

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 & Treasurer

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 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

Queen's Service Medal

Keslowena - belated congratulations to Heather Gladstone, a Christchurch branch member, who received the Queen's Service Medal in the 2015 New Year Honours. Heather organises much of the music for the Branch, often leading singing and dancing on her accordion.



Heather attended her investiture with members of her family at Government House in Wellington in May (as pictured) and took her medal and certificate along to the June meeting of the Christchurch Branch.

She set up her own music school in 1978, teaching piano accordion, voice, piano, composition and theory and organising regular student concerts. Her life has been dedicated to music and helping others through music including Music for the Disabled, the Children's Choir Christchurch and the St. Albans Community Choir which raises funds for the Canterbury Community Hospital.

The citation for her QSM also mentions that "Mrs Gladstone served as Committee member of the Christchurch New Zealand Cornish Association from 1967 to 1990, and represented the association through music programmes in Cornish schools". Heather was, in fact, one of the original members of the Branch which started up in 1967 after coming to NZ from Port Isaac.

More recently, Heather's honour has been recognised by the Canterbury Branch of the Royal Commonwealth Society at a formal function where she was presented with a commemorative scroll.

Faith hits the headlines

Taranaki member and treasurer for the branch, Faith Richards, hit the headlines in the local paper and national on-line news feeds. Faith has spoken out about her experiences in being declined a hip replacement on the public health

system prompting comments from the Minister of Health and the Labour spokesperson.

Faith, unwilling to live with the pain, resorted to paying for the operation privately. Despite her level of discomfort she was turned down for the surgery based on "patient prioritisation" - "a combination of clinical assessment and patient input". Faith contends that she was honest but others exaggerate their condition to qualify.

We wish you all the best for your recovery from the op and the publicity, Faith.

Tutmen and tributers

Cornish mines were run on a complex system of economics. The mine captains supervised the operation of the mines but did not directly employ the workers who were engaged on a type of contracting basis.

There were two sorts of underground miners known as tutmen and tributers. When a new mine was being opened up, tutmen were engaged to sink the shaft and run the levels in preparation for working the lode. Once metallic ground was reached, it was common to shift to tribute work.



Tutmen secured their work by bidding in an open Dutch auction. The Mine Captain would stand at a high window of the Count House (accounting house) at the monthly "setting" time. The leader of a group or gang would shout out a price to remove a specific amount of rock or

set a certain amount of timber within a specific period. Other gang leaders would underbid him. This continued until the lowest price was reached. At this point the Mine Captain would toss a pebble into the air and the last bid received before it hit the ground was awarded the contract. Naturally, when men were hungry they would bid as low as possible to get the work. Some paid work was better than no paid work. The tut gang would split into three teams

so that excavation could continue around the clock in three 8 hours shifts. Their progress would be measured by independent assessors. If they hit particularly hard rock it was at their risk and they would be penalised if the set amount of work was not completed on time.

The metal ore was extracted by tribute men who also had to bid for their work - not on the volume but on a share of the value of the ore they produced. The bidders therefore had to take into account the amount of metal in the rock, the costs of extracting it and the market price of the metal. Tribute men therefore took on a large proportion of the risk of the business. They would be paid a minimal amount each week then their expenses (candles, explosives, fuses etc.) were deducted by the mine owners before paying over the balance on settling day. Sometimes, if the going was tough or they had assessed the value of the pitch poorly, the miners would go into deficit. Being in debt to the mine owners put the tributers in a very difficult position.

The 'pitches' at the ore face were put up for auction every ninth Saturday or 'survey day'. During the nine weeks, each party of tributers, known as a pare or pair (even though there could be more than two in the party), extracted as much ore as they could from their section of the lode. Their output had to be kept separate while it was raised to the surface, valued and then prepared for market. The tributers employed surface workers, mostly women (bal maidens) and boys, who saw to the stamping, cleaning and washing of the ore.

On top of all the other risks and responsibilities placed on the underground miners, they also had to go up and down the shafts to their workplaces in their own time and, in the deeper mines, this could involve long climbs on poorly-secured, wet ladders in almost total darkness. Further deduction from their earnings was made to contribute to a sick club which, despite its name, would only pay out to a miner if he was injured - not sick. Sickness was all too common and it was only a matter of time before a miner succumbed to bronchitis, silicosis, tuberculosis or rheumatism. Some sick clubs paid a pension to the wives of miners killed or seriously injured at work.

There was no ACC, minimum wage legislation or unions in those days!

Tin and gold

By pure chance while I was surfing TV channels one evening I stumbled upon an episode on Prime of the BBC series "Escape to the Country" that was house hunting in Cornwall. It was episode 42 of series 15 for those who'd like to watch it on You Tube.

Not only were the houses featured in the programme close to my home stomping ground - Carnkie, Trevarth and Porthtowan - but there was an interesting article on jewellery made of an alloy of Cornish tin and gold.



Cornish tin & gold is a trademarked range made by Wearnes the jewellers who have branches in Falmouth and Helston. The very largely traditional designs are by Sarah Corbridge, the great granddaughter of founder William Wearne who set up the business in 1890.

After the closure of all Cornish tin mines you would expect tin to be in short supply but Corbridge uses tin salvaged from the wreck of SS Liverpool carrying tin ingots from Cornwall. North of Anglesey she collided with the barque La Plata and sank in 42 metres of water. In 2001 the tin was salvaged from the wreck and is now being used as an alloy with gold. Wearnes have applied for a patent for the alloy.

Gold is routinely mixed with a range of other metals to make it workable. The mix with tin has a similar purity to the usual 9 and 18 carat gold.

It's not too late for your Christmas shopping and the range is available on line.

Add a little Cornish to your day

Here is a list of everyday objects that you can practice naming as you use them. You can do it quietly to yourself or say the names out loud to the amusement of the people around you!

Kernewek	Sounds like	English
Lollell	Loll ell	Knife
Forgh	For hh*	Fork
Lo	Low	Spoon
Kalter	Cal (rhymes with shall) terr	Kettle
Padel dhorn	Paddle thorn	Saucepan
Hanaf	Hann aff	Cup
Skudel	Skoodle	Dish/bowl
Plat	Platt	Plate

*hh is the shorthand I've used before for the guttural sound that sounds bit like 'ck' and a bit like clearing your throat. Forgh sounds quite like for the English 'fork' but also a bit like 'forge'.

Say Something in Cornish

If you are keen on learning to speak Kernewek, new free lessons have been launched on a website called "Say Something in Cornish". The lessons are based on a successful programme teaching Welsh. The lessons are purely audio and you are told not to try to write anything down but keep going through the lessons to remember how things are said. It's supposed to make it easier and more intuitive to learn.

I may not be doing the lessons justice by trying to listen and participate – there is a constant flow of phrases and sentences to repeat out loud – as I have been driving to work in the mornings. It's hard to concentrate on the two things but I have graduated from the first four of ten lessons in the course. I can now say "I want to speak Cornish and I'll do it later" in Kernewek. I've been wondering what other drivers think I am up to because there's no-one else in the car when I'm commuting.

Scilly Isles police

Kathryn Ryan interviewed Sergeant Colin Taylor of Hugh Town Police on the Scilly Isles on her 9 to noon programme on National Radio on Friday, 2 October. She reckoned Sergeant Taylor was the funniest policeman in Britain.



The constabulary on St Mary's, the largest of the Scilly Isles, consists of three sworn officers, one non-sworn support person and a special constable for a population of 2,200. Sergeant Taylor has adopted a light-hearted approach to social media as a highly effective tool to spread a serious message. His Facebook page tells hilarious stories of guarding clogs (for a Dutch gig racing team), trying to trace the owner of a pair of shoes left at a public phone box as if the owner had been abducted by aliens and how a fried egg was a key clue left at the scene of a break-and-enter crime.

I will put a link to the interview on the Association's website (in case it gets deleted from Radio NZ's). Search for "Isles of Scilly Police" on Facebook to read the entertaining articles.

Recent posts have been a tongue-in-cheek request to John Key to allow Sergeant Taylor to live in NZ and a response from the NZ Commissioner of Police in the same vein suggesting he applies for a job in the NZ force.

Skeletons at St. Piran's Oratory

James Gossip of the Cornwall Archaeology Unit, who led the excavations at St. Piran's Oratory on Penhale Sands near Perranporth, has announced that human skeletons were found again on the site. Skeletons were also found during previous digs in the 1800s.

"The clearance of sand during the recent re-excavation," he said, "uncovered the remains of several skeletons to the north-west of the Oratory, buried approximately 24 inches below ground surface."

There were twelve individuals found. Two were adult women, one aged at least 45 and the other probably aged 20-25. The rest were children aged

from around 6 months to 5 years. Two skeletons exhibited familial traits and appeared to have been buried together, suggesting a close relationship.

The burials were aligned east-west in the Christian tradition, with their limbs extended and their heads at the western end of the grave. The one exception, a child lying in a flexed position, was on an almost north-south alignment, the reasons for which are uncertain. Some of the graves had been marked with upright stones at the head and feet and the bodies are likely to have been wrapped in shrouds before being placed in grave pits dug into the sand.

The skeletons were first uncovered in November 2014. They were carefully recorded in situ in accordance with guidelines set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and under licence from the Ministry of Justice. They were later transferred to the lab where they were cleaned and analysed by osteo-archaeologist Richard Mikulski.

Mr Gossip explained, "Samples from two burials were then selected for radiocarbon dating and sent to the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre.

The first sample, taken from the skeleton of the child buried on its side in a flexed position, produced a date suggesting burial in the 8th or 9th



centuries AD. The second, also a child, appears to have been buried around the same time, but more probably in the 9th century AD."

The find is important because the human remains indicate that the site had religious significance that pre-dates the stone structure being excavated (estimated to be 11th or 12th century) and there are very few examples of such early Christian worship.

Support for Cornwall from an unexpected source



In her parting speech as Grand Bard Maureen Fuller (Stereon Mor) spoke of meeting Dr. Benjamin Zephaniah, a high profile academic and poet of Afro-Caribbean culture. Born and

bred in Handsworth, Birmingham Zephaniah is very proud to be British.

The meeting took place at the Welsh Eisteddfod where Zephaniah spoke out about how the British hear much more about foreign cultures

such as his own and little is said about the range of different indigenous cultures within the British Isles like the traditions and languages of Wales, Cornwall and the other Celtic nations.

I confess that I had not heard of Zephaniah before but, from a little research, he appears to be a sort of modern-day John Betjeman (see the last newsletter) writing acerbic and poignant poetry that comments on everyday issues. He also has an impressive CV as an international reggae musician and a collection of about 20 honorary degrees.

His comments promoting Britain's ancient cultures attracted considerable attention and prompted Maureen Fuller to call again for the British government to stand by its undertaking to "combat discrimination, and promote equality" and give the Cornish the same status, on a par with the U.K.'s other Celtic peoples. She mentioned the upcoming new design for the pound coin which contains the traditional symbols for England (rose), Ireland (shamrock) Scotland (thistle) and Wales (leak) but with no sign of Cornwall.

Expensive embarrassment

You often see someone driving a 'dunger' on the beach in NZ but a young and wealthy driver underestimated



the effect of the weight of his car when he drove onto the sand at Marazion. His 2.5 tonne Bentley Continental Flying Spur worth £120,000 (NZ\$290,000) got well-and-truly stuck. Helpful locals tried for hours to free the vehicle but they were only using their buckets and spades. In the end the car and its owner had to suffer the ignominy of being towed off the beach by a tractor. Fortunately it had been stuck above the high tide mark that day.

Christchurch branch

The President opened the 8 August meeting by welcoming 32 members on a bright and sunny winter afternoon. Eleven apologies were received.

Frieda Looser provided this month's "My connection with Cornwall" short talk. Frieda, originally from Cheshire, had no connection with Cornwall until, at a meeting of University of Canterbury lecturers in 2005, it was suggested she lead a tour group to England that summer. So successful was it that the following year Cornwall and Devon were visited. To get the correct inside information at a series of pre-tour

lectures, some of our branch members attended and they learnt Cornish songs and dialect. Needless to say the trip was wonderful and Frieda fell in love with Cornwall and the Cornish.

Val had us interpreting an invitation from Cornish to English for an organ concert in St. Pauls. This was our latest Cornish language lesson.

The Quiz. 6 tables took part in the annual quiz of 20 questions in four sections. Les was quiz master and Val the scrutineer. After much head scratching and whispered discussion Table 5 was declared the winner by half a point from Table 6 with Table 1 a further half point behind.

During afternoon tea the usual raffle was drawn and several winners went home smiling.

The next meeting on Saturday 12 September attracted a large audience of approximately 74 branch members and general public combined with 36 members of the St. Albans community choir for the third annual Cornish music concert.

The choir, lead by their musical director Heather Gladstone qsm, walked into the hall singing the Floral Dance and then "Hail to the Homeland". There followed a programme of many traditional and well-loved Cornish music along with one or two more modern numbers. Some were introduced by Val and Les with background information and personal stories. The afternoon ended with a rousing rendition of "Trelawney" complete with the Cornish rallying call of "Oggy, Oggy, Oggy" by Les.

Our biggest ever Furry Dance led by a band with a "Curious Tone" then made its way into the lounge for afternoon tea which included many Cornish dishes.

Places mentioned in this newsletter



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

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