,



the main dance at midday and an evening dance at 5 p.m. The Hal-an-Tow is also performed around the town between-times and is a type of mystery play involving characters based on Robin Hood, St George and St Michael.

## International competitions

2019 was also a year in which the Cornwall International Male Choral Festival was held. Male voice choirs are part of Cornish tradition – picture gangs of miners going underground. The festival started in 2003 and has been held every two years since growing in stature and reputation.



60 choirs took part with over 3,000 all-male voices but ages ranged from schoolboys to retirees. 28 Cornish choirs were joined by choirs from South Africa, Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, Russia, Lithuania and Croatia as well as 22 from England, Scotland and Wales.



Champion choir was the Croatian Klapa Kastav vocal ensemble. Celtic Male Ensemble took second place and won the shield for best overall

Cornish Choir. Both were in the 40 voices and under category.

Of the larger choirs with 41 voices or more, Muntra Musikanter, a Finnish-Swedish choir, took first prize. Mousehole Male Voice Choir came third and was the highest ranked Cornish choir in the category.

The winners of the youth competition were boys from a South African Methodist college who will also made a voyage of discovery about the heritage of their school: St Stithians College near Johannesburg was named after the 1859 birthplace of one of its benefactors - Albert Charles Collins originally of Stithians, Cornwall.



If you enjoy male choir music (I know many of you do) there are hours of recordings on You Tube. The festival was held in numerous locations around Cornwall but the finals and most international choir performances were based in Truro Cathedral which is a wonderful setting with great acoustics.

There was international competition of a more

physical nature at the 30th World Pilot Gig Championships on the Isles of Scilly in May. It was an eventful month.

Held over the long weekend at the start of the month including the May Day public holiday, 2019 was the event's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It is the highlight of the visitor season for the Scilly Isles.

This year's competition is likely to have been the biggest ever with a massive 169 gigs competing.



Its popularity means that it is out-growing the time and facilities available. Next year they're limiting the number of boats.

Most competitors are from Cornwall and south-west England but teams from the Netherlands are regular competitors. This year there were also teams from USA and Bermuda. Echoing the Jamaican bobsled team at the winter Olympics, this was the first time the Bermudan crew had competed against or even met other gig rowers.

The Cornish pilot gig is a six-oared rowing boat, built to strict specifications using Cornish narrow leaf elm, 32 feet (9.8 m) long with a beam of 4 feet 10 inches (1.47 m). Designed as a general work boat, gigs were used to transport harbour pilots out to incoming vessels. Crews would race to get their pilot on board a vessel first in order to get the job and hence the payment. Gigs were also one of the first shore-based lifeboats helping vessels in distress, with recorded rescues going back as far as the late 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Two Cornish crews were rightly crowned 2019 world champions. Falmouth Gig Club took the honours for the ladies in a new boat named Arwennack that was launched in January this year. The men from Looe Rowing Club retained the world title for the second year in Currah's Pride, a relatively new boat built by one of the boat club's members for last year's event.

## Running away to Cornwall

If you ever feel like visiting Cornwall to see some of the exciting and unique events but are put off by the daunting cost of air fares and accommodation, perhaps you should take some advice from National President, Elaine James.

She has taken advantage of the service provided by some banks of allowing you to give

your bank accounts special names. Her favourite account, into which she deposits any spare change and small regular savings, is her "Running away to Cornwall" account.

The bank clerk could see the benefit of it once the logic was explained. Even small savings eventually add up so that you can fulfil those dreams and run away to Cornwall.

### Cornwall spotting

If you use a computer with Microsoft Windows 10 you will be familiar with the pictures that appear on screen when you turn on your computer and while you are signing in.

The scenes are from all around the world of stunning places photographed by very skilled people. It is frustrating at times not knowing where some of the places are. It seems almost random that a message shows up "Like what you see?" that you can click to answer a short survey: "No, thanks" or "Show me more like this". It then tells you the location.

The other day I thought I recognised the craggy cliffs and distinctive islands in a lovely sunset landscape. The question appeared so I was able to confirm my suspicions and ask to see more. It was Bedruthan Steps on the north coast of Cornwall.

The coast here is owned by the National Trust. The narrow strip of golden sand all but disappears at high tide and is accessed only by a steep path and steps down the cliff face. Bedruthan is believed to be derived from the Kernewek *Bos Rudhen* meaning Red-one's dwelling. Legend has it that a giant used the rock stacks as stepping stones to cross the bay without getting his feet wet.

These days the rock stacks are a drawcard for climbers. Each one has a name and from north to south they are Queen Bess, Samaritan Island, Redcove Island, Pendarves Island and Carnewas Island. Samaritan Island is named after a ship the Good Samaritan which was wrecked there in October 1846 with the loss of nine lives. A rhyme written at the time states

"The Good Samaritan came ashore,  
To feed the hungry and clothe the poor,  
With barrels of beef and bales of linen,  
No poor soul shall want for a shilling".



The coastline is notorious for wrecks.

Not only is the site beautiful during the day and at sunset but it is also designated a Dark Sky Discovery site. The low light pollution grants good viewing of the Milky Way and the general night sky.

### Christchurch

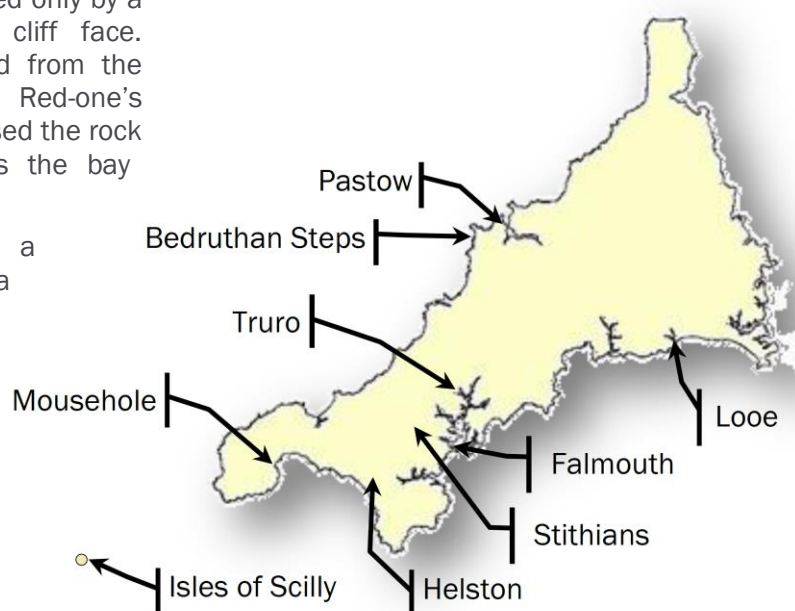
20 members attended the Christchurch Branch meeting on 13 April. 10 more sent apologies that they couldn't be there.

Judy Wright, who moved from Christchurch to Martinborough some time ago stays in touch by sending Powerpoint slide shows of news from Cornwall there are presented by Doug Lamb.

The highlight of the afternoon was a quiz hosted by Les Mitchell with an emphasis on Cornwall. Consisting of 20 questions, the quiz caused MUCH groaning and head scratching. The winning team scored a creditable 13.

Proceedings ended with afternoon tea and the drawing of a raffle.

### Places mentioned in this newsletter



That's it for this newsletter my 'ansomes. See 'ee again dreckly!