



Chairman's Letter August 2019

What a super spring conference we had this year, and wow! what a finish. All the talks were really interesting and I for one gleaned something new from each one. Finally, on the Sunday afternoon we had John Joliff's very moving story of a man fighting at the front. The conference could have ended with everyone feeling low and sombre but no, Marilyn and Ian would never send us home feeling sad, and the conference ended with a good old sing-song of World War One tunes from home and the trenches. This was led by our very own Lesley Trotter and the 'Day-Light Choir'. A brilliant way to end a conference which had a very difficult topic to deal with.

Once again all of the CALH outings have been great and the sun has also shone on them. The first, back in May, was to St Ives where we were hosted by members of the St Ives Archive. I thought I knew St Ives, but on this occasion we were led down streets and through alleys I had never ventured down before. And that is the joy of attending a CALH day, you get to see the parts others miss. Our walks around areas are never too strenuous (if I can do them anyone can), and every few strides we stop to hear another fascinating fact from someone who really knows the area.

In June we went up to North Cornwall to visit Stratton and Poughill. Two of our long-standing members, Jo Mattingley and Todd Gray told us about the churches and brought the history of them to life, whilst Alan McIntosh gave us a fascinating walk around Stratton.

In July we were hosted by the St Neot History Group who gave us a splendid talk about the stained glass in the church. This was followed by a walk round the village before a pasty lunch back in the church.

In the afternoon we visited Lantewey, the home of two of their members, Martin and Julia Eddy. What a treat it was to see this beautiful house and learn some of its history. The day finished with a visit to Carnglaze Slate Caverns which CALH visited way back in 1994.

Since our last visit more of the caverns have been cleared and it was interesting to see the progress that had been made.

NEWSLETTER

August 2019

Our Place on the Internet

www.calh.co.uk

Email us on

calhnewsletter@gmail.com

Autumn Conference

Tales and Songs of the Sea

Newquay's Newquay's Oil an Gwella Male Chorus

Songs and smiles

Four part harmony, with humour

John Friend, a retired fisherman from Looe

Oh, for a Fisherman's Life

Prof Gareth Parry of the Telegraph Museum, Porthcurno

Porthcurno, Cornwall's contribution to Global Communication

Cornwall's undersea link to remote continents and islands

Merv and Alison Davey, Cornish Bards and Organisers of the Family Ceili Band

Cornish folklore, music and dance

Kilbirnie Hotel

Newquay

Sat 12 October 2019

Booking Deadline 4th October

We now have a break until our last outing of the year which will be to Fowey. Again this will be led by the local history group and it is hoped that more of these groups will take out group membership with CALH so we can keep in touch with the work they are doing and they can join us for our events.

If any of you are also members of a local group or an Old Cornwall Society, why not suggest the group join, details are in the new CALH leaflet or on the web.

At the present time we have over 12 group members including the Toronto/Cornish Society. It is hoped these groups will not only support the meetings and outings, but will also contribute articles to our journals and let us know, through items in the newsletters, of their activities, so we can support them.

As usual I want to give a big thank you to Jeremy Rowett-Johns for producing such a good and informative journal again this year, but also with a plea for more articles for the next journal. To make the journal a vibrant read we need to keep a balance between reports on outings and talks, and original articles written and researched by our members.

So come on, put down on paper (or should I say on your computer screen) the results of your research, and share it with the rest of us. It doesn't matter how long or short an article is, Jeremy can always find room for it. Likewise if you have any queries or problems, send them to Jeremy, and, when you get the answer to a problem, let us know the result as well. This year the journal included four book reviews, so if you have published anything recently, do let the committee have a copy so we can review it. Likewise if you have read anything relating to the history of Cornwall and would like to share your thoughts on it with others do send them to Jeremy.

I hope to see lots of you at Fowey in October. Till then enjoy the rest of the summer and '*Happy History Hunting*'.

Your Chairman
Carole Vivian
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Spring Conference and AGM

7-8 March 2020

The theme for our Spring Conference next year, at the Kilbirnie Hotel, Newquay, is 'Clothing in Cornwall – Vanity and Utility'.

This title covers an amazing variety of talks by experts from our membership and from outside CALH. We will learn about clothes recorded in mediaeval records and in a 17th Century inventory. We will see samples of costume from history and hear of the stories behind them.

The development of military costume will be examined by Nick Kelly, who spoke on Tommy's Uniforms in our 'Great War' conference. The 'Portable Antiquities' project at the Royal Cornwall Museum covers fastenings for clothing through the ages. We look at clothes in paintings and clothes in photographs. We look at leather and at hats.

Put the dates in your diary – 7 & 8 March 2020

More details will follow in the next Newsletter

Marilyn and Ian Thompson

Newsletter Editor vacancy

At the AGM in March the committee reported that we no longer have a Newsletter Editor and would someone please volunteer to take the job on. We warned that if we failed to get an editor there would be no newsletter.

We have to report that so far no one has volunteered. Rather than lose contact with members other than through the journal, Carole and Hugh decided they would have a go at editing this newsletter, but hopefully only as a one off.

Someone needs to step up and take the job on. Neither Carole nor Hugh have ever edited a newsletter before so, if they can get this one done, surely one of you could take the next one on.

If you are prepared to help please send an email to calhnewsletter@gmail.com or contact Hugh on 0796 920 6292 or there may be no contact with members other than the sending of booking forms, until the next journal in Spring 2020.

Visits 2019

There have been three successful and well-attended visits so far this year.

In May we were at the seaside in St Ives, visiting the St Ives Archive and the St Ives Museum. In June we visited St Andrew's Church in Stratton and St Olaf's Church in Poughill with their amazing bench ends. In July we saw St Neot church, churchtown and the St Neot Archive, Lantewey and the Carnglaze Slate Mines.

Still to go is the last visit of the year, to Fowey on Tuesday 8 October, the week of the Autumn Conference. We look forward to another great day out. Tales of the sea link these two events so don't miss out.

Marilyn and Ian Thompson

Paying CALH by cheque?

Lloyds Bank are introducing a new automated computerised cheque processing system which will clear cheques received by us by the end of the next working day.

Unfortunately, this might result in the rejection of cheques made payable to CALH rather than Cornwall Association of Local Historians.

We therefore must ask members in future to make their cheques payable to Cornwall Association of Local Historians

Vernacular Architecture Group Dendrochronology in Cornwall

In April I hosted a four-day residential conference for the Vernacular Architecture Group (VAG). We were based at the Hannafore Point Hotel in Looe and everyone (86 delegates) seemed to enjoy themselves, although I was fairly exhausted by the end of it. We went out in coaches every day looking at various houses, then, after the evening meal we had a lecture, so there was no rest for the wicked. Jo Mattingly, Eric Berry and Patrick Newberry all agreed to do an evening talk which was wonderful, and it was nice to be able to show those from 'up country' the quality of speakers we have down here.

Prior to the conference I had been awarded, by VAG, a significant amount of money to fund some dendro-dating in the county. Nat Alcock supervised things and Martin Bridge of the Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory took the samples. It was really interesting to see how the cores are taken, but unfortunately the results were not 100% successful.

Part of the problem is that so few samples have been taken in this part of the country there is little to compare it with. Also the fact that timber grows faster down here, and therefore has fewer rings, means they are less easy to date. However, the great news is that we did get a date for Pennellick in Pelynt parish (visited by CALH several times over the years).

The date for what survives of this amazing roof is **1285-1317**, which makes it the oldest domestic roof so far dated in either Devon or Cornwall. Rectory Farmhouse at Morwenstow also gave a date range of **1320-1352**. Sadly the date of the roof on Cargoll Barn in St Newlyn is still uncertain, although it is similar to other roofs in Cornwall that have been dated to the 14th century. The roof at Haveners on the quay in Fowey also failed to reveal a date, but it is hoped dates may eventually be gained by other methods. (Don't forget we are visiting Haveners in October).

What is thought to be a 17th Century cottage in West Looe was also found to be unsuitable for dating as the ground and first floor joists were too fast-growing and had too few rings. Most of the roof of this cottage was constructed of coniferous timbers, some of which displayed Baltic timber marks. For interest's sake, and as Martin was on hand, I dipped into my own pocket and had the roof of my house dated. It was found the trees had been felled in the winter of 1797/98 and construction probably took place in **1798**. This is 100 years after I had thought my house had been built, so either the original roof was replaced or the house was built by Sir Harry Trelawny rather than Bishop Trelawny.

I had presumed the pieces of carved granite within its walls had been re-used after the Bishop's re-modelling of part of the manor house

in circa 1690, but I now think they may have come from the old gatehouse that Sir Harry had pulled down in the late 18th century. If that is the case some of the interior fixtures may also have come from the gatehouse. Finally, I had some pieces of old roof truss, that I believe may have come from the roof of the great barn, dated and found they had a felling date of **1499-1531**. Let's hope some more dating can be done soon as, the more samples that are taken in Cornwall, the easier it will be to get a date.

Carole Vivian

Kresen Kernow opening soon!

After three years in construction, the Kresen Kernow team have moved in and are working really hard to get ready for opening in September.

Currently we are re-shelving the 1000's of books and journals in the Cornish Studies Library. These will be the heart of the collections on open access, where people can come to browse the books and journals, or use the digital resources onsite and online. Other activities underway include unpacking the archive collections in the strongroom. Over 500,000 items all need their new locations to be updated on our database so we can find them for researchers.

Brand new exhibition units and high specification display cases are being installed, allowing us to celebrate and share Cornwall's archives more easily. There will also be a new website which will ensure that digitised items – including books and thousands of photographs – can now be accessed from the comfort of people's armchairs, whether they are in Bude or Brisbane.

Kresen Kernow will launch in the first week of September with a variety of opening events, culminating in a public open day on Saturday September 7th to coincide with Redruth's International Mining and Pasty Festival. We will be open for research visits from the 11th September and our standard opening hours will be Tues – Saturday, 9.30-4.30. Keep an eye on our website www.cornwall.gov.uk/kresenkernow for information nearer the time.

Celebrations will continue throughout the month, with free Heritage Open Days 'behind the scenes' tours on offer as well as a John Couch Adams-themed exhibition launch on October 5th, using original letters and documents to celebrate 200 years since the birth of the Launceston-born mathematician who discovered Neptune.

To keep up-to-date with our latest news, events and activities find us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @kresenkernow

Deborah Tritton
Kresen Kernow Project Lead
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Historic art studio to get a £400,000 makeover

A crumbling art studio in Newlyn, which was the centre of a major artistic movement, is to be restored thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Anchor Studio was built in 1888 and was the home of Stanhope Forbes, regarded as the founding father of the internationally-renowned Newlyn School of Artists.

<https://www.itv.com/news/westcountry/2019-06-26/historic-art-studio-in-cornwall-to-get-a-400-000-makeover/>

Barry West

Advance Notice

Desert Island Documents for 2019

The sixth and seventh in the series

Dr Oliver Padel, 2pm, Saturday, 19 October 2009

Venue: Cornwall Record Office / Kresen Kernow

Dr Todd Gray, 2pm, Thursday, 7 November 2019 (as part of the Exeter Literary Festival)

Venue: Exeter Guildhall

For tickets see the Events page

www.devonandcornwallrecordsociety.co.uk/

CALH Calendar of Events

3rd October – (Thurs) – **CALH Committee Meeting**, Kresen Kernow – 2.00 pm

8th October (Tues) – **Day Out Visit to Fowey** – It will include a talk and guided tour of historic Fowey and a visit to the Fowey Museum. In the afternoon, you will visit the Italian inspired Trenyhton Manor Hotel. Booking form on line when available

12th October (Saturday) - Autumn Conference **Tales and songs of the sea**, Kilbirnie Hotel, Newquay. Booking form on-line. The booking deadline is 4th October

16th January 2020 (Thurs) – **CALH Committee Meeting**, St Augustine's in St Austell – 4.45 pm

9th April 2020 (Thurs) – **CALH Committee Meeting**, location to be decided – 4.45 pm

7-8 March 2020 (Sat-Sun) – AGM & Spring Conference, Kilbirnie Hotel, Newquay. Theme **Clothing in Cornwall – Vanity and Utility.**

16th May 2020: **Day out visit to Grampound**

June 2020: **Day out visit to Wadebridge**

4th July 2020: **Day out visit to St Just in Penwith**

September 2020: **Day out visit to be announced**

Courtney Library news

BOOK CATALOGUE: new edition online

Many CALH members who are not members of the Royal Institution of Cornwall may be unaware that the Courtney Library's catalogue of printed books is now available on our website www.royalcornwallmuseum.org.uk Please follow the links to the Courtney Library pages and scroll down to the catalogue section and find the link 'Download a copy here'. A new edition of the catalogue is currently held on a basic ACCESS database and can be viewed as an EXCEL spreadsheet. Due to its size some of the data such as pagination has unfortunately had to be omitted in the online version. While using the catalogue, if any errors are spotted, please let us know so that they can be corrected ready for the next edition.

CONSERVATION PROJECT: Cornish language

Also in the Courtney Library section of our website there is information about a recently launched project to raise funds via crowdfunding for the full conservation of a printed volume of Morton Nance's annotated copy of *Lexicon Cornu-Britannicum: a dictionary of the ancient Celtic Language of Cornwall...* by Robert Williams (1865). The annotations of Cornish words by Nance completely fill every margin of this book which was Nance's working copy in use from c.1920-1950s. The Nance volume is currently on display in the Courtney Library's balcony case on the first floor at the Royal Cornwall Museum.

Angela Broome

Librarian & Archivist, Courtney Library & Cornish History Research Centre

Is this the last CALH Newsletter?

CALH only issues three editions each year in February, August and November, and the time taken for each edition to contact regular providers, edit and assemble the articles is around 8 hours so the task is not demanding.

So if CALH members are to continue to receive their Newsletter, a member must be prepared to become our Newsletter Editor, so do please contact Hugh (details on previous page)