



# The Packet



The Quarterly Newsletter of the Cornish Society of Durham Region

Vol. 1 No 2

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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Ever wondered what Christmas in Cornwall is like? No snow, for sure! But nonetheless, the Cornish have a unique way of celebrating the season....



Mousehole Lights

This fishing village is located in the far west of Cornwall. From modest beginnings it has gained legendary billing in Cornwall's festive calendar, boasting an amazing 7000+ twinkling bulbs depicting the likes of sea serpents, whales and fishing boats in a myriad of colours across the harbour.

The village of Angarrack is tucked away off the A30 and often missed by those heading to St Ives or Land's End. This all changes in the lead up to Christmas when the villages home built illuminations tell the story of the Twelve Days of Christmas. This includes eleven pipers piping, a display 20m wide and nearly 10m tall. The twelve drummers drumming are equally impressive and the six swans do actually appear to swim down the village stream!



Angarrack's 12 Days of Christmas

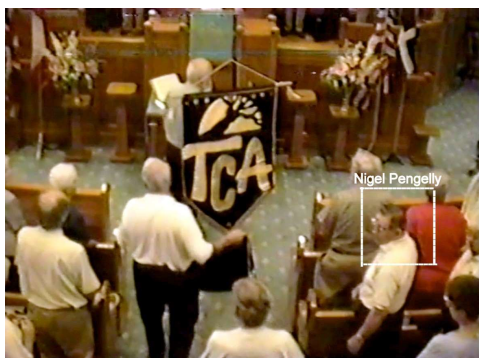


Santa arrives at St. Ives in a Lifesaving Zodiac.

Newsletters will, from now on, include articles written by our members. Here is an article by John Webb about the Pengelleys in Canada.....

### **The Pengellys in Ontario, by John Webb**

This article is a sneaky way of promoting Nigel Pengelly from Penzance, who will be making a presentation to the TCA in February. Nigel is well known to the North American Cornish diaspora, both as the editor of Cornish World magazine for many years and as an attendee at many Gatherings. Here he is, during the Opening Ceremony of the 2006 Gathering in Bowmanville with John Tyacke carrying the banner. Sher is up there on the head table.



Nigel followed up his visit with an article in Cornish World magazine about his possible links to the Pengellys in Ontario. With his permission, I have repeated some extracts here, along with some further research results shown in italics.

Nigel states: “I’ve never really explored my Cornish past that much. I know that there is a hamlet called Pengelly where we all originated but from then on, my ancestry becomes vague. The Pengelly’s are a large family in that there are many older cousins but surprisingly few young members coming into the fold. There’s a fair collective of Pengelly’s in North Cornwall, some in the Camborne/Redruth area and a gathering of Pengelly’s in Penwith.

I wasn’t aware that any of them travelled as most were farmers and stayed on the land through the hard times. However, I met Jim and Bessie Pengelly in Toronto. He told me there were Pengelly’s in Canada. One, William James Pengelly founded a village called Pengelly Landing - a small wharf on one of the great lakes.”

*Sadly not true; and despite the different spellings, it was Captain Robert Lamport Pengelley (1798-1875) who established and built his home in Pengelly Landing in 1836. The Pengelleys were a distinguished family from Fowey. Captain Robert went to sea at age 9 as a powder monkey on one of the ships his father, Commodore John Pengelley, took into the Battle of Trafalgar.*

“He also informed me that Massey (of Massey Ferguson tractors) had many experimental farms around Toronto.”

*This was Dentonia Park Farm, in Scarborough. Walter Massey developed a model farm where he carried on agricultural experiments and, eventually, a scheme to provide a safe milk supply for Toronto through pasteurization, selling the milk through the company he founded. In 1900, under Walter Massey's leadership, four Methodist businessmen formed the City Dairy Company to, as it advertised, provide "a milk supply for the citizens of Toronto and vicinity under thoroughly sanitary conditions".*



“Massey’s head farmer was William James Pengelly who helped develop the commercial pasteurisation of milk. There is a street, Pengelly Street, named after him.”

*This was William James Pengelly, 1851 – 1914. Born in Liskeard, he arrived in Canada in 1872. Unfortunately, I can find no records in the City Dairy archives regarding his role in the development of milk pasteurization.*

*The street is perhaps Pengelly Court in Scarborough.*



Nigel’s date for the presentation is Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, at 2.00pm, on Zoom. The link will be circulated shortly before the meeting.

Our second article is by Joan Mollon....

## A Letter from Home

My great grandfather Thomas Blythe was born in the little village of Polyphant, Cornwall in 1836. He was the only one of his family to come to Canada and his parents Susan and Edward as well as his brother William were back in Cornwall. When he married in Darlington Township in 1865 and my grandmother was born in 1869 his parents were only able to hear of it from his letters.

Thomas and his mother Susan regularly wrote to each other. This is the oldest letter that has survived.

*Polyphant Sep 8 1872*

*Dear Son and Daughter*

*I once more take my pen to write you a line as we did not get any answer to our last letter wrought in September now one year has passed away and we have patently waited.*

*I thought my letter might have been mislaid or you ill any of you as I would hope for the best I thought your time was busily engaged. If so please to write the first opportunity if it be ever so short and let us know how you are getting on in your temporal concerns and also how your souls prosper as we are deservng to here from you. No doubt the things of this life greatly call your attention and take up your time. We rise early and let up late and eat the bread of carefulness. It is our duty to provide things honest in the sight of all men.*

*Please to tell us if you have a good harvest and how your crops are in general and if you have any harvest or what you are doing. We hope to here you are doing well. The harvest in Polyphant is all but finished. We have good crops in general and fine weather for gathering in. Apples are very scarce this year, there will be no cider made in Polyphant. The potatoe crops not very good.*

*There have been some changes in Polyphant this year. Mr and Mrs Sleep that did live at Tallpetherwin are both dead. The died in Polyphant the lived here 9 years retired. Mr died five weeks after Mrs I myself watched by them and saw them both die.*

*Dr Williams and family live in the house. We have two Dr now in our village.*

*Edward Wadge died left a wife one child, a short time after the child died.*

*All Peter's children is married except Robert. Several men around here is left for America two hawks from Bowden Charles Wadge the say they are going up in the states.*

*Now my dears I hope this will find you well with the Dear child that I should like to see but it cannot be. My dear Thom your Father is failing very fast. He works when he is able. I am as well as I can expect to be. William his wife and family are well. John is a fine boy works with Father to the carpentry work. They have plenty of work. Their love to you both. Our kindest love to Mr Hoskins and family.*

*So no more at present from your affectionate parents S & E Blythe*



*Figure Edward and Susan Blythe*



Ta Da! Drum Roll..... Cornwall's feature town..... **LOOE**

### **The History of Looe:**

Archaeological evidence like the Giant's Hedge and the Stone Circle at Bin Down, suggests that the area around Looe was inhabited as early as 1000 BC!

Looe became a thriving town due to being one of Cornwall's largest ports. It exported local tin, arsenic, and granite as well as being well known for its fishing and boat building industries. Records have shown that the town provided 20 ships for the famous siege of Calais in 1347!

The small coastal town continued to expand as the years rolled by, with the textile industry playing an essential part in the town's economics too. Trade and transportation to and from Newfoundland also aided the town's success...



**Looe in 1904. From the**  
[website:https://imagearchive.royalcornwallmuseum.org.uk/places/looe/looe-cornwall](https://imagearchive.royalcornwallmuseum.org.uk/places/looe/looe-cornwall)

However, at the beginning of the 1800's, Looe's prosperity started to decline. The war against Napoleon and the blockade of 1808 took its toll on the country, and this prevented Looe's fishing fleet from reaching their pilchard-fishing ground, which was the main income for the village at the time, ultimately damaging their trade.



Nonetheless, nearly three decades on in 1828, the building of Liskeard, Looe and the Union Canal linking them, along with the development of booming copper mines in the Caradon area from 1837, meant that Looe's fortunes began to quickly pick up again. The canal was first used to transport lime from Wales for use in Cornish farming, and later to carry copper and granite between the railhead at Liskeard and Looe's port. In 1860, the canal couldn't keep up with demand, and it's main reason for being built was to handle the demands of the shipping trade. Therefore, a railway linking Looe to Moorswater near Liskeard was then built along the



**Tourists flock to Looe beach**

<http://www.cornwall-online.co.uk/caradon/looe.htm>

towpath of the canal, which was used less and less, until 1910 when the traffic ceased. As the mining boom came to an end in 1879, the railway began to carry passengers, which began bringing tourism into the town.

In 1866, a lifeboat station was established on East Looe beach and in 1878 a new Town Hall was built, now known as the present-day 'Guildhall'. At this time recommendations were made that the two towns would be merged under the governing body and despite much protest, the Looe

Urban District Council was then formed in 1898, to govern the whole of Looe.

### **Looe Bridge**

In 1411, a wooden bridge was built over Looe river to connect East and West. A fire destroyed the bridge and was replaced by the first stone bridge in 1436, this bridge featured a chapel dedicated to St. Anne in the middle. Whereas the seven-arched bridge which remains today, was built in 1853 to cope with the increasing traffic through Looe

### **Looe Island**

Sometime before 1144, a monastic order began using Looe Island and built a chapel there. The monks provided a rudimentary lighthouse service using beacons to guide the ships safely into the harbour. Another chapel was then built on the opposite side on a hill, just outside West Looe, however, both are now just ruins. Today, Looe Island is part of Cornwall Wildlife Trust and a marine nature reserve, as the waters around it are teeming with life. The island provides a quiet haven for wildlife, with a variety of habitats, and you can book a boat trip to take you over to the island, where you can enjoy a walking tour as well as the beautiful views across the bay!

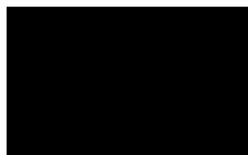
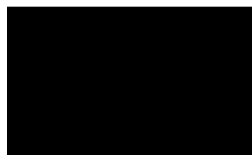
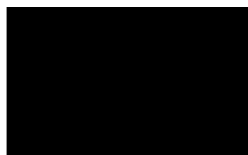
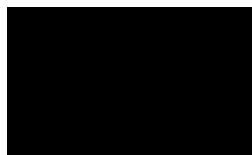
### **Today**

Nowadays, Looe is still known as a successful fishing port and tourism destination. Unlike the built up, modernised and jam packed towns such as Plymouth and Newquay, Looe & Polperro with their whitewashed original buildings and houses offering quaint B&B's, cafes, shops and eateries, add to it's wonderful charm, making it a glorious place to spend your holidays!



**Tourists flock to Looe beach**

<p><b>Upcoming events:</b></p> <p>Cornish Society of Durham Region - <b>Zoom meeting on January 15<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm.</b></p> <p>Information for joining the meeting will be sent closer to the date.</p> <p><b>March 3<sup>rd</sup> - the raising of the St. Piran flag at the flag staff at Bowmanville.</b> Town hall is closed March 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, so the flag has to be raised on the 3<sup>rd</sup>.</p> <p><b>In May</b> we will have a tour of a local Cornish cemetery and a light lunch somewhere - perhaps by a local church women's group. Further information to follow.</p>	<p><b>Memberships:</b></p> <p>Memberships run from January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>.</p> <p>I am setting up an e-mail address where you can e-transfer your memberships (I'll do that today). It will be:</p> <p><a href="mailto:durham.cornish@gmail.com">durham.cornish@gmail.com</a></p> <p>Or you can put it in the post to:</p> <p>Cornish Society of Durham Region, c/o 80 Roser Cres., Bowmanville, ON L1C 3N9</p> <p>or you can bring it in person to the flag raising on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.</p> <p>Membership is \$5.00/year per person.</p>
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