

President

Val Moore
53 Philpotts Road
Mairehau
Christchurch 8052

Ph: (03) 386 1313
E-mail: valtanton@hotmail.com

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

Secretary

Nick Bartle
88 Weka Street
Miramar
Wellington 6022

Ph: (04) 388 1958
E-mail: nzcornish@slingshot.co.nz



Est. 1962
Founder: Cliff Trevelyan
Trevelyan an Tyrnoweth

NEWSLETTER

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

Christmas in Mousehole

One of the best-known Christmas traditions in



Cornwall are the Mousehole harbour lights.

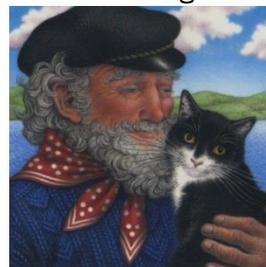
The picturesque fishing village has been decorating its buildings, streets and harbour with lights at Christmas for over 50 years. The seeds were sown in 1963 by local artist, Joan Gillcrest, who strung lines of coloured bulbs along both quays to make the village a bit brighter at Christmastime. The displays grew very quickly having caught the imagination of a couple of village carpenters who made and donated items to the displays. Today the largest set piece is the 'Merry Christmas Happy New Year' which is 50m long, 6m high and contains nearly 1,000 bulbs. In total there are over 7,000 bulbs, rope lighting and low voltage light systems, 20 strings of lanterns with around 50 lamps in each, over 40 set pieces all made by a volunteer team and 9 km of cable. Annual running costs are around £16,000 (approaching NZ\$40,000) paid for by donations from the 30,000 or so visitors each Christmas and fund raising events during the year

During their history the lights have had to weather badly-timed storms. In 1989, on the night before the switch-on ceremony, a major storm breached the bulks used to close off the harbour entrance and wreaked havoc amongst the exhibits in the harbour where they are positioned to take best advantage of the reflections in the water and be visible to all the visitors. All the damage was repaired in a couple of days. Fortunately the whale - a new exhibit being introduced that year - had been due to go on display at the last

minute so avoided the storm and has featured in the harbour ever since.

The most ambitious project is a Celtic cross on St Clement's Island 500m off shore of the harbour mouth. It was introduced as a Millennium project powered by a 110 volt subsea cable. For 2009 it was refurbished and converted to being powered by a wind generator. Then, during the Valentine day storm of 2014, the whole cross was lost to the sea. It has been replaced and is now powered by solar panels.

The lights are not the only claim to fame for Mousehole at the festive time of year. It also has the tradition of Tom Bawcock's Eve on 23 December. Tom was a local fisherman and hero. The story tells that leading up to one Christmastide many, many years ago Mousehole was suffering from a famine. Fish was the staple diet and a series of storms had prevented the fleet from putting to sea. It was approaching Christmas and the population was starving. Tom, a widower, was the only fisherman willing to leave the harbour in search of a catch. He braved the raging storm and returned with a haul so large that his boat could scarcely stay afloat. The village was able to celebrate Christmas again with a range of tasty fish meals. The one that stands out is stary gazey pie, a mixed fish, egg and potato pie striking in its appearance because the



fish heads poke through the pastry piecrust and gaze at the stars.

Mousehole and increasingly the surrounding villages and towns have continued to mark Tom's bravery on the day before Christmas Eve. The story has been immortalised in a beautiful children's book - The Mousehole Cat by Antonia Barber. A video is available on You Tube for anyone wishing to entertain younger family members over Christmas with a good yarn that



suits the season. Be sure to explain that the locals pronounce it “Mouzle” not “mouse hole”.

Cornish links to the Melbourne Cup

I am often surprised where I notice references to Cornwall. Prince of Penzance was the name of the horse that won the Melbourne Cup this year. I didn't study the field in advance and relied on the office sweepstake for my annual flutter. I wish



I had taken more interest because I might have backed the NZ-bred bay gelding simply because of its name and cashed up on its outside odds. I first noticed the name as we sat around the TV in the office minutes before the start of the race and the commentator was naming the horses as they entered the starting gates. I have not been able to find out what inspired the owners to call the horse Prince of Penzance but the trainer, Darren Weir, has his stables in Ballarat, part of the Cornish Copper Triangle in South Australia.

One of the other runners in the race was owned by the Godolphin thoroughbred horseracing stable founded by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Emir of Dubai. Godolphin House is an ancient estate near Helston in Cornwall, now owned by the UK National Trust. I wondered why the Emir of Dubai would chose to name his stud after a Cornish estate.

The link dates back to the early 1700s and to Francis Godolphin who was member of parliament for Helston from 1701 to 1710. Among other top level positions in the British royal household of the time he acted as lord warden of the stannaries (Cornish courts), high steward of the Duchy of Cornwall and Governor of the Scilly Islands. He was elevated to 2nd Earl of Godolphin on the death of his father in 1712 and was created Baron Godolphin of Helston in 1735.

He had the distinction of owning one of the three Arabian stallions that founded the modern thoroughbred lineage of racehorses – The Godolphin Arabian or Godolphin Barb. The horse was foaled in Yemen (hence the Arabian label) in about 1724 and had a series of distinguished owners across the Middle East and Europe and was finally bought by the 2nd Earl of Godolphin who placed him in his Cambridgeshire stud until the horse died in 1753.

It all makes sense why the middle-eastern stud should choose its name from such a significant ancestor in the racing industry.

Add a little Cornish to your day

There is a different format for this section of the newsletter due to the season.

If you would like to bring in the New Year with a blend of Celtic cultures here are the words of Auld Lang Syne (a traditional Scottish song usually sung very drunkenly at Hogmanay) translated into Kernewek by R Morton Nance. It fits the usual tune.

Avyth ankevys coweth coth?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot?

Na nefra dres dhe vrys?
And never brought to mind?

Avyth ankevys coweth coth?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot?

Ha'n dedhyow sol-a-brys?
And days of auld lang syne?

Dhe'n dedhyow sol-a-brys, ow hur
For auld lang syne, my dear

Dhe'n dedhyow sol-a-brys
For auld lang syne

Gwren evu tos carensa whath
We'll take a cup of kindness yet

Dhe'n dedhyow sol-a-brys
For auld lang syne

Tin – the movie

The DVD of a film “Tin” has recently been released. Produced entirely in Cornwall by Miracle Theatre, TIN sold out Cornish cinemas earlier this year. It stars Jenny Agutter, Dudley Sutton and Redruth-born opera star, Benjamin Luxon, who joined the original cast of the stage play from which the film developed..



In the winter of 1890 a windswept troupe of actors arrives in a small town to give a performance of Beethoven's opera

“Fidelio”. The inhospitable, granite-grey town is in crisis: its once-glorious tin mine, upon which everyone's livelihood has depended for generations, is on its last legs.

The actor-manager's business acumen proves no match for local cunning and she is misled into investing in the mine. When it unexpectedly yields up new treasures, any notion of fair play is abandoned.

Three contrasting love stories unfold as villagers and actors seize an opportunity to transform their lives. As the community's spiritual leaders come to blows deep underground, a



performance of Beethoven's 'Fidelio' is given in the town hall – against all odds.

One strand of the story is based on Edward Bosanketh's novel 'Tin', published in 1888 about his father's involvement in a blatant swindle by a local bank. The protagonists were based on well-known local characters (thinly disguised) and the story exposed the real-life dodgy bank dealings. Subsequently, Bolitho's Bank attempted to buy and burn all copies of the book. Fortunately a few survived and this colourful Victorian novel provided the basis for a stage play produced by Miracle Theatre in 2012, in partnership with English Touring Opera and Cornish Mining World Heritage Site. It took a further 3 years to transform this show into a feature film.

To tell this very Cornish story, the producer, Annie Ukleja, decided to work with local actors, crew and postproduction facilities and a tiny budget of £100,000. To some extent the end product reflects the low cost but it does so with a quaint style that adds to the overall humour and charm. The visual effects were done by award-winning animation company Spider Eye, which just happens to be based in the old Consolidated Bank building in St Just, where the real-life forgery took place 135 years ago.

The film's writer and director, Bill Scott will be visiting family in NZ for Xmas and is hosting the NZ premier screening at Flicks Cinema in Titirangi. Apologies that the newsletter won't reach you in time to go along.

Members in the Wellington area are invited to watch the DVD at my place at 88 Weka Street Miramar at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, 16 January 2016. Please contact me (details above) before 8 January if you are intending to come. Hope you can make it, Nick

You can buy the DVD for £16.00 on-line at <http://www.tinmovie.com/> or by contacting Miracle Theatre, Krowji, West Park, Redruth TR15 3AJ Cornwall. Telephone 01209 216762

Cornish-themed interior décor

Another surprising Cornish 'find' was while browsing in a furniture shop for curtain fabric. Leafing through the samples I noticed one fabric covered in Cornish place names – Truro, Falmouth, Padstow and more. Just in case you feel like redecorating with a truly Cornish motif, the fabric is called "Shore Signs" and is part of the Pegasus Coastline range of materials with strong seaside themes in three colour ways distributed in NZ by James Dunlop Textiles.



Christchurch branch

The branch held a meeting on Saturday, 10 October 2015 in St. Pauls Church, Papanui.

As asbestos was found in the ceiling space of the hall complex during an inspection, a last minute change saw us move into the church for this meeting.

The President opened the meeting welcoming 27 members to the hopefully temporary meeting place. Several apologies were received.

President Val gave her latest lesson in the Cornish language and Les presented this month's news from Cornwall.

Val then spoke of her connections in the "My Cornish Connections Series". Being from North Devon but with a Cornish grandparent, Val's beginnings in Cornwall were as a teacher at Mount Hawke and then some years at Roche where she was deeply involved with all the village social life. A twelve month teaching swap brought her to Christchurch where she met husband Bruce and then in a chance meeting at a teaching seminar in Christchurch with another teacher, Pam Barnett (Manhire), she found she had met Pam's father who had been on a trip back to Roche. Pam invited her to a Cornish Association meeting and Val has been a leading member ever since.

Our main entertainment was a DVD narrated by the Cornish born actor, John Nettles, of the mainly mid-Cornwall area that he grew up in around the clay pits and villages of St. Austell. Unfortunately with the sudden change of venue, it was difficult to find a suitable hanging point for the screen and sunlight proved to be a nuisance. There are more DVDs in the series so we hope to have a better view of what seemed to be a most interesting series some time in the future.

Following the DVD, afternoon tea was taken and raffle drawn for branch funds.

The next meeting, held on 14 November 2015, attracted an attendance of 30 and a number of apologies.

In Cornish Language lesson Val had us learning phrases to use when signing off on letters or cards.

Les reported some news of happenings in Cornwall over the past few weeks.

Dorothy Drew's discovered her connection with Cornwall after coming to Association meetings for some time as guest of great friend Ida Hocking. When she found out



that her Grandfather had been born in St. Ives, Dorothy was able to join and attends in her own right.

Dorothy's recent trip to the U.K and New York was her best holiday yet. Based on Merseyside Dorothy and her travelling companion did day trips into the countryside and tours to Wales, Ireland and Scotland visiting many well-known castles and historic sites. They had one day in London before flying to New York where they continued their sight-seeing. Returning to Auckland via San Francisco completed a most enjoyable trip. The President thanked Dorothy for her account and led a loud round of applause.

This was followed the raffle by afternoon tea.

Taranaki Branch

The Duke and Duchess of Cornwall (alias HRH Prince Charles and Camilla) were in New Zealand again in early November. One of the highlights of their tour of the country was having Tea with Taranaki in Brooklands Park in New Plymouth on 9 November. In the exclusive setting of a large marquee on The Lawn, Elaine James, president, and Carol Cowling, secretary, (pictured in their garden party finery) were lucky or well-connected enough to be invited as proud representatives of the Taranaki Branch.

The royal couple were held up by fog at Auckland airport and were nearly two hours late for the event. Meanwhile the 500 or so guests were able to enjoy cold drinks, finger food and were entertained by local musicians. The ladies spoke with the royals and Prince Charles noticed the Cornish coat of arms pin that Elaine was wearing. Carol and Elaine had a great day.

Polite as always, Carol had a letter published in the Taranaki Daily News thanking the New Plymouth District Council for organising the event. In Carol's words there was a "wide cross section of people in the community" represented at the tea which was a "good indication of the time

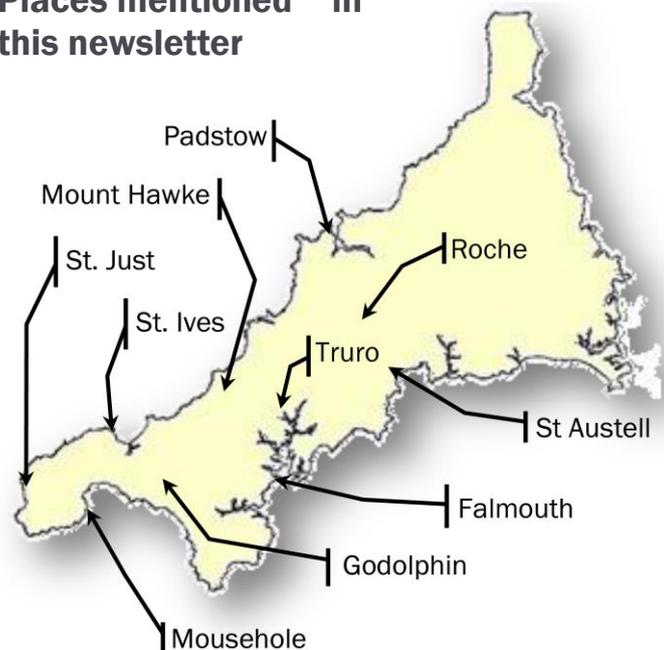


spent by many people in the Province".

The Taranaki Branch held its November/Christmas meeting at Hollard Gardens this year. They like to go somewhere different at this time of year. Members living in New Plymouth travelled south and were able to lessen the time and fuel burden for the members in South Taranaki who often make the trip to the city. Hollard Gardens is owned by the Regional Council and has free admittance, one of the many privileges provided to locals and visitors by Taranaki ratepayers. Along with other parks and special gardens it is part of what makes Taranaki famous for its beautiful environment. After quickly dealing with the official business of a quarterly meeting, members then enjoyed afternoon tea and the scenery.

The Taranaki committee recently decided that the branch can no longer participate in the annual New Plymouth Ethnic Parade. Judith Hellyar has done a great job over many years organising a float to represent many aspects of Cornish life and history but sadly the branch no longer has the strength and resources to continue that commitment.

Places mentioned in this newsletter



That's it for this newsletter and for 2015.
All the best for the festive season, my 'ansomes!

Nadelik Lowen ha Bledhen Nowyth Da

