

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



■ ■ 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

Division at Tintagel

Tintagel (pronounced “*tin tadje yell*”) is one of the most visited tourist sites in Cornwall. It combines the drama of the north Cornwall coast with the legend of King Arthur and has picturesque old buildings in a quaint village. What more could you ask for?

English Heritage, which manages the site, reckons it needs more modern appeal and easier access for the visitors. A year or so ago it commissioned a carving of the face of Merlin, the wizard, in the rock below the castle ruins and near Merlin’s Cave. When it was unveiled, publicity photographs gave the impression that the carving was much bigger than it is and generated considerable backlash from historical purists. The carving is 30cm high, hardly on the scale of Mount Rushmore as pointed out by Jeremy Ashbee, English Heritage’s curator of historic medieval properties.

More recently a 2.5 metre tall stylised statue of King Arthur was installed on the cliff top. English Heritage has been accused of cultural vandalism and of ‘Disneyfying’ the site.

The latest proposal has caused dissent even within English Heritage’s own ranks. It is planning to build a spectacularly high and narrow footbridge to join two parts of the site. The castle, thought to have been built in 1230s by Richard, first Earl of Cornwall and fabulously rich brother of King Henry III. Back then it stood on a promontory but, over the centuries, sea erosion has all but cut it off from the main land and it is effectively an island at high tide. Tourists have to descend flights of steps to near beach level, cross a bridge and then climb up staircases on the other side; a physical feat that many are not able to complete.

The new bridge, due for completion in 2019, roughly follows the original level of the land before it was washed away. English Heritage’s steward at the castle does not like the idea. She believes it will be closed for large parts of the year due to high winds, will be too scary for

anyone nervous of heights and will result in higher admission prices and reduce visitor numbers. She added her objections to the many others who made submissions against the proposal to the local planning authority. English Heritage has taken a broad-minded approach to its steward’s contrary opinion and is not taking disciplinary action.

There will be many viewpoints on whether the developments around the castle at Tintagel will “Disneyfy” the area. The comment has to be taken as a criticism based on the animated film *Sword in the Stone*. But how seriously should the legend be taken? Is it unrealistic to expect the archaeological site to remain accessible only to scholars for academic research? As for many of Cornwall’s historic and natural sites, it is exploited as a tourist attraction.

From personal experience there has long been a commercial presence in the village that has cashed in on visitors’ willingness to pay to see a large round table and suits of medieval armour. It also has to be remembered that there are few historical facts to support the existence of King Arthur and his knights of the round table. It is a legend, a story, albeit with roots deep in history. Arthur is credited with defeating

the Saxons in the late 5th and early 6th centuries, long enough ago that no factual evidence it likely ever to be found. The story has grown and been embellished ever since Thomas Malory first compiled and documented it in *Le Morte d’Arthur* in 1485. It grew in popularity during the gothic romantic era of the

19th century when its chivalry appealed to the standards of gentlemanly behaviour of the time. It served as inspiration for many famous poets including Wordsworth and Tennyson. Even Walt Disney can spot a good story

involving love, betrayal, the fight of good and evil with plenty of magic and supernatural characters. Why not keep the story alive and accessible to modern audiences?



Raw fry

Graham Harry wrote in with a recipe for Cornish raw fry. He admitted to never having eaten it but it was one of my Dad's favourites. Funnily enough Mum never made it for family meals – only when Dad was late home from work and eating alone. I suspect she didn't like it or thought that it was "poor man's food" and not "proper" to serve up to the family. In our house there was never an egg added to the top but, like other traditional foods, there are bound to be lots of personal variations.

This recipe comes from an internet blog, "Recipes from a Cornish Kitchen" by Laurie of Penryn. Laurie doesn't give exact quantities preferring to 'follow her nose' and sense of Cornishness.

Ingredients

Bacon in thick chunks (use smoked for extra flavour) or thin strips of skirt steak
Finely chopped medium onion or large shallot
Swede and potato in equal quantities
Poached or fried egg.
Seasoning

Method

Slice the veg, the swede smaller than the potato. Heat a small fry pan. Fry the bacon and after a little while add the onion, then the swede. Cook for a few minutes. If there is not a lot of fat from the bacon, add a little lard or oil. Now layer on the sliced potato. Season well with salt and lots of pepper. Keep the pan on high and pour over some boiling water until it is within half an inch from the top of the veg and bubbling like mad being careful as it will spit. After a half a minute turn the heat right down and cover. Simmer gently until vegetables are soft. The swede and potato will look the same colour as when they first went in the fry pan, giving rise to the name of the dish - Raw Fry. Top with the poached or fried egg.

You could modernise the dish by using vegetable stock instead of water or by adding some herbs, but the ancients would not have had that.



Coverack floods

At the time of writing the news is full of devastating floods in Texas. However on 18 July Coverack, a chocolate-box-top fishing village with quaint thatched cottages, experienced its own flash flood. At about 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon heavy rain began. Within 40 minutes emergency services were beginning to receive calls. At 4:30 the hailstones were big enough to break windows. At 5:20 an official emergency was declared and a coastguard helicopter scrambled from Newquay. An elderly couple were rescued from the upper

windows of their home. By the end of the localised downpour over 100mm of rain had fallen in under 3 hours.

Around 50 homes were affected; some properties suffered structural damage and the main road into the village which descends a fairly steep hill was closed for days for repairs. A bus on its way up the hill had been forced to stop by the strength of water cascading down.



At another point closer to the centre of the village a torrent swept down from the hills behind and formed a spectacular waterfall over the harbour wall. Fortunately there were no serious injuries but stories surfaced later of near misses and close shaves.

Businesses were impacted by the timing of the disaster in a period leading up to the peak of the tourist season in one of Cornwall's most picturesque spots. It took a week before the beach and harbour were assessed as safe and free from pollution.

Cornwall Council is leading a multi-agency recovery task force. While work is still going on the local community is doing what it can to raise funds to help victims. A "Coverack Aid" show was held in the village hall on 28 August along with various other fund raising efforts around Cornwall.

My Cousin Rachel

After sending out the last newsletter I received an e-mail from Terence Trethewey who lives at Ahipara in the Far North. He said:

"I was interested in the review of the film "My Cousin Rachel" in the August newsletter. One small part of the [original] film was shot on Hensbarrow, just above Tresayes. It must have been around 1950. We village kids went up to see how things were managed. Richard Burton was there. We surrounded him. I didn't know anything about him but was struck by his voice and handsome looks. I was about ten but I vividly remember the time. Richard asked my twelve year old sister to give him a kiss but she was too shy, even though I tried to persuade her.

"Anyway, a gallows had been set up at a crossroads on the moorland and a scene was practised where two men walked up to the gallows. Then another scene was actually shot where a stagecoach and horses came down the road and turned into a lane leading to Upper Colvreath. Later I went to see the film.



“The scene of the gallows on the crossroads was, I think, at the beginning of the film, only now there was a body hanging from the gallows. Later on I saw the carriage swing off onto the path turn a corner and - magic the path turned into a cliff path on the coast - my first insight into film editing.”

Thanks for sharing such a great memory, Terence. You were correct about the opening scene with the gallows and there is a wide panorama of typical Cornish countryside in the background.

Cornish calendar

We have been approached by Evocative Cornwall who are based in Truro and print calendars and greetings cards featuring lovely images of Cornwall. You can see the 2018 calendar online at www.evocativecornwall.co.uk.



As a small fund-raiser for the Association we are considering placing an order but will only do so if there is enough interest (5 or more calendars ordered). The price is \$19.95 each including postage and packaging to addresses in New Zealand.

There is time for the calendars to arrive before Christmas so that you could give them as unique presents to friends and family. These calendars will not be available at Whitcoulls!

Please get your order to me by 31 October. My contact details are at the top of page 1. Please specify the number of calendars you would like and the address(es) you want them to be sent to. Payment can be by cheque, cash or direct deposit into our Kiwi Bank account number 38-9003-0932058-02. Be sure to give your name and “calendar” in the reference field on the deposit.

50 years ago...

To paraphrase the opening line of Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, “It was 50 years ago today...” when the Beatles descended on Cornwall during their Magical Mystery Tour of the UK while they were filming their third movie. The tour was largely unplanned and spontaneous and started life as a television spectacular without a script. They were travelling in a psychedelic



yellow bus with 42 other passengers – their cast, extras and film crew.

After crossing the Tamar from Plymouth on Tuesday 12 September 1967 the bus stopped in Bodmin where the West End Dairy suddenly had to provide ice creams and snacks for 46, then went on to film a scene on Paull Street which appears at the start of the film.

Next stop was Newquay and the town was plunged into Beatles mania as the Fab Four and their extras filmed scenes for the film all around the town but especially at the beaches. The band was expecting to spend only one night but stayed for three. The Beatles stayed in holiday flats in the grounds of the Atlantic Hotel. The extras and crew had rooms in the hotel itself. It meant that the Beatles were mobbed every time they dashed into the main building for meals and there are various stories of people disguising themselves as hotel staff in order to get inside to meet the John, Paul George and Ringo.

One young porter got all four autographs on a cover of the album. In 2014 it sold at Sotheby's for £111,000.

Some of the screaming female fans were plucked out of the crowd and asked if they owned bikinis. If they did they were recruited as extras on the spot.



Spencer Davis happened to be staying at Perranporth at the time and was invited for a drink with the band and was persuaded to take part in some of the filming. The next evening Paul and Ringo took up Spencer Davis' invitation to the Tywarnhayle pub in Perranporth. Spencer Davis tells the story: “I'm sitting in the bar when in walks Paul and Ringo. The punters in the pub just couldn't believe it. Paul, being the sort of character he is, just grins at everybody, shouts out 'Evenin' all' and then installs himself at the piano. He sat belting out pub songs all evening with everybody singing along until about two in the morning. That was such a great night.”

That night the tour bus was broken into and a denim jacket belonging to George Harrison was stolen. The local police were unable to find the culprit and the jacket was never recovered. If only the thief could own up to it now it could be worth a fortune!

The following morning the whole crew posed for photos outside the hotel before heading back to London.

In New Zealand, the Cornish Association newsletter for October 1967, written by Cliff Trevelyan in Eketahuna, reported briefly on the Beatles' visit as well as meetings of the Auckland, Christchurch, Nelson, Taranaki and Wellington branches. Those were the days!

St Just Miners' Chapel

Like many societies and associations around the world, the congregation of the Methodist chapel in St Just in Penwith is dwindling and ageing. The chapel, which is a fine example of the architecture of Cornish Methodist places of worship, is in need of repair and maintenance to the cost of £2 million which is well beyond the means of a small town with a population of less than 5,000.

Built in 1833, it is now a Grade II listed building that was once the hub of the mining community in St Just and beyond. It is set within sight of the sea in possibly the most visually powerful, post-industrial landscape in Cornwall.



It has a typically plain exterior reflecting the austerity of its religious background. The interior is rather more elaborate and colourful for a Methodist chapel. It has outstanding acoustics and is a magnificent setting for music, from a solo voice to a full-blooded Cornish Male Voice Choir, from a single trumpet to a brass band or its magnificent pipe organ. It has been described as being as close as you could get to a Methodist cathedral in Cornwall.

A local trust has been set up to raise funds and co-ordinate the immediate work as well as the ongoing maintenance. Rather than becoming a "friend of the chapel" the trust has adopted the Cornish word "pard" (meaning friend). For £100 you can become a Cornish pard and contribute to the restoration and preservation of a landmark.

Member news

It is with considerable sadness that I have to report on the death of two members. Mrs M J Riley of Blenheim passed away in August and Mrs N Nokes previously of Nelson died in Christchurch on 29 September. Our thoughts and sympathies go to their family and friends.

KESKALAR GWIR
Sincere condolences

Christchurch branch

On 9 September the President opened the meeting having rushed from a Synod meeting called to decide the fate of the earthquake damaged Christchurch Cathedral. There was an attendance of 22 members with a number of members sending their apologies for various reasons.

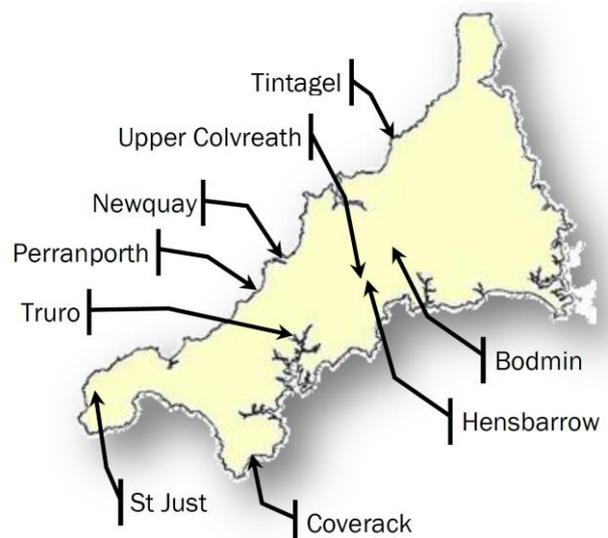
Next month's meeting is on 14 October during Christchurch Heritage week. The Association in conjunction with the St Albans Choir and guest artistes will host a concert entitled "Hail to the Homeland" in the St. Paul's Parish Centre followed by afternoon tea in the lounge. Members of the public are invited to attend.

The main entertainment was provided by members Don and Sharron Hillier who have led tours to Cornwall and other parts of England. Their lively and interesting talk showed their obvious love for their subject, this in spite of not being able to show any pictures. At the end of his talk they were asked many questions. The President thanked Don & Sharron before returning to the Synod conference.

Library

I have mentioned before that the Association has quite an extensive library of Cornish books available to members to borrow. The lending is free of charge but I do ask that you reimburse for the postage. The cost will depend on the size and number of books you borrow. A small NZ post envelope for a single paperback would be \$3 and large bags cost up to \$6 each way. Please phone, write or e-mail with your requests. A full list is enclosed with this newsletter.

Places mentioned in this newsletter



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

