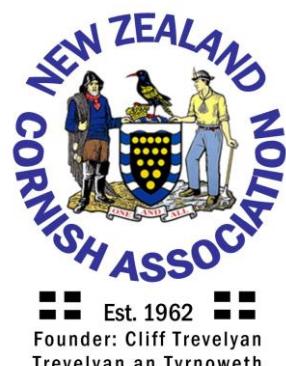


## President

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/home>

## Secretary & Treasurer

Nick Bartle  
88 Weka Street  
Miramar  
Wellington 6022  
  
Ph: (04) 388 1958  
E-mail: [nzcornish@slingshot.co.nz](mailto:nzcornish@slingshot.co.nz)



# NEWSLETTER

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

## Shearing record

Rowland Smith, master shearer and multiple award-winning sportsman, has broken the world 8 hour ewe world shearing record by clipping 644 in the time.

Rowland was born in Ruawai in Northland into a family already heavily devoted to shearing. He was taught by his father and older brothers and was shearing competitively by the age of 13. Now farming in Hawkes Bay he even married a woman who held shearing records in her own right. His wife, Ingrid, held the woman's 8 hour lamb shearing world record in 2009.

As a professional shearer, Rowland follows the seasons around the globe and has worked in Finland, Estonia and the USA. For his record attempt he found himself at Trefranck Farm, St Clether near Launceston in Cornwall. Why there? You may well ask. Rowland's brother, Matt, now manages the farm for his parents-in-law. Matt had held the 8 hour world shearing record for a while in 2010.



The eight-hour shearing marathon is broken up into four two-hour runs. Rowland worked consistently throughout the day recording 161 ewes in each of his four runs averaging 44.7 seconds per ewe but at times getting his time down to under 35 seconds.

Always keen to support the next generation of young shearers, Rowland will now be working with British Wool in its shearing training courses which take place across the UK from May through to July. No doubt he'll be back in NZ for the shearing season here and perhaps another try to win the Golden Shears. He has won four times before!

## Porthleven fire

Rick Stein, TV personality chef, has a growing business in hospitality; restaurants, hotels, cooking schools, recipe books and his television appearances. There are Rick Stein restaurants in Newquay, Falmouth, Porthleven and St Merryn.

There are so many Rick Stein properties in Padstow, it has been nick-named Padstein.

There was a fire at the Porthleven restaurant on 12 June which earned headlines in the British press such as the one in the Express: "Huge fire rips through Rick Stein restaurant – major investigation launched".

Later reports revealed that the "major fire" had, in fact, been restricted to a lean-to storage shed.

Although the store had been reduced to a shell, damage to the main building was minimal. Cornwall Fire & Rescue Service had stopped the fire from spreading. Firefighters from Helston, Tolvaddon and Mullion dealt with the fire using up to six hoses. There had been some concern that the store contained gas cylinders.



The major investigation aspect of the story was blown up out of hints of unpopularity for Rick Stein in Porthleven. On the Rick Stein website Porthleven is described as "the perfect Cornish fishing town – and the most southerly fishing town in the UK". Despite this glowing recommendation, the restaurant does not buy any of its fish from local fishermen, preferring to purchase from nearby Newlyn. The newspaper picked up on some resentment and sowed seeds that Porthleven fishermen may have committed arson to get revenge.

Trumping that implausible gossip, Metro, a free daily rag that is part of the Daily Mail Group, ran a story that the Cornish Liberation Army, described as a separatist "terror group", has claimed responsibility for fire-bombing the restaurant as direct action against the English presence in Cornwall.

Rick Stein lives mainly in Sydney these days. He turned 70 in January this year and was apparently belatedly celebrating his birthday at the time of the fire.

## Lions' tour

The tour by the British and Irish Lions rugby team has been credited with generating millions of dollars in tourist spending throughout New Zealand.



One Cornish rugby fan contributing to NZ's economy was staying near Wellington and got in touch. I was delighted to spend a couple of hours with Tim Nolan before the game against the Hurricanes. We had a great chat that ranged from the global environment to pasty making. Tim was able to update me on the local news in his wonderful Cornish accent as well as bringing me a copy of the latest West Briton newspaper and other Cornish goodies.

Tim, a retired environmental consultant, has worked for governmental agencies and charities in numerous places around the world including the Solomon Islands, Samoa and Indonesia. Now enjoying life in Lanner (only 2 or 3 miles from my home town of St. Day) we found we shared an interest in certain local hosteries. I was also delighted to find that, although he was here to see the Lions tour, he was actually supporting the All Blacks!

There is rugby throughout Tim's family. His daughter is the marketing manager for Redruth Rugby Club and her husband is their trainer. Tim's wife is Samoan and related to Ma'a Nonu; hence the support for the All Blacks. Tim is, in fact, a frequent visitor to NZ.

The only Cornish player in the Lions squad, Jack Nowell, who featured in the last newsletter, got a short period playing in the test match in Wellington which the Lions won. He was also named on the bench for the final drawn test.

## My Cousin Rachel

A new film version of the Daphne du Maurier novel, *My Cousin Rachel*, has just started screening in local cinemas. The last film of the book was made 65 years ago, shortly after the book was published, starring Richard Burton and Olivia de Havilland.

Written in 1951 while du Maurier was living in Menabilly near Fowey, I had expected it to be similar to the film version of *Rebecca*, another du Maurier classic, which was written and set around 1935. I was a bit surprised to find that *My Cousin Rachel* was a Gothic romance set more than a century earlier.

The action takes place on the fictitious Ashley estate in Cornwall, inherited by a young man from

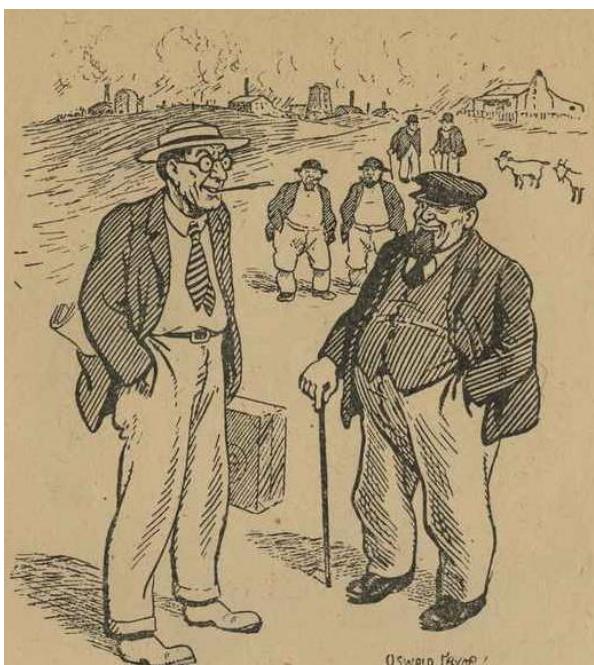
his cousin and guardian who has died in Italy. The cousin's widow comes to live with him. They fall in love but the young man struggles with suspicion over the role she played in his cousin's death. The inspiration for the main character came from a 17<sup>th</sup> century portrait of Rachel Carew. The Carews are a long-standing 'society' family in Cornwall. The story line of the film does not stick strictly to the novel and takes some artistic licence with the ending but stays true to the suspense and overall plot.

I have seen mixed reviews but I enjoyed the movie. The stars of the 2017 release are Rachel Weisz (*The Light between Oceans*) and Sam Claflin (*Hunger Games*). The look and feel of the film was like a slightly tuned-down or low-action Poldark. I have since found out that it was largely filmed on location at Flete Estate in Devon and at West Horsley Place in Surrey which explains why I was unable to recognise any of the "Cornish" countryside!



The first episode of a new series of Poldark has screened on TV just as I write and has set an action-packed pace for the rest of the series including a birth, a marriage, two deaths and a total eclipse of the moon. In the UK the episode attracted 5.5 million viewers.

## Another Oswald Pryor cartoon



"An' what part do 'ee come from Maister?"  
"Gahd's own country, Boy!"  
"Well! Tha's funny. I should NEVER 'ave picked 'ee fer a Cornishman."

## British election

The general election in the UK in the first week of June may seem a long time ago after dropping out of the headlines. The Conservative party did not do as well as expected in many parts and came close to a hung parliament.

However, the support for Theresa May remained strong in Cornwall. All six constituencies in Cornwall returned their Conservative MPs with increased shares of the vote. The darker blues areas on the map indicate an increase of 5% or more.



## William Murdoch

In almost a classic case of “any excuse for a party” Redruth has developed an annual celebration to commemorate one of its famous historic residents, William Murdoch. This year Murdoch Day was held on 17 June and consisted of parades and dancing through the town, street markets and music.



Murdoch was not Cornish but Scottish. Born in East Ayrshire to a millwright, he excelled at maths and demonstrated skill and interest in mechanics while assisting his father. At the age of 23 he walked to Birmingham and found a job with the engineering firm of Boulton and Watt. One of the partners was the James Watt of steam engine fame.

Murdoch proved himself highly resourceful and valuable to the firm. They promoted him and sent him to Cornwall to manage the installation of steam engines and pumps in the tin and copper mines. He made his home in Redruth from 1779 to 1798 in a house which, in the town of today, seems very small indeed and set in a narrow back alley.

Murdoch needed to come up with quick and ingenious solutions to technical problems to maximise the efficiency of the mine engines and keep ahead of the fierce competition of other engine manufacturers. He turned out to be a consummate inventor and scientist.

He is credited with producing the first self-propelled steam carriage. It was on a small scale, only a foot high, but he demonstrated it circling around in his living room in 1784 and at the King’s Head Hotel in Truro in 1785. This is claimed to be the first public demonstration of steam locomotion. Murdoch developed two larger models but never quite finished the necessary refinements and thereby surrendered the final invention of the full-size steam carriage to

Richard Trevithick which went up Camborne Hill coming down first in 1801. Trevithick lived next door to Murdoch for a while and it is tempting to think that he picked Murdoch’s brains or borrowed his ideas.

Murdoch also invented the sun and planet gear to solve the problem of getting continuous rotational motion from steam engines that had previously been restricted to backward and forward (or up and down) pumping action. As an employee of Boulton and Watt, the design of the gear was patented under the name of James Watt. The firm’s own records include a drawing by Murdoch and a letter written by Mr Boulton confirming that the idea originally came from Murdoch.

He did not limit himself to engineering inventions and dabbled in chemistry too. He developed a replacement for isinglass made from local cod rather than from expensive imported sturgeon. Isinglass is used to clarify beer among other things. He also accidentally discovered iron cement when ammonium chloride and iron filings mixed in his tool bag. He recognised its usefulness as a sealant for joints in the pipes of steam engines.

However, his main invention and the one of which Redruth is particularly proud is the production of gas for use in lighting homes. He devised ways of producing coal gas by heating coal, capturing it and then reticulating it around his home to replace oil and tallow as principal means of lighting. His Redruth cottage was the first home to be lit in this way.



After leaving Cornwall and returning to Birmingham he perfected the methods of gas production and scaled up his systems to be able to illuminate large factories by 1805 with hundreds of lights.

His commitments to Boulton and Watt were a constraint on his extra-curricular activities and are thought to have prevented him from making the most of the commercial potential of his inventions. One such invention he added to his growing list was the use of compressed air and vacuum to transport capsules along tubes. Better known as Lamson tubes from the largest manufacturer, they started life as a method of distributing messages but their uses soon diversified. They became popular in shops for sending customers’ payments to a central cashier (Kirkcaldie & Stains in Wellington had them in use into the 1980s) and are still used to carry medical samples to the laboratories around some hospitals.

## Royal Cornwall Show

The annual A&P show for Cornwall was held on 6, 7 and 8 June this year and, despite less-than-perfect weather conditions, 111,000 visitors braved wind and rain to enjoy the traditional range of attractions. There are livestock competitions, horse jumping, trade stalls, baking and flower arranging to name only a few. Equivalent to Field Days at Hamilton and similarly housed on dedicated grounds near Wadebridge, the show is the highlight of the agricultural calendar for Cornwall.

Befitting its royal status, a member of the royal family attends each year. In 2017 it was the turn of the Earl of Wessex to present the trophies at the end of the grand parade of prize winners. The supreme award went to Michael Alford from Devon and his Limousin heifer (pictured).



## Christchurch branch

The Christchurch branch celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday on Saturday 8 July 2017.

The St. Albans choir started the festivities by marching into the hall singing the Floral Dance.

The President then gave a short talk, briefly outlining the history of the branch from the initial meeting of 14 interested people of which two remain members, through the ups and downs of membership and the various meeting places around the city to the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration.

The cutting of the spectacularly iced cake was undertaken by original members Heather Gladstone and Les Mitchell assisted by President Val Moore all of whom are Cornish Bards.

The choir then led the singing of "Hail to the Homeland" with the first verse in the Cornish language. This was followed by two other popular Cornish songs.

Judy Wright then presented another of her items of "Cornish News" accompanied by Powerpoint views of the places involved.

Val Moore's Cornish language lesson this month was based on the invitation to the birthday meeting, all in the Cornish language, but with an English interpretation.

Charlie on accordian and Irene on keyboard then had feet tapping to a selection of dance tunes

and the nostalgic "Dark Isle." Charlie then had some of the more agile members up to do some country dancing which ended with a conga around the hall.

The choir's final bracket included 'Let's hear it for Trelawney' "The Sweet Nightingale" and finally a rousing "Trelawney" complete with the battle cry.

There was the usual raffle and a splendid afternoon tea was much enjoyed by both members and choir.

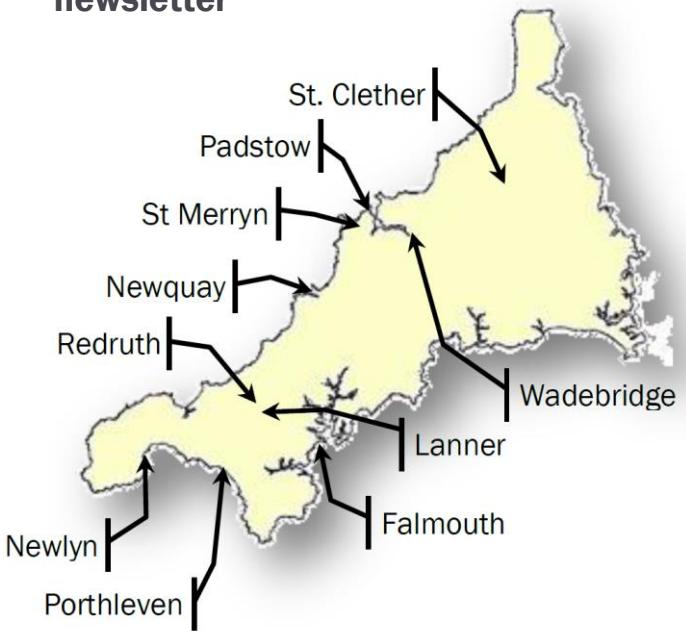
**Penn bloodh lowen dhe Christchurch!**  
*Happy Birthday to Christchurch!*

## New sponsor

I would like to record my thanks and appreciation to my employer, The Colonial Motor Company, for allowing me to use the company's copier and printer to produce our newsletters. The Association supplies the stationery but there is no charge for printing and copying.

I haven't been asked to say this but, if you happen to be thinking about buying a car or getting your current vehicle serviced by experienced and well-equipped technicians then please consider one of the many dealerships in The Colonial Motor Company Group. There are many all around the country. You can look them up at [www.colmotor.co.nz](http://www.colmotor.co.nz) or feel free to contact me.

## Places mentioned in this newsletter



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

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nick".

**Subscription reminder** If you get a reminder with your newsletter, please forgive me if I've missed your payment and drop me a line to point out my mistake. Otherwise your prompt payment would be appreciated. Thanks.