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

N e w s l e t t e r

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

Bledhen Nowydh Da

Even though it may be February before this newsletter hits your mailbox it's the first for 2017 and still not too late to wish you happy New Year.

Notice of national meeting

2017 is a year when the NZ Cornish Association holds its biennial national meeting. This year the meeting is being hosted by the Christchurch Branch and will be held on

Saturday, 6 May 2017

**at the Methodist Church on the corner of
Chapel Street and Harewood Road,
Christchurch**

starting with lunch at 12:30 p.m.

All members and guests are welcome but please let us know if you plan to attend so that we can be sure there are enough pasties to go around! Contact Val Moore or Nick Bartle. Details are at the top of the page.

The meeting will follow our time-honoured format. After lunch the formal meeting will address reports from office holders, election of officers, subscriptions and any other appropriate business. Then there will be entertainment (the Christchurch Cornish are famous for their music, singing and dancing) and a cuppa before leaving for home. More details in the next newsletter.

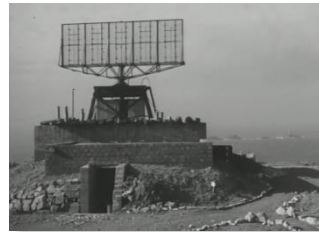
World War 2 secrets

During the years of WW2 the risk of spies resulted in the poster campaigns warning "careless talk costs lives" and "even the walls have ears". There were several highly secret military sites in Cornwall that played important roles in the defence of the UK.

Radar stations were located around the coast of the UK to detect incoming aircraft. To make sense of the multiple detections of the same aircraft, stations were linked in a chain; hence the name of "chain home" for the coastal defence. Chain home low (CHL) radar was a technology developed early in WW2 by the Air Ministry Experimental Station at Bawdsey Manor so was also called AMES Type 2 radar. It could detect aircraft flying below the level of regular

radar. It was critical to protect the strategic advantage so the locations and equipment were kept strictly secret.

There were numerous CHL stations using the apparatus including some in Cornwall at Tintagel, Portoe, The Lizard, Rame Head, Trevoze Head and RAF Mark's Castle, station CHL 17A. RAF Mark's Castle may well have been typical of the other stations. It appears to have been a hive of activity and involved a considerable amount of construction.



There were three closely-associated stations surrounding Land's End - RAF Sennen, a standard chain home radar station. RAF Mark's Castle CHL station was a cluster of buildings and aerials above Trevescan Cliff nearer Sennen Cove operated 24 hours a day, staffed on 8 hour shifts by RAF and WAAF personel that were billeted either on site or, for the officers and ladies, in Sennen Cove. The third station was on top of nearby Chapel Carn Brea, Britain's most westerly hill. It was home to a chain home extra low radar station which used signals of shorter wavelength to detect even lower aircraft.

Michael Sculthorp-Wright, a local historian based in Newmill near Penzance, has researched the stations and posted his work on a website from which I picked up most of the material for this article. His sources have been mainly personal such as letters between people who served or worked at Mark's Castle. The official information on WW2 remains under restriction until 2039 at the earliest which is 100 years after the outbreak of the war.



Michael's website includes the following story of the arrival of Nora Leggatt (pictured) one of the WAAFs, as she started her tour of duty.

"We were to operate the AMES 2 situated on the cliff above Sennen Cove towards Land's End. A

lorry drive via RAF Sennen, another RADAR site close by, drop off personnel working there and carry on with us to Mark's Castle at Land's End. We were to operate a three watch system manning the Operations Block under a male Sgt.

[The WAAF Commanding Officer] said there was a foot path we could use along the cliff if the weather was fine. It was rather a long walk but enjoyable in fine weather. She gave us the rest of the day off to settle in and familiarise ourselves with the area. As we left the cookhouse earlier we bumped in to a young man who introduced himself as Cyril Jackson the proud driver of a Standard Eight. He said he was the milk boy and lived locally on a farm. He briefly said that if we walked past the lifeboat station there was Georgina's Cove Café. The café was the nearest thing we had to a NAAFI. Pam said after Cyril went into the cookhouse, "Don't worry, I'll take you there". After unpacking our kit and settling our room we took a walk along the cove to Georgina's Café. We climbed the steps into the wooden building and received a warm welcome from the lady behind the counter and wolf whistles from the far corner from a group of soldiers. The lady soon quietened them with a stern comment. The lady came over and introduced herself and then remembered Pam had already been stationed here. "Been on leave have you my lover?" Pam put her finger to her lips and said "Walls have ears Georgina" to which Georgina laughed. "You can't keep secrets in Sennen me girl. You should know that by now. Ifin we don't know something about you, we make it up". We all laughed. Georgina asked what we would like to order. Four teas and some cake please. Pam said we should try the local cake called heavy cake. Georgina corrected her saying it's hevva cake, made in the past when good catches of pilchards were made.

The soldiers asked to join us and came over. The chap sat next to me introduced himself as Archie Easton with the Duke of Cornwall Light Infantry guarding the different areas of the county. A very boring job it was too he said. They move us around a bit to help with the boredom. We were last in Falmouth. Word has it we are off to the Scilly Isles soon for a stretch. "What silly isle is that?" I asked. He laughed. "It's Scilly not silly. They are a group of Islands about 28 miles southwest of here. You can see them on the horizon on a clear day". The tea and cake arrived. Archie explained, "You see the criss-cross in the cake, that represents fishing nets. It comes from years ago when times were hard for fishing families down here. The women would wait on the beach to see

if the menfolk caught fish. If they heard the men on their boats shouting "hevva!" as they heaved in the nets, they knew there would be some money coming in and could spend a little on food and some coal. So the women would go shopping for mixed fruit and butter to make hevva for tea. Georgina makes it when she can get the fruit on ration. The butter comes from a local farm on the QT."



Little remains of the Chapel Carn Brea site. The only visible remnants are concrete foundations in places poking through the bracken and heather. The RAF Sennen buildings were spread over a wide area incorporating Trebehor, Trengothal and Skewjack Farms. Once vacated by the RAF signals unit in 1970, some of the buildings were converted into a holiday camp called the Skewjack Surfing Village but it closed in 1986 and the buildings were demolished in 2000.

Various bunkers and operations blocks lie vacant and derelict on the site but one bunker was converted into a three bedroom home. Part of the site is still in use for communications in the Fibre-optic Link Around the Globe (FLAG) network serving two cables, one to USA and the other to France.

Yarg

Stinging nettles were the bane of my life as a kid. Many a time I would fall into a large clump while out playing with friends and emerge covered in itchy red spots. So you can imagine my reaction when I first heard of a cheese covered in the stuff! Fear not - the stings are neutralised during the processing so your tongue is not harmed in the eating.

The cheese was developed from a 13th century recipe in the 1970s by Allan and Jenny Gray.

The name yarg is Gray backwards. Production was commercialised and Lyhner Dairies have been making yarg for over 30 years. The current cheesery is in Ponsanooth.



It is a mixed-texture cheese that is creamy on the outside and crumbly in the core. Made from the milk of

grass-fed Friesian cows, each truckle (the name given to the individual rounds) is hand-coated in concentric circles of nettle leaves before being set aside to mature. The leaves attract naturally occurring moulds and impart a delicate, mushroomy taste and develop a unique bloomy white appearance.

Lyhner Dairies have more recently developed a variation using wild garlic instead of the nettles and they are set to release another cheese in

2017 at the end of its 16 month maturing process – Kern – which is a Gouda style cheese with a black wax rind.

Lyhner Dairies has won many awards, the latest were gold medals at the 2016 British cheese awards for yarg and the wild garlic version.

Cornwall Heritage Trust

Cornwall Heritage Trust owns and manages some of the most iconic heritage sites in Cornwall, working closely with local communities, Natural England and English Heritage. The sites include Treffry Viaduct, Castle an Dinas, Trevanion Culverhouse and Sancreed Beacon. It also manages other sites such as Carn Euny ancient village at Sancreed on behalf of English Heritage.

It has an education programme that provides a range of teaching resources and funds school trips to the heritage sites, school workshops and on-site learning. A bursary scheme has helped a number of students with their research into Cornish heritage.

Each year it makes grants to organisations across Cornwall to enable them to continue their own heritage work.

Its annual Sir Richard Trant Memorial Award recognises a heritage champion in Cornwall in memory of Sir Richard Trant who did so much to protect Cornish heritage and was also a former Chairman of the Trust.

It also runs a Community Outreach Programme such as community picnics and Cornish Story Cafes (Whethlow Kernow) to promote its activities and raise funds.

Treffry viaduct and Luxulyan Valley

Cornwall Council owns 66 hectares of the Luxulyan Valley, an area of considerable industrial archaeological significance within the Cornwall Mining World Heritage Site.

Joseph Treffry inherited a family estate of Place House near Fowey and, even though he did not complete his education at Oxford University, was enough of an engineer and an entrepreneur to realise that the Luxulyan Valley was a good route between the south coast and the high ground in central Cornwall which was being mined for tin and copper and quarried for china clay. He undertook a number of large-scale industrial construction projects including

- ■ ■ a harbour at Par
- ■ ■ an inclined plane railway to the Fowey Consols mine close to St Blazey.
- ■ ■ a leat (water channel) from Luxulyan at the head of the valley along its west side to the

- ■ ■ mine – a total distance of 2.7 miles
- ■ ■ The Carmears tramway running from Bugle through Luxulyan for almost the full length of the valley to Pontois Mill

The tramway needed a high-level crossing of the river and so the great viaduct was built of granite from the nearby Carbeans and Colcerrow quarries and was completed in 1844. The viaduct carried both rails and water. The quality of the design and construction had to be precise or the water would not flow. The channel, lined with “puddled-clay”, carried water until there were so many leaks that it had to be shut off in 2013 to avoid irreparable damage to the piers.

On its way down the valley the water that crossed the viaduct/aqueduct was used to power the Carmears incline, by means of a water wheel, 34 feet (10 m) in diameter. This enabled the tramway to pull loads up the incline, against gravity.

Treffry also had mining interests on Goss Moor in central Cornwall and owned Newquay Harbour. His grand plan was to extend the tramway across the peninsula from coast to coast. He did not complete the plan before he died of pneumonia in 1850. The Luxulyan Valley complex fell into disuse during the late 19th/early 20th centuries and the last of Treffry’s rails were removed in 1940.

The Cornish Heritage Trust owns the Treffry Viaduct and 250 metres of the leat contained in an area of land of about 1 hectare. The viaduct has 10 equal spans, stands 27 metres high and is 200 metres across. Built between 1839 and 1842, it was the first large civil engineering structure of its kind to be built in Cornwall, and is now a Scheduled Ancient Monument.



Cornwall Council and The Cornwall Heritage Trust launched a project to restore the viaduct and the leat. The total cost of the project will be £3.8 million. The Trust has ear-marked £0.6 million of its

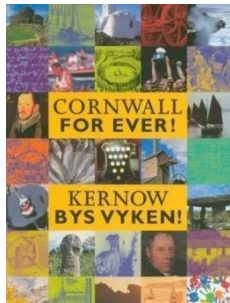
own funds, has been awarded £0.25 million by Cornwall Council, has applied for Heritage Lottery funding and has launched a public appeal.

The project will mend the leaks, re-line the leat with stainless steel, enhance the natural surroundings, improve public access and provide walks, trails and signs for the area. Large parts of the top of the viaduct will have to be dismantled to access the bedstones of the aqueduct channel. The viaduct was not designed or built with such renovations in mind. It was a requirement of English Heritage that the

water should flow in an open channel, ruling out pipes as a potential solution. However, once water starts to flow down the valley again, it will be used to power an electricity generator and the power will be sold to the national grid to offset maintenance costs.

Cornwall for ever website

In 2000 as a millennium project HRH Prince Charles, Duke of Cornwall published a commemorative paperback in association with Cornwall Heritage Trust. The book titled Cornwall for ever! Kernow bys Vyken! celebrated all things Cornish. (Even the NZ Cornish Association got a very brief mention.) A copy was given to every school-aged child in Cornwall.



The Trust has recently co-ordinated the conversion of the book into a website :

www.cornwallforever.co.uk

It covers its broad topics in four sections – the People, the Places, the History and the Year – in short attractive and easily-digested articles. Although clearly directed at a younger audience it is a useful source of interesting information.

Doomed to failure?

Just seven months after the British referendum to leave the European Union in which the majority of people in Cornwall voted to leave, Cornwall Council has announced what its media release termed “an ambitious bid to be centre stage”.

The bid is for Truro to be declared the European Capital of Culture for 2023. The bid is being supported by a range of bodies and institutions around Cornwall all of whom are trumpeting the cultural and economic benefits that Cornwall would receive if the bid were to be successful.

The EU launched the idea in 1985 when Athens was chosen as the first Capital of Culture making it a focus for all sorts of cultural events and activities for twelve months. Since then many famous cities have held the title for its year-long duration. There is no doubt that Julian German, the Council’s Cabinet Member for Economy and Culture, was enthusiastic when he said “Cornwall’s culture is world class and our ambition is to provide a platform for our writers, performers, artists, poets, producers, designers, musicians, software coders and cultural entrepreneurs to tell our

story to the world. Our bid will respect the past, but it will be about the opportunities of the present and our ambitions for the future.” The bid will be launched officially on 3 March 2017.

However, the British parliament started its debate on Brexit on 1 February and a timetable is set for the required legislation to go before the House of Lords later this month with a deadline of 7 March to pass the bill. Is it even likely that Britain will be a member of the EU in 2023? It seems Cornwall’s bid is doomed to failure.

Christchurch branch

The President opened the 10 December meeting welcoming 61 members, guests and the St. Albans Community Choir to our Christmas celebration. Several apologies were received

The St Albans choir got the entertainment underway with "Deck the Halls" and followed up with several more carols and Christmas songs.

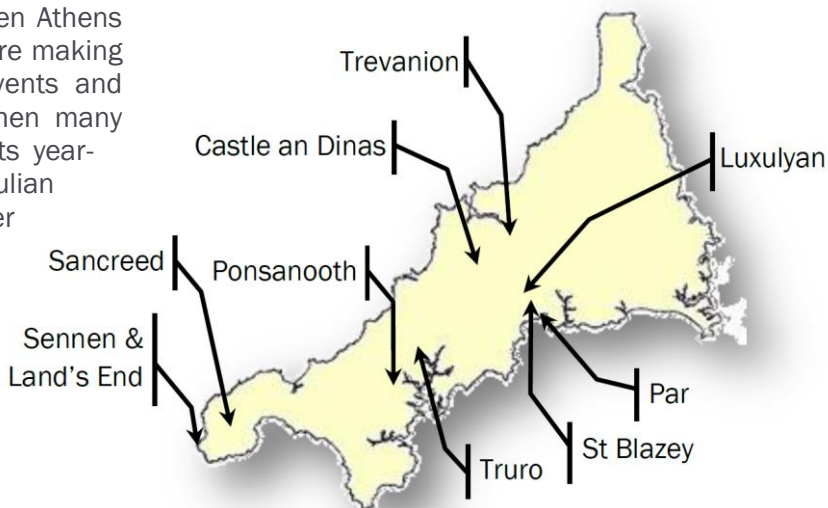
Dorothy and some members of the choir then presented a humorous musical item, and Dorothy did the honours by cutting the Christmas cake made this year by Judy.

A melodrama by choir members was presented with the President holding up prompt notices for the audience to cheer, hiss or boo at the appropriate time. An unruly group of Santa’s elves then sang a parody of the Monty Python Lumberjack song.

The audience joined the choir in some well-known popular carols finishing with "Santa Claus is coming to Town" as the old gentleman himself arrived in the hall with presents for everybody.

The afternoon ended with the President thanking the choir and inviting everyone to afternoon tea of Christmas goodies.

Places mentioned in this newsletter



That’s it for this newsletter. All the best, my ‘ansomes!