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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

The Man Engine

It is ten years since large swathes of Cornwall were awarded UNESCO World Heritage Status. Celebrations have taken place along the full length of the region. The main feature of the 'tinth' anniversary has been a Man Engine – the largest ever mechanical puppet made in Britain. “Man Engine” is a great play on the words because the name was originally applied to the system of wooden rods and platforms that was used to “pump” the men up and down below ground in Cornish mines. The first Man Engine in Cornwall was developed by Michael Loam of Liskeard and installed at Tresavean Mine in Lanner in 1842. In 1919 a metal bracket at the top of the Man Engine at the Levant Mine broke, the heavy timbers crashed down the shaft and 31 men were killed. The modern engine-driven man is more “transformer” than anything else – both man and engine.



For transportation the Man Engine, weighing in at 40 tonnes, curls up to a modest 4.5m, the height of a double-decker bus. He started his 130 mile journey at Tavistock on 25 July and made his way to the Geevor mining complex on 6 August. At each of 25 stops on the way the Man Engine was unveiled and, in order to transform to his full height of 11m, the crowd was required to chant and sing him awake and into steamy action. For that purpose a question and answer mining chant (the name haka balweyth may be borrowing a word from Maori – I can't find a Cornish word 'haka') and a song have been composed.

The Chant/Haka Balweyth:

Kober! Arghans!	Copper! Silver!
Sten! Sten! Sten!	Tin! Tin! Tin!
Yn pub karrek?	In every rock?
Yn pub men!	In every (tomb)stone!
Kober! Arghans!	Copper! Silver!
Sten! Sten! Sten!	Tin! Tin! Tin!
An gwella sten?	Where's the best tin?
Yn Kernow!	In Cornwall!

The song: Hard Rock Cornish Miners

Copper, silver, lead and tin
Can't you feel em 'neath your skin?
One and all we've always been
- hard rock Cornish miners

Chorus: Cousin Jacks both great and small
Raise your voice, sing One and All
Round this world we send our call
“Health to the Cornish Miner!”

Deep and dark down Caradon Mine
William Crago's aged just nine
8 hours work then 2 hours climb
- hard rock Cornish miner Chorus

Alfie Crowle he made his name
In Mexico's first football game
Gave our pasty worldwide fame
- hard rock Cornish miner Chorus

Clung to life when three men die
Telfer Mitchell bikes with pride
One foot dancing one foot tied
- hard rock Cornish miner Chorus

Our Jane Harvey's a foundry maid
White Hart Hayle's her cast-iron trade
Deals get done and money gets made
- hard rock Cornish miner Chorus

Londonchurchtown from Penzance
Humphry Davy lead the dance
Invented more than safety lamps
- hard rock Cornish miner Chorus

Copper, silver, lead and tin
Can't you feel em 'neath your skin?
One and all we've always been
- hard rock Cornish miners Chorus

The celebrations have involved a range of activities including school workshops. More details can be found at the Man Engine website www.themanengine.org.uk as well as recordings and sheet music for the song.

Thanks to the Cornish American Heritage Society for bringing the Man Engine to my attention in their newsletter Tam Kernewek.

Cornish Tea

The Cornish cream tea is a tradition. All but one of the key ingredients are usually produced

locally. Fresh fruit is available to make the jam (usually strawberry but I feel that wild blackberry is actually better). Any self-respecting baker can rustle up a batch of scones or, to be more authentic, Cornish splits. The crowning glory – clotted cream – is, of course, one of Cornwall's signature products. The tea to drink however, is generally a blend of Assam, Ceylon and Kenya teas, but that is no longer necessarily so. Tea has been commercially grown in Cornwall since 2005 by the Tregothnan Estate.



Jonathan Jones,
Tregothnan garden
director

The estate is owned by the family of Lord Falmouth, one of the oldest aristocratic families in Cornwall. His ancestors travelled far and wide with the British Empire and collected all sorts of exotic plants for the gardens back home. Tregothnan claims to have been the first place to grow ornamental Camellia outdoors 200 years ago and the tea plant, *Camellia sinensis*, is of the same genus.

Cornwall primarily succeeds as a tea-growing location because it rarely has frosts. The hillsides that Tregothnan lies on are about as perfect as it gets, particularly in the walled garden of the estate on the banks of the Fal River. Sheltered from the Atlantic by the Lizard it has all the benefits of Cornwall's microclimate without being battered by winter storms or salty water, which is disastrous for tea. It is warm, the soil is acidic and, importantly, there is lots of rain. Cornwall is compared to the growing conditions in Darjeeling which is higher above sea level and consequently has cooler temperatures. The commercial plantations are spread across Cornwall south of Truro and occupy around 100 acres with plans to expand by half again.

The tea plants are propagated by cuttings and once established take 5 years to reach maturity. After that tea can be harvested almost all year round by pinching off the bud and two tender leaves on the growing shoot. The leaves are then laid on bamboo racks to allow gentle withering. Rolling then takes place for black tea. This can literally mean rolling the leaves between two surfaces, traditionally by hand. The more intense the rolling, the stronger the resulting flavour. The next step is oxidation. This involves spreading the rolled leaves on a flat surface and keeping them at a controlled temperature. As the natural liquids in the cells interact, the colour changes from green to brown. The final stage is to dry the leaves to 2% moisture. Green tea varies from the above in that oxidation is replaced by steaming, retaining the natural green colour. Just 36 hours after plucking the tea is ready for drinking.

Tregothnan's current harvest is around 10 tons a

year making it a very small producer by international standards (3 million tons are grown worldwide) and its products are in the 'exclusive' category. Originally available only through Fortnum & Mason in London (where it continues to be sold at £180 for 125g) Tregothnan tea is now sold by Waitrose supermarkets at £4.00 for 10 tea bags of 2g each. There is a small range of tea styles, some blended with imported products, but the single estate tea is refined and taken black – maybe an acquired taste.

Not only has Tregothnan taken tea (Britain's favourite hot drink) from the Chinese and made it truly British but the estate has also developed a range of products based on manuka. They sell manuka honey and manuka chips for smoking and barbecuing. Is nothing sacred?

This article and the next were based on newspaper cuttings forwarded by Judith Hellyar, Taranaki.

Gwithewgh Kernow Kowal!

Keep Kernow Whole!

The number of seats in the UK parliament is being reduced from 650 to 600. And the Boundary Commission has recommended a cross-border "Devonwall" constituency for the next general election in 2020.

Gorsedh Kernow calls this "political vandalism" and claims it threatens to destroy the territorial integrity of Cornwall and its border that has been in place for a thousand years. It is a denial of Cornwall's distinctive history and cultural identity and blatantly ignores the U.K. Government's recognition of the Cornish under the 2014 Framework Convention for National Minorities.

The maximum and minimum sizes of electorates for each constituency are specified in law. The electorate of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly qualifies for 5.3 seats i.e. is too small for 6 MPs and fractionally too large for 5. The legislation allows for special cases (Orkney & Shetland, the Western Isles, and two seats for the Isle of Wight), but Cornwall is not deemed to be a special case.

Gorsedh Kernow is trying to build a massive campaign to pressure central government and Members of Parliament to modify the legislation to ensure that Cornish constituencies remain whole and lie entirely within the boundaries of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Gorsedh Kernow urges everyone who cares for Cornwall, both Cornish born and Cornish of heart to write, in their own words, to Chris Skidmore MP, Cabinet Minister responsible for the Act, asking for an amendment to the legislation allowing Cornwall to be recognised as a special case.

Chris Skidmore MP, Minister for the Constitution, Cabinet Office, Whitehall, London, SW1A 2AS
chris.skidmore.mp@parliament.uk

The birds

What visit to the seaside – especially a quaint Cornish fishing village – would be complete without the raucous cry of the seagull? Even in Wellington, the screeches overhead can bring a home-sick lump to the throat.

However, reminiscent of Alfred Hitchcock's horror film "The Birds" (which was based on a Cornish short story written by Daphne du Maurier) gulls often get too close to humans during their attempts to steal food. Accused of "attacking", the birds are only doing what they have been encouraged to do by tourists who are amused by their antics. It can drive other tourists away because they can't sit in the sun and quietly eat their pasty or fish and chips. In an attempt to fight back, many Cornish towns put up signs to discourage feeding the birds (Mary Poppins would be horrified!). These signs have reached the stage of being iconic in their own right. This postcard currently decorates the side of my fridge as a memento of a visit to Looe.



In a recent case, reported by The Daily Telegraph in the UK, a teenage girl was eating an ice cream on Smeaton's Pier in St. Ives when a gull swooped in from above to grab a share of the delicacy. The girl's surprised reaction made her fall off the pier onto the beach 5 metres below. A passing lifeguard raised the alarm which triggered a full-blown rescue including a helicopter landing on the beach to air-lift the girl to the Royal Cornwall Hospital at Treliske.

Rogue gulls do not stop at terrorising tourists. Birds have been seen to kill pets including a terrier in Newquay and a tortoise in Liskeard

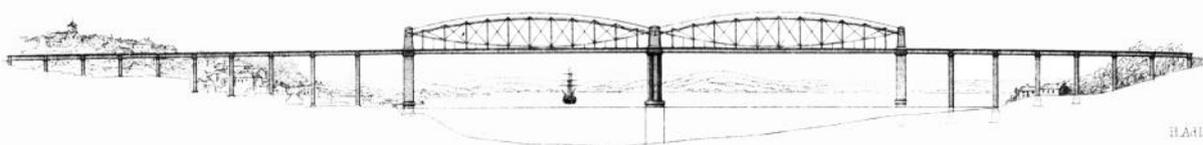
The Royal Albert Bridge

In the 1830s when plans were being drawn up to join Cornwall to the rest of the world by railway, there were two competing schemes. The proposal put forward by the London and South-western Railway took an inland route from Exeter around Dartmoor and crossed into Cornwall near Launceston. The other was proposed by the Cornwall Railway and was backed by the Great Western Railway. It had a more commercial objective and aimed to serve the busy naval towns of Devonport and Plymouth as well as the industrial centre of St Austell. However, its

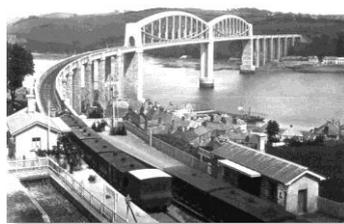
coastal route would pose more engineering problems that would be expensive to solve; not least of which was crossing the River Tamar. Early ideas of carrying trains across the river by ferry were dropped when Isambard Kingdom Brunel, the son of a French engineer, came on the scene.

A series of designs were submitted to the Admiralty which had the final say on structures crossing waterways. Its main criterion was that there had to be a minimum headroom of 100 feet above high water mark in order to allow the Navy's tall ships to ply the river unimpeded. Brunel's first intention of a dual track wooden bridge was rejected as were other designs until he developed a unique solution. His single line metal bridge had only one pier in the busy shipping lane and was of a bowstring design, a variation of a suspension bridge. On each side of the central pier would be a huge parabolic tube with heavy chains (with 20 ft links) hanging below it to which the viaduct would be attached. The upward sweep of each huge tube would exactly mirror the suspended curve of the chains. The bridge was to be built at the narrowest part of the river in the area which was still 1,100 ft wide. To have the necessary height there were 19 more piers on land and the bridge was to be almost twice the width of the river.

The actual construction of the bridge was ingenious. An iron cylinder 37 feet in diameter and 90 feet tall was floated to the centre of the river, tipped on end and planted on the river bed. When the water was pumped out of the tube, men could then work inside to excavate the foundation of the central pier. They were required to go down to bedrock 80 feet below mean sea level. A solid masonry pier was then built inside. Work started on the Cornish side of the river. When most of the piers there were completed and the conventional girders in place, the first of the two main trusses, which had been made in a purpose-built erecting yard on the Devon side of the river, was floated into place. Brunel created a spectacle and added theatre and suspense by requiring absolute silence of the crowd (estimated at 20,000) that had gathered to witness the historic event. Brunel stood on a platform high in the centre of the truss as it was slowly manoeuvred into place to coincide with high tide. Conditions were favourable, everything went smoothly and the truss was positioned so that it could be jacked up in 3 ft stages as the piers were built up underneath it.



Brunel's health failed and he was unable to repeat the performance for the installation of the Devon-side truss. Building was completed and the first train crossed the bridge in April 1859, six years after construction began. In May 1859 Prince Albert officially opened the bridge – hence its name, The Royal Albert Bridge. Brunel wasn't there for the opening but had a private trip across in his sick bed on a specially modified wagon two days later. He died in September 1859. As a monument to the great engineer, his name was placed on the land-facing sides of the two towers supporting the main trusses.



With the benefit of some TLC and a few modifications, the bridge continues to this day to provide support for the main rail line from London to Penzance.

The Olympics and Cornwall

In a repeat of their performance at the London Olympics in 2012 Helen Glover and Heather Stanning took the gold medal in the women's coxless pairs rowing. Helen Glover's family live in Penzance and her father has a long history of sporting success including captaining the Oxford University rugby team in 1960 and playing for a Devon and Cornwall team against the All Blacks. Fresh from her Olympic success Helen married Steve Backshall a wildlife presenter on 10 September in Cornwall as the fairy tale wedding photos show. No doubt she is now wearing even more gold as a result.



Phil Burgess was in the British rugby 7s team that lost to Fiji in the Rio final. Phil had captained the Cornish Pirates before being called up to the Sevens team for the 2013-2014 season. He was also in the Championship XV that played the Maori All Blacks in Doncaster in November 2012.

A star athlete with a less obvious connection with Cornwall is Usain Bolt. Bolt was born in Trelawny, Jamaica. Trelawny (Jamaican patois: Trilaani) is a parish in Cornwall County in northwest Jamaica and was named after William Trelawny, the then Governor of Jamaica. Known for its sugar estates and processing mills, the rum and sugar was exported through Falmouth, its capital and a thriving sea port.

Christchurch branch

The President opened the meeting on 13 August welcoming 27 members and recording apologies from 13 more.

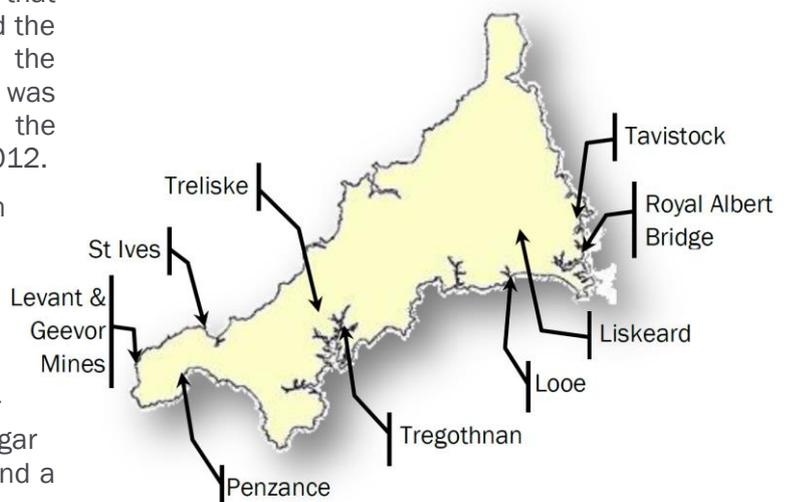
The President announced awards to two of our long standing members: a Bardship of the Cornish Gorseth for Heather Gladstone and the Paul Smales medal to Dorothy Drew. Both were for outstanding service over many years.

Jean Piper gave a short talk on her connection with Cornwall with her grandfather, and grandmother, Ann Trethewey, meeting on the boat out to New Zealand from Cornwall and marrying soon after their arrival.

The President presented the latest lesson in the Cornish Language and Les had the latest news from Cornwall gleaned from the internet.

The main contributor was member Frieda Looser who recently led a study group on a tour around Spain. Starting in Barcelona the tour proceeded through many areas of the country off the usual tourist beaten tracks. Frieda was able to paint a verbal picture of the heritage area of Gaudi's Sagrada Familia (a large Catholic church which is still under construction 90 years after the foundation stone was laid). The tour visited villages of Catalonia and Saragossa with its Roman Plaza and 2,000 year old bridge. The pilgrims' road to Compostella starts from here. Inland now to the Altamera 18,000 year old caves to see the rock drawings. The surrounding countryside brought memories of Cornwall and Wales. Frieda has many more travel tales to tell us but unfortunately time was against us but we look forward to the next instalment with much anticipation. The President thanked Frieda on our behalf. Afternoon Tea was then served.

Places mentioned in this newsletter



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

Nick