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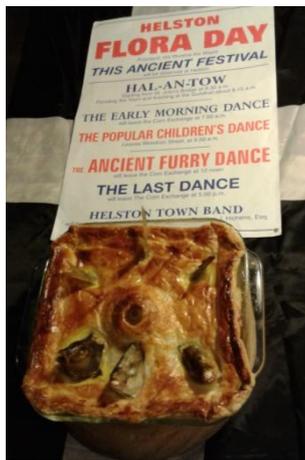
N e w s l e t t e r

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

Member news

The last newsletter included a recipe for starry gazey pie. I sent out a challenge for members to send in a picture if they made one.

Bill Trewheellar of Napier sent in this patriotic photo of a pie he made. It has a backdrop of a St Piran's flag and a poster for Helston Flora Day, a souvenir of a visit 7 years ago that Bill says was one of the happiest days of his life.



"The recipe was an enjoyable challenge," He adds. "I went fishing in my kayak and caught three suitable fish. No fish stock so used a chicken soup plus a cup of peas and one of sweet corn. Absolutely delicious."

Well done, Bill. You went above and beyond the call of duty to actually catch the fish yourself and the picture looks as if it could have come out of a recipe book.

Cornish in unexpected places

Details for the following article were provided by Gordon Grey, a member who actually lives in Probus, Cornwall.

Gordon wrote to say that whilst on holiday on the Isle of Man (one of the six Celtic nations along with Cornwall) he visited Laxey and was surprised to see a Cornish flag flying alongside a Manx flag. A little research in the guidebook soon uncovered the Cornish link.



Laxey is a mining centre that used to produce zinc and lead and is home of the largest surviving water wheel in Europe. Named the Lady Isabella,

the huge wheel measures 72½ feet (22m) in diameter and is six feet wide. It serves the same purpose as the steam engines did in Cornish tin mines – to pump out water and prevent flooding in the lower levels. Water was plentiful on the Isle of Man and coal was not so the construction of the waterwheel was a sound economic choice. There are other clear similarities with Cornwall such as the style of the houses around the wheel.

The three men who were instrumental in the development of the waterwheel were George W Dumbell, chairman of the board of directors of the mine company, Robert Casement, a Manxman who, as a self-taught engineer, designed the wheel, and Richard Rowe, a Cornishman experienced in tin mining, who was appointed mine captain.

Streams and rivers flowing down the surrounding hills were directed into a large cistern at the head of the Laxey valley. From there, the water flows by gravity through an underground pipe and is then forced up the tower to be delivered at the top of Lady Isabella so that its weight turns the wheel. A large crank converts the revolving motion of the wheel into the linear movement required to operate the mine pumps. The water then continues its journey down the valley to the washing floor which was the equivalent to the stamps of Cornish mines. Here smaller wheels harnessed yet more energy from the water.



Another wheel on the Laxey site has very close links to Cornwall. At 50 ft in diameter it is a baby compared to the monster higher up the valley. It started its working life in 1865 high in the Laxey Valley at the Snaefell mine. By 1910 the mine had done its dash and the wheel was disassembled. It was sent to power pumps at a china clay pit at Blisland north of Bodmin in Cornwall. That pit too had fallen into disuse by the 1950s. In 1971 the Cornish Wheel

Preservation Society (which became part of the Trevithick Society) came to the rescue and took the wheel apart again for storage. It spent some time at a museum at Llywernog Silver Lead Mine in Wales but was not put to use there and was returned to the Isle of Man in 2003. The wheel was erected down the valley from its original location in the Valley Gardens where the washing floors once graded and sorted the ore.

The Trevithick Society presented the wheel to the people of the Isle of Man as a gift from the people of Cornwall. After three years its restoration was complete and the wheel, christened the Lady Evelyn, turned again in August 2006. Pictured are the flags flying at the opening ceremony to mark the contribution of three Celtic nations in the restoration of the Lady Evelyn.



Many thanks to Gordon for bringing this great story to our attention and for providing copies of the guide books from Laxey which will be added to the Association's library and will be available for members to borrow.

Probus

Probus, Gordon's home village, lies on the A390 road between Truro and St. Austell and is famous for the Grade 1 listed Norman church of St. Probus and St. Grace which boasts the tallest church tower in Cornwall. The body of the church was built in the 15th century and the tower was added in the early 1500s but the religious history of the site goes back a lot further. There was a monastery here until the 12th century and the first vicar was appointed in 1312. The main building underwent restoration in the 1850s and it was the tower's turn for a makeover in the 1920s. The pipe organ was installed in 1884 by the Plymouth firm of Hele & Co.



I personally remember Probus as a good place to stop on the way home from day trips to places like Mevagissey or Looe. There was a good fish & chip shop on the main street.

The area around Probus is rich in natural history. Nearby Trehane Barton is one of only 11 recorded breeding sites of the greater horseshoe bat in Britain. The soil is fertile and the village was home to Cornwall Council's demonstration gardens until their closure in 2004. Just outside the village is Trewithen, a grand 18th century house with gardens well-known for their collections of magnolia and rhododendrons. The

ceanothus 'Trewithen Blue' and rhododendron 'Trewithen Orange' were bred here.

Red squirrels

In March 2012 Trewithen set up a home within its walled garden for two female red squirrels. In July of that year Prince Charles, Duke of Cornwall, released a male into the enclosure. The breeding programme has been successful and in January 2016 it was reported that the females appeared to be preparing to give birth for a second time.

Prince Charles is Patron of the Red Squirrel Survival Trust which is involved at Trewithen and at a more ambitious level with the Cornwall Red Squirrel Project which aims to create protected habitats on the two peninsulas of southern Cornwall in West Penwith and the Lizard. These sites have been identified as being suitable for re-introduction because both areas have ideal wooded valleys and mixed woodland. Being surrounded by sea on three sides they are also more easily defended against re-population by grey squirrels. The main method of controlling the reintroduction of grey squirrels, once they have been eradicated, will be selective trapping.

Red squirrels are the species native to UK and Cornwall and were common until the introduction of the grey squirrel from America in 1876 as an ornamental species. The grey is generally larger and bolder than the timid red and also carries the squirrel pox virus. Greys show no symptoms of the virus but it has decimated the population of red squirrels which are now listed as one of UK's most endangered mammals.



Not only do the grey squirrels pose a significant competitive threat to red squirrels they also cause considerable economic and biological damage. To access sweet sap they strip bark off trees to the point of killing saplings. They also prey on eggs and chicks of nesting birds. There are so many similarities between the grey squirrel and possums in New Zealand as well as the methods of creating mainland "islands" as sanctuaries.

C'mon my Lover...

You may remember the song Pretty Girl which was a big hit in 1970 for the NZ band Hogsnoth Rupert. The band was founded in the late 60s and has continued in various forms ever since. Two of the original members have stayed with the band throughout. Alec Wishart, frontman and lead singer for the group, died earlier this year. Dave Luther, who played guitar and the

Bureaucrats get everywhere

Tristan, a Cornish farmer was overseeing his animals in a remote hilly pasture near Minions on Bodmin Moor when a shiny brand-new BMW advanced toward him out of a cloud of dust. The driver, a young man in a Saville Row suit, Gucci shoes, RayBan sunglasses and Armani tie, leaned out the window and asked the farmer, "If I tell you exactly how many cows and calves you have in your herd, will you give me a calf?" Tristan looks at the man, who is obviously a yuppie, then looks at his peacefully grazing animals and calmly answers, "OK, my burd, why not?"

The yuppie parks his car, whips out his Dell notebook computer, connects it to his iPhone 6s and surfs to a NASA page on the Internet, where he calls up a GPS satellite to get an exact fix on his location and scan the area in an ultra-high-resolution photo. The young man then opens the digital photo in Adobe Photoshop and exports it to an image processing facility in Germany. Within seconds, he receives an email on his laptop that the image has been processed and the data stored. He then accesses an MS-SQL database through an ODBC connected to a cloud-based Excel spreadsheet and almost instantly receives a response. Finally, he prints out a full-colour, 150-page report on his miniaturised HP LaserJet printer. He turns to the Farmer and says, "You have exactly 1,586 cows and calves."

"That's right, my 'ansome. Well, I 'spose 'ee can take one of my calves. 'Elp yerself!" says Tristan with a grin. He watches the young man select one of the animals and looks on with amusement as the he struggles to stuff it into the boot of his car without soiling his expensive clothes. Then Tristan says to the young man, "Ere, if I can tell 'ee zackly what your business is, will 'ee give me back my calf?" The young man thinks about it for a second and then says, "Okay, why not?"

"You're a Member of the European Parliament", says Tristan. "Wow! That's correct," says the yuppie, "but how did you guess that?"

"There ain't no guessing needed" answers Tristan. "You showed up 'ere even though nobody called 'ee; you want to get paid for a answer I already knew to a question I never asked. You used millions of pounds worth of equipment trying to show me how much smarter you be than me. But you don't know a bleddy thing about how working people like me make a living - or about cows, for that matter. This 'ere's a flock o' sheep. Now, give me back my dog."

band's signature harmonica, gave an interview on National Radio a short while ago. There was one line in the song that stood out - "C'mon, my Lover, give us a kiss". He told the story of how it came about that a Jamaican-style ska song, happened to have a single line spoken in a broad Cornish accent.

"Alec and I and a few others were in a bar having a drink on a Saturday afternoon after a football match and, of course it's a Cornish saying. They say "Lover" all the time down in Cornwall. This Cornish guy was with us and he said to one of the girls "Hey, my Lover, pass us a beer." And I said to Alec "We've got to put something into the song to make it a bit different and that's got to go into the song." So we changed it a bit and it became 'C'mon, my Lover, give us a kiss'. It just caught on. Alec couldn't go anywhere without people remembering the saying."

For anyone who wants to be nostalgic and hear Pretty Girl again, the NZonScreen website contains a video of Hogsnoet Rupert in full swing.

Back on time

On 8 May the community of St. Day came together in an "Around the Clock" grand finale celebration to re-open its town clock. "Town" is used loosely and is a reference to the days when St. Day was a bustling centre in Cornwall's mining industry.



Built in 1831, the tower cost £400 and included a lock-house to help control the growing unruliness in the market square. In 1918 it was used as the venue for the remembrance ceremony and fundraising began to incorporate a war memorial.

The clock was manually wound until 1948 when an electric mechanism was installed by a local benefactor. It chimed every quarter hour and struck the hour for the whole town to hear.

Until 2014 the clock and tower had been owned and maintained by Cornwall Council and its predecessors but was in need of more tender loving care than the Council felt able to provide. Custody was handed over to St. Day Parish Council and plans for extensive refurbishment were born including having new hardwood windows fitted, the clock faces restored, stonework repaired and repointed and the clock motor reconditioned and updated. The work cost over £100,000 and was funded by the Lotteries Board and Cornwall Council among others as well as local donations.

The opening celebrations took the form of

singing, dancing and market stalls around the clock. A song – The St. Day Clock Tower Song - was specially composed and performed to mark the occasion. After two years of silence the clock is back in action and there is no longer an excuse to be late for anything in St. Day.

Christchurch branch

28 members attended a meeting on Saturday 9 April 2016. 13 more members sent their apologies.

Margaret Swanney gave this month's talk on "My connections with Cornwall". The Rodda family tree starts with her great great grandfather being born at Madron in 1804 before going to South Australia to the mines. The family moved to South Africa for 9 years returned to Australia and finally settled in New Zealand.

President Val gave us our Cornish language lesson on the weather.

Les had some up-to-date news from Cornwall and had members interpreting some Cornish dialect sayings into English. The guest speaker was Beverley Van who is an expert in the art of growing Bonsai plants. Bev brought along a number of specimens she is working on and spoke of the material mix for growing Bonsai, the trimming of the roots to match the plants, leaf and wood growth. The plants are grown in pots which are only glazed on the outside and can be made to produce miniature flowers and fruit in proportion to their size. Before and during afternoon tea Bev answered many questions with several members saying they intended to give Bonsai growing a try. The President thanked Beverley for a most interesting demonstration

The Christchurch branch held its annual pasty lunch on 7 May and over-indulged in all things Cornish. There were 42 members and guests and apologies from 9 more who couldn't make it. A special welcome was given to Jean and Graham Harry who now live in Cambridge in the North Island.

The Padstow "Hobby Hoss" morning song was sung by members and guest artistes led by Heather on the accordion.

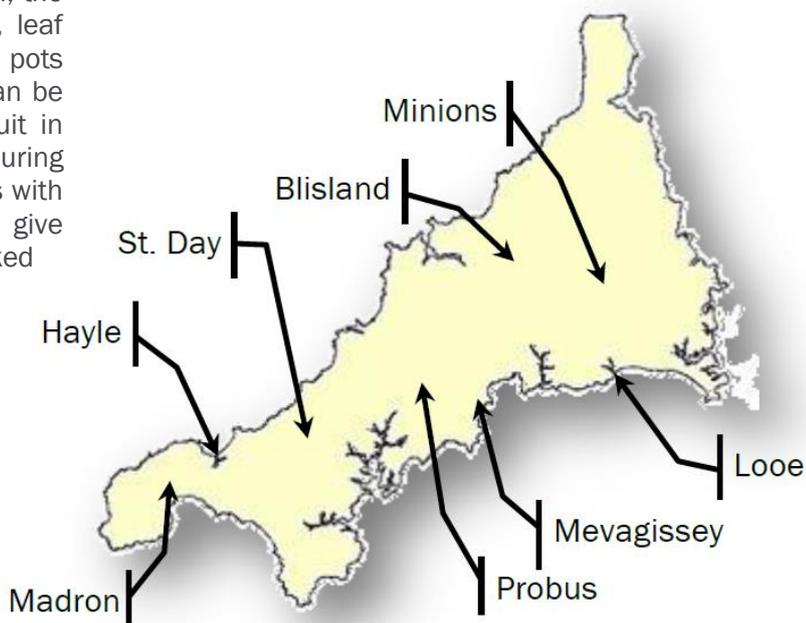
There were toasts to Cornwall, to the Duke of Cornwall and to absent friends. There were songs, music and poetry including the usual favourites like "Hail to the Homeland", "There's something about a Pasty", "Goin' up Camborne Hill" and "Trelawney" complete with the traditional battle cry of "Oggy, Oggy, Oggy".

Grace in the Cornish language was led by the President after which the pasty lunch was served to the tables by the committee ladies.

Les had some items of general news of happenings in Cornwall over the past month. Judy told of her connections with Cornwall, from being born in Redruth hospital and growing up in Hayle. One of her grandfathers was a copper miner while the other was in the Royal Navy. Her parents met while working at an aircraft factory in Gloucester during the Second World War. They married and settled in Hayle in the Copperhouse area close to the Harvey's engineering works where much of the machinery used in the mining industry was produced and where Richard Trevithick invented his high pressure steam engine.

St.Albans choir led by Heather Gladstone on her accordion provided the entertainment. Within the constraints of the room two sets of dancers led by a band with a curious tone managed a very passable version of the Helston Furry Dance to much applause. The meeting ended with afternoon tea.

Places mentioned in this newsletter



Subscriptions

Thanks to all members who have paid their subscriptions for 2016/2017 whether as a national member or to your local branch. Many have made generous donations which are gratefully received. This is a parting reminder for those of you who haven't yet paid up - now is the time to renew your membership.

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

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