Onen hag oll

The Cornish Association of Victoria Inc.
Ballarat Branch
A.C.N. A0008 264A
October 2025 Newsletter

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Saturday 11th October
PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE

A visit to the Geelong Branch of the CAV - Neil Thomas, from Geelong, is arranging a tour of places connected with Cornish Heritage
Those who wish to attend must contact Keith Lanyon asap - if you are happy to drive please tell Keith and if you would like to go but unable to drive, please tell Keith also.
We will be meeting at the Skipton Street Church at 9.00 am.
A pizza lunch will be provided and any food allergies should be notified to Keith Lanyon - 0411 512 160

Saturday 6th December
Lunch at the Grand in Dana Street - numbers to Keith Lanyon by 30th November.
Please also tell Keith of any dietary requirements you may have when you give your numbers.

August Meeting - our speaker was meant to be Doug Bradby whose topic was *Who benefitted most from the Gold Rush?.*

Unfortunately, Doug was unavailable to attend, but Jenny Burrell, one of our members was able to give us interesting information and lead a discussion on the same topic.

Those who benefitted:
* Miners if they were lucky to strike plenty of gold

* those who serviced the population - general shop keepers, hotel keepers (there was a sly grog industry - e.g. Bentley's pub); carters of goods; boot makers; tradespeople - blacksmiths. carpenters; butchers; bakers; coach operators, candle makers, tent makers etc

* women also had trades - dressmakers; milliners; teachers.

*James Oddie - A Ballarat older statesman, leader, and benefactor on his 85th birthday, quoted a Professor Gregory and suggested that the British Government had benefitted to the sum of £500 million - The £500,000,000, to Britain had been the biggest thing that had happened to her for the last 500 years.
Yet the early pioneers had been told they were only rogues and vagabonds. Did they ever hear of an industry being started by rogues and vagabonds? … They were men of honour, energy and of great mental power.

It was a very enjoyable and informative afternoon which concluded with a delicious afternoon tea.

Editor's note:
While the gold rush brought immense wealth to Victoria and the British Empire, I can find no evidence to suggest a direct £500 million profit was made by the British government from the Victorian gold rush.
The Victorian government generated revenue

Normally meetings are held on the even months at Skipton Street Uniting Church Hall, cnr Darling and Skipton Streets, Ballarat.
Meetings begin at 2.00 pm and are followed by a shared high tea.

through mining licenses, taxes on gold exports, and increased trade, which ultimately benefited Britain.

Article concerning James Oddie can be found here:

A PIONEER CITIZEN. (1909, April 1). *The Ballarat Star (Vic. : 1865 - 1924)*, p. 4. from http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article217283896

Grand Bard's Award to Lillian James OAM

This year's Grand Bard Award goes to the other side of the world, to Lillian James, who, at 96, is the oldest Bard in Australia and very possibly in Gorsedh Kernow. Lillian has taught Cornish and published books in the language for many years and in May this year announced her 'probable' retirement from teaching at the Kernewek Lowender Festival. This award is a testament to the work she has done to keep Cornish culture and in particular the language, alive and kicking in Australia where the challenges are greater than they are for those teaching in Cornwall and to the tenacity of the Cornish diaspora in maintaining their links and culture.

It was indeed an honour to accept this award on behalf of Lillian at the Gorsedh Awards' evening

Touring Around Cornwall with Arthur and Robyn

Cape Cornwall

Cape Cornwall (Cornish: Kilgoodh, meaning goose back) is a small headland in West Cornwall.
Most of the headland is owned by the National Trust and the National Coastwatch has a look-out on the seaward side.
Pottery found on the Cape has been dated to the late Bronze Age.
Cape Cornwall Mine, a tin mine on the cape, operated intermittently between 1838 and 1883.
The mine's 1864 chimney near the peak of the cape was retained as an aid to navigation.
In the early 20th-century, the former ore dressing floors were for a time converted for use as greenhouses and wineries.
In 1987, the mine site was purchased by the H. J. Heinz Company of the United States (and British plants) and donated to the nation.
The remains of Cape Cornwall Mine are designated as part of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

St Helen's Oratory

St. Helen's Oratory maybe a derelict early Christian chapel at Cape Cornwall and is believed to be on the site of a 6th-century church.

The site was likely a place of worship for a small monastic community or hermits.

While named after St. Helen, (the mother of the Emperor Constantine) recent research suggests the original chapel on the site may have been dedicated to St Just.

The current structure is a medieval building, possibly a field barn, built on or incorporating elements of the earlier chapel.

In the mid-19th century, a significant cross bearing 4th or 5th-century markings was found, along with a small stone basin that is now in St. Just church.

This ancient cross was later lost.

A different ancient cross was later placed on the existing structure, and the building as it is seen, dates to the early medieval period, possibly the 8th to 10th centuries.

A joint project in 2001 between the National Trust and the Cornwall Archaeological Unit conducted conservation work, photographic recording, and consultancy for the Scheduled Monument.

St. Helen's Oratory is designated as a Scheduled Monument under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 due to its importance to national history.

Porthledden

The large house overlooking Cape Cornwall is Porthledden, a Grade II listed property built in 1909 for Captain Francis Oats, the former chairman of De Beers.

When Francis Oats left school in the early 1860s, he became a miner, but in the evenings he would walk the seven miles from his home in St Just across the fields to Penzance, in order to attend evening classes in mining engineering.

After excelling in exams, he was offered free tuition at the London School of Mines and was made a local mining captain at the age of 20.

Later, after moving to South Africa, he became chairman of De Beers and a close ally of Cecil Rhodes, accruing a significant fortune in the diamond mines and gold fields along the way.

Porthledden has served many purposes over the last century, including a hotel in the 1920s and 1930s, a gentleman's club, an evacuee school for girls during WW2, and a wedding venue.

The building lay empty for over twenty years until 2003, when a grade II listing, lobbied for by many people in St Just and Cape Cornwall, helped to provoke its sale and an extensive restoration program.

In 2024, it was listed for sale at £5 million.

There are 10 bedrooms, nine bathrooms and four reception rooms in the main house, with a separate three-bedroom guest apartment.

Labyrinth 'Kerdroya'

Kerdroya, a labyrinth on Bodmin Moor is made of nearly 450m of Cornish hedging - which combines stone and vegetation.

Built on a disused car park, on the shores of Lake Colliford, it is in a very peaceful location.
Will Coleman, spent five years developing the project - which is made of more than 140,000 granite stones.
The project was built by master craftsmen and apprentices as a way to pass on traditional stone hedging techniques - more than 150 people have received training in the craft of hedging, which is rated as "endangered" by the charity Heritage Crafts.
A thousand volunteers and five thousand schoolchildren have also helped to build it.

When built correctly, Cornish hedges last a very long time, with some believed to be 4000 years old, making them one of the oldest human-made structures still used for their original purpose.

Many of the base stones, for Kerdroya were hauled out of the lake during a drought and moved to the labyrinth by horse and sledge.
There are grey granite stones from Bodmin Moor in the structure, but also lighter-coloured ones brought in from other parts of Cornwall such as serpentine from the Lizard.
One section is made using a technique called "lyverva" (Cornish for a library), with the stones resembling books neatly lined up on shelves.

In the centre is a piece of art by local father and son team Gary and Thomas Thrussell. It is their take on the labyrinth, made of copper and marine grade stainless steel.

The Tinners Hounds
The statue in Redruth, known as Tinners Hounds, is a 2007 bronze sculpture by David Kemp that features eight dog-like figures made from discarded wellington boots from the Geevor Mine, which closed in 1991.

The artwork is located on Fore Street in Redruth and was commissioned by the Cornwall County Council, Kerrier District, and Redruth Town Councils to represent the local mining heritage.

A friend told David Kemp about a collection of discarded wellington boots at the Geevor Mine, which was a major mining site in Cornwall until its closure in 1991, and David went and collected some and then used the discarded boots to create the original sculptures of "The Hounds of Geevor".

David Kemp writing:
My workshop is a derelict mine building, out on the Tinners Coast, near St Just.
Twenty years ago, Geevor mine closed, ending several thousand years of tin mining in the area.
The mines had quickly fallen into ruins, their shafts choked with debris & scrapped machinery.
A friend, working on the maintenance staff at Geevor, watched a mechanical digger burying a pile of redundant miners boots, & gave me a shout.
I drove over & filled my pickup with the discarded boots, not knowing what I might do with them.
This discarded footwear was to become THE HOUNDS OF GEEVOR.
Cornwall County Council, in conjunction with Kerrier District & Redruth Town Councils, commissioned me to cast eight hounds in bronze.
Fittingly, bronze is an alloy of Tin & Copper, the valuable commodity that the owners of the boots were excavating from the bowels of the earth.

Warleggan
Warleggan is a hamlet on the southern edge of Bodmin Moor and is reached crossing many cattle grids across fields of cattle grazing.

The parish church (dedicated to St Bartholomew) is partly Norman and partly 15th century in date.
It formerly had a spire but this fell down in 1818 and was not rebuilt - it is located on a steep hill - the churchyard is circular which may indicate that it is an ancient burial site.

Warleggan's claim to fame rests with its eccentric Minister, Frederick William Densham, who served the church from 1931 until his death in 1953.

Densham was 'low' Church of England with many Methodist tendencies, particularly anti-gambling including raffles and playing cards and also anti-dancing.
However his predecessor had 'high' church tendencies which isolated Densham from his congregation particularly his Parochial Church Council which appears to have had five members from one extended family out of nine members.

It would appear that before his arrival the church had less than ten regular attendees.

For most of his incumbency, he preached to an empty/almost empty church and it was rumoured that he made cardboard cutouts of people to sit in the pews.
This may have been started by Daphne du Maurier, who later apologised to Densham and sent a small sum in damages.
He did, however, on occasions put out small black edged memorial cards to commemorate past Rectors.

Complaints were made to the Bishop of Truro asking for his removal and relocation, with no effect as he was seen to be fulfilling his duties and conducting services each Sunday.

He would often attend the local Methodist Chapel, after preaching and often was asked to be preach,

never using the pulpit but from the floor.
Among the Methodists he was a popular figure.
His father, William Densham, had been a Congregational Minister.

Many have asked why he chose to be an Anglican Minister and not a Methodist preacher.
He was well educated with a BA and had travelled the world, including to South Africa and Ceylon, and perhaps he thought his education would be valued more in the Anglican church.

Gorsedh Seminar
The seminar was held at Marazion and the main topic was presented by Jowdy Davey, representing Lowender Kernow, a group dedicated to celebrating and nurturing Cornwall's distinctive culture and Celtic heritage.
Her presentation concerned the creation of an Inventory of Cornish Living Traditions.

Safeguarding Cornwall's Living Heritage
Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), which means the living knowledges and practices of culture, is being collected in the UK as part of the government's ratification of the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The first step is to create an inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the UK, and the UK government will be opening the submissions process this autumn.

Essential information
What is happening?
In December 2023, the UK Government announced its intention to ratify the 2003 UNESCO Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Signing up to the convention means creating an inventory, or list, of intangible cultural heritage in the UK. This list will be regularly reviewed helping to identify any heritage which might be 'at risk'.

We are now at the stage where the government will soon be inviting communities to submit their intangible cultural heritage to a UK-wide register.

What living heritage can be submitted?
Simply put, heritage can mean any 'living heritage' which is practiced by communities.
The UK government completed a public consultation on how the UK's ICH should be collected and the results are published here.

From the results of the consultation, the government will be inviting submissions in the following seven categories:
*Oral Expressions: Living heritage relating to both spoken-word and non-verbal communication that are used to pass on knowledge, cultural and social values and collective memory. Examples could include proverbs, riddles, songs, nursery rhymes, or storytelling.

*Performing Arts: Living heritage relating to performance and human creativity. Examples could include different musical practices, dance, or drama.

*Social Practices: Living heritage that is often shared and practised by a group. Examples could include calendar or seasonal customs, festivals, celebrations or rituals.

*Nature, Land, and Spirituality: Living heritage relating to the environment and belief. Examples could include building techniques, land management systems, knowledge about certain animals and plants and ecologies.

*Crafts: Living heritage relating to the skills, knowledge and making of things, either by hand or with assisted tools. Examples could include specific practices of weaving, wood carving, pottery, blacksmithing, or stonemasonry.

*Sports and Games: Living heritage relating to games, competitions or activities needing physical effort and/or skill. Examples could include sporting events or recreational games.

*Culinary Practices: Living heritage relating to the preparation and consumption of food and drink. Examples could include the making of specific dishes or the sharing of food and drink socially.

What are the criteria for submission?
*Must be currently practised.
To be considered for the inventories the item must have a living community who hold the knowledge or

know-how of the item to be carried out, and who are able to pass on the item to future generations.

*Submissions should provide information on the current and future viability of the item and will be able to indicate whether the community submitting the item considers it to be endangered, e.g. that it is in danger of dying out without significant change in the current level of transmission.

*Can originate from anywhere and be from anytime, but must include information about the history and transmission within the community concerned. The item does not need to have a minimum age or have been passed down a minimum number of times and it can originate from anywhere and anyone.

*Must be the living practice itself.
A submission to the inventories should include information about the associated elements of the item where relevant, but the item of living heritage can not only be the associated tools, instruments, costumes, materials etc. nor only be the outcome, output, creation or result.

*Must be compatible with existing internationally agreed human rights standards. For example, with the rights of others to non-discrimination and equal treatment, privacy, freedom of thought and expression, and participation in social and cultural life.

*Must have free, prior and informed consent from the community. The submission must provide evidence that the practicing community has consented to the item of living heritage being submitted to the inventories.

*Any commercial benefit from the living heritage item, must be for the primary benefit of the community.

At the seminar, volunteers were called for a new project aiming to REVIVE the Cornish language

A major seven-nation project has been launched to help preserve and promote the Cornish language, as well as Cornwall's wider cultural heritage, by combining immersive technologies with participatory storytelling.

Called REVIVE, the £2.5 million project is being led by Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) and will use new digital technologies, including extended reality (XR), to encourage the wider use of two endangered European languages – Griko, which is spoken in parts of southern Italy, as well as Cornish.

It is estimated that at least 50% of languages spoken today will disappear or become seriously endangered by the end of this century and according to the United Nations, a language dies out every two weeks.

Cornish, or Kernewek, became extinct by the late 18th century but underwent a dramatic revival during the 20th century and the language has now been reclassified as endangered by UNESCO.
It is estimated there are now around 500 fluent Cornish speakers, plus thousands more who can speak basic Cornish.
Publications, films and music are being produced in the language, and new street signs in Cornwall now display names in both England and Cornish.

REVIVE will involve Cornish speakers working with members of Anglia Ruskin University's StoryLab research institute to create new digital content, immersive experiences and stories, and these will be displayed as part of temporary exhibitions in community venues in Cornwall.

Using a combination of 3D extended reality technologies, data visualisation and archival research, the aim is to bring the language to life for younger generations and promote the county's heritage.

The researchers will also create a digital platform and repository, so that the material being collected and created is available online.
This will include testimonies collected by locals, such as photographs, film and audio, as well as new XR digital narratives.

REVIVE, which involves a consortium of academic and industry partners from the UK, Italy, Germany, Portugal, Romania, Serbia and Estonia, has been launched thanks to €3 million (approximately £2.5 million) of funding from the EU's Horizon Europe programme, and work on the project will begin in March.

Bardic Ceremony
This year 220 bards attended the ceremony held at Marazion, on Folly Field, opposite St Michael's Mount. (in between the foreshore car parks)
It was a sunny day but very windy with some members losing their head-dresses in the wind.
Twenty-two new bards were welcomed including one from Spain, one from Minnesota, one from Toronto, one from Ireland and one from the Outer Hebrides. There were representatives from Wales and Brittany.


Following the ceremony, an early tea was served in the Marazion Community Centre where there was plenty of parking!!

In the evening, there was a concert where a Cornish version of Alfred Lord Tennyson's the Lady of Shalott - Arlodhes A Shalott - was performed.
This work was created in residency at Endelienta Arts in 2024, music composer and pianist Matthew Thomason, translated by Elizabeth Ellis, soprano Elizabeth Freeborn and a cellist normally Kath Buckler (who was unable to be there so there was another cellist whose name I cannot recall).
We were issued with Cornish and English versions so we could follow the story and it was a wonderful performance;

Included below is a summary of the poem found on the internet

Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott" tells the story of a cursed woman living in isolation on an island near Camelot, who must weave a magical web while only viewing the outside world through a mirror. One day, she sees the dazzling Sir Lancelot in her mirror and, captivated, looks directly out the window, breaking the curse and causing her death. She floats down the river in a boat to Camelot, singing mournfully, where she is found dead by the citizens, including Sir Lancelot.

Part I & II: The Curse
The poem begins by introducing the remote island of Shalott, where a mysterious woman lives in a tower, unseen by the outside world. She is under a curse, but she doesn't know its specifics, only that she must not look directly at Camelot. Instead, she weaves a magical, colourful web and watches the world pass by in a mirror.

Part III: Sir Lancelot
One day, the handsome and bold Sir Lancelot rides by the river, singing and shining like a star.
The lady becomes infatuated and, for the first time, looks out of her window to see him directly.

Part IV: The Cursed Death
As she looks, her mirror cracks and her web unravels. Realizing the curse has befallen her, she leaves her tower and finds a boat on the river. Dressed in white, she lies in the boat and floats down the river toward Camelot, singing a sorrowful song. She freezes to death from the cold before reaching the first house in the city. Her name is inscribed on the boat, and when the citizens of Camelot find her, they recognize her and Sir Lancelot notes, "She has a lovely face".

Also on the program were the Bray Family Singers, (a family folk band from Padstow) and Will Keating and John Dowling, who performed some well known favourites and encouraged some community singing.