



Kenderwi Kernewek

(Cornish Cousins)

Newsletter of the California Cornish Cousins

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Add 16th Gathering to the Annals of California Cornish

THE CALIFORNIA CORNISH enjoyed a panel discussion, pasty toss, pub night sing-along and other events at their 16th annual gathering in Grass Valley and Nevada City in June. It was one of the best attended gatherings in recent years. About 170, including Cousins and guests, attended the pub night.

Gathering participants came to the region once known as “the Northern Mines” from throughout California. Several drove or flew from San Diego and others came from the San Francisco Bay area and as far north as Corning. Some came from British Columbia and Texas.

The weekend began on Friday when the Cousins visited the Doris Foley Library for Historical Research in Nevada City. Several perused the books and magazines in the A. C. Todd Cornish Studies Collection. Others pursued family history using the library’s extensive local and regional re-

sources. Librarian Jenny Long called it “the busiest day of the year.”

Later, at City Hall, Mayor Steve Cottrell of Nevada City hosted a panel discussion on the impact of the Cornish in the town known as “the Queen of the Northern Mines.” The panelists included several local historians and a publisher. (See related article). All gathered Friday night at the Grass Valley Elks Lodge where Eleanor Kenitzer and the Grass Valley Male Voice Choir led a pub night sing-along. The evening began with all standing for “Trelawny” and continued with the singing of the most popular Cornish (and a couple of Irish) songs.

When the food ran out, many dispersed to the local eateries. The Cornish filled the Owl Tavern and the Golden Gate Saloon and other establishments just as they used to do in the days when the gold mines were working three shifts. *(Cont’d on Page 2)*



Gage McKinney (4th from l.) recites the California Cornish oath during naturalization ceremonies.

The morning sun shone clear and bright on Saturday's Pasty Olympics, announced by Grass Valley's town crier, Robert Russell, dressed in the elegant hand-sewn livery of his office.

Mayor Mark Johnson remained undefeated in the pasty toss. This year he betted his rival, Mayor Cottrell of Nevada City, by 14 inches. Other winners included Janice Paull of San Jose, who represented the New Almaden contingent. Howard Levine, director of the Grass Valley Downtown Association, orchestrated the event and served as line judge.

A special feature of the Pasty Olympics this year was an outdoor "naturalization" ceremony conducted by Gage McKinney. Nine poor waifs, who had no Cornish ancestry of their own, found sponsors, took the oath and became Cousin Jacks and Jennys. Now they're eligible to seek employment in mines and quarries in North America.

A short time later, over a pasty lunch at the Empire Mine Historic State Park, the Cousins considered preliminary plans for the North American Cornish gathering to be held in Grass Valley and Nevada City in July 2009.

Many of the Cousins stayed after lunch for a tour of the mine conducted by Orlo Steele, who had worked in the mine when young, and Dick Biggs, a Cornish descendant.

Other Cousins fanned out into the county and enjoyed free entry into the Nevada County Historical Society museums, including the railroad museum at Gold Flat.

The banquet dinner at the Elks Lodge on Saturday night featured the Grass Valley Male Voice Choir singing, "Trelawny" and "Take Me Home" and other favorites. The audience clapped, whistled and cheered their appreciation.

David Watkinson, vice president of operations, followed with a dramatic slide presentation on the efforts to re-open the Idaho Maryland gold mine near the center

of Grass Valley. He pointed out the many environmental challenges.

The gathering concluded on Sunday morning with worship at the historic Nevada City United Methodist Church, led by Pastor Charles Smith and Eleanor Kenitzer. The service included hymns by Charles Wesley and concluded with Cornwall's indispensable hymn, "Jesus Shall



**EDWARDS BROS.
IMMIGRANT
COUSIN JACKS**

Among those who attended the gathering in June were three brothers who represent the last

*of the immigrant Cousin Jacks. Bert, Claude and Pete Edwards (l. to r.) came to California from Pendeen, Cornwall, with their parents in 1950. Their father was a pumpman in a Cornish mine and had the same job at the Empire mine in Grass Valley. Claude said it was an easy transition as the family moved from one Cornish settlement to another. As a young man Claude mowed the lawns at the Empire mine. Joining with Harold and Grace Hosking, the Edward brothers swell the ranks of the immigrants from "over 'ome" in our club. **Gage McKinney***

Reign."

President JulieBeth Lamb announced that next year the Cousins will gather in the Mother Lode. The 17th annual gathering will be held in Sonora and Soulsbyville

in Tuolumne County. It will emphasize home life. **Gage McKinney**

Southern Fall Luncheon To Be Held in Idyllwild, October 13

Jan Davis invites all Cornish Cousins to meet in the lovely little mountain town of Idyllwild for the annual Southern Fall Luncheon at 12 noon, Saturday October 13, 2007. We will enjoy a wonderful lunch at The Restaurant Gastrognome, 54381 Ridgeview Drive, one block from North Circle Drive near the Christmas Tree. The price of \$21.95 per person will include everything, including tax and tip. The five menu choices are Smoked Turkey Salad, Rainbow Trout Filet, Raspberry Chicken Sandwich, Asparagus and Portabella Mushroom Pasta and Chicken Wellington.

All sound VERY delicious! Please send your check with your menu choices to JAN DAVIS at 7895 Mt. Vernon Street, Lemon Grove CA 91945 before October 1, 2007 to reserve your spaces. The banquet room is limited in size, so the first 26 reservations will be seated there. Others will be seated in the regular restaurant area.

If you have never been to Idyllwild, you might want to stay for the weekend like I will. What a sweet little town!!! It is located east of Hemet and Temecula. According to their Chamber of Commerce, it is 103 miles from Long Beach, 114 miles from San Diego, and 48 miles from Temecula.

California Cornish Cousins can go on-line at www.idyllwildchamber.com for information on lodging, attractions, etc. If you have questions about Idyllwild, email Jan at jandavis3@cox.net

See you there! **Jan Davis**

New Edition of *The Cornish Miner in America* Available

In 1967 the Arthur H. Clark Co., then of Glendale, CA, published Dr. A. C. Todd's *The Cornish Miner in America*. It was simultaneously published in Truro, Corn-

wall. Though not a Cornishman, Todd had conducted adult education classes in Cornwall, becoming fascinated by these fellow-Britons who spoke as readily of Butte and Grass Valley as they did of their homeland.

After teaching and researching at the University of California and conducting numerous interviews, he wrote *The Cornish Miner in America* with its extensive listing of Cornish families in the United States. In the late 1990s the book, then long out of print, was reprinted by Clark based upon prospective buyers lists provided by Cornish organizations. For this edition Dr. Todd wrote a new introduction reflecting upon the growth of these organizations. In this century still another reprint was undertaken and most of it has been sold.

If you do not have this classic consider its purchase before it again goes out of print, probably for good. Purchase is quite simple. You can call the publisher, now affiliated with the University of Oklahoma Press, at 1-800-842-9286. I believe the price remains at \$29.50 per copy. **Dick Chamberlain.**

Gladys Smitheram Passes at 87

We are sorry to report the death last February of Gladys Smitheram who passed away at age 87. She and her husband Bill were long-time members of California Cornish Cousins, hosting Central Coast luncheons at their home in Santa Barbara.

Greetings From Your New Editor

• When Bert Trerise ran that small "replacement wanted" item in the Winter Issue, I couldn't resist! I have a Cornish heritage, have been retired from the publishing field for almost 10 years, and figured this could be a fun way to contribute to The Cousins. Thanks to Bert for a great job over the past nine years. CCC members, please remember that this is your publication. We'll be pleased to receive your calls and/or e-mails with comments and suggestions for future editions.

Burnett Tregoning

Bill noted that he and Gladys had 61 wonderful years together, including “a lot of

good times and travels, especially to Cornwall.”

California Cousins Go to Kernow (Part 3)

By JulieBeth Lamb and Family

ANOTHER DAY in west Cornwall took us once again across the ferry as we headed towards the Lizard, southernmost peninsula in the UK. Whipping winds and rain met us at the point adding to its mystery and beauty. Looking at the lighthouse and off across the fields to a large mansion we felt like we had gone back in time and we were thankful we had a warm car with windshield wipers in which to travel on our way.

Our next stop was St. Michael's Mount, an island off the coast of Marazion in the Penzance area which at low tide is accessible by ancient rock footpath. Atop a stone outcropping stands a chapel and castle rising up from the sea, surrounded by lovely gardens and a man made port. There sometime in the 900s a fisherman saw the figure of St. Michael warning him of the rocks hidden there in the sea, saving his life. In the 12th century a Benedictine monastery was built with links to the Mont St Michel in Normandy, France, the chapel still holds weekly services. The castle was built in the 1600s as one of the protection and warning sites along the Cornish coast.

Upon arrival we checked high tide times to be sure we could walk back without getting our feet wet and then spent a lovely time in their visitors center, climbing the cobblestone paths and granite steps to the top of the island, touring the castle and chapel, and looking out upon the gardens and buildings that make up the island including fruit trees and a dairy. Battling the winds and fearing rain we could only imagine families in times past living here on top of this rocky crag weathering a storm perhaps for days on end.

Our very best day was when we finally got to meet our cousins Anne and Andrew Lawry at Newbridge in the Penzance area. They were so kind to invite us to their cottage, Trig the Wheel, for pasties and sweet

cream tea. Andrew, Anne and her brother John told us all about their families and lives there, family history, and the old family homestead Lady Downs. After our repast they showed us around Zennor, including the Church of England where some of our relatives were buried.

We went across the countryside, along curving narrow roads, down a long muddy lane to the small farm of Lady Downs. They told us about how hard the family had worked to make a living on 35 acres of moor land so they could buy the land from the Duke of Cornwall before the three generation lease was up and the land reverted to the Duchy to be leased again. The rock house has been covered over with stucco, but the barn remains untouched. We stood at the same granite gate post at which my great, great grandmother Honour Lawry watched her sons go off to find their fortune never to return in her lifetime. Cousins Anne and Andrew sent us home with a small Methodist hymnal they believed to have belonged to her.

Cornwall has an ancient history filled with villages, castles, and standing stones much like Stonehenge. We visited one of these stones, Layon Quoit with three uprights and a capstone about 9 by 17 feet and weighing about 13 tons. It is believed to be an altar, monument or mausoleum from the Bronze Age dating to sometime between 1000 and 2000 BC.

The little fishing village of Mousehole was our next stop, named for it's small port with a narrow opening to protect the boats from harsh storms. This hillside village is filled with shops and restaurants and lots of lights hearkening back to a stormy holiday many years ago. No boats could weather the sea and the people were starving, but one old fisherman and his cat went out to brave the storm and provide for the

town. When the townspeople realized where they had gone every light in town was set out to help them find their way back through the narrow opening into the safety of their harbour. The courageous man endured the storm and fished abundantly while his cat tamed the “storm cat” that threatened them, and the two came home to provide a feast for the whole town which included pasties, star gazy pie, and fish stew.

We spent most of our last day in Truro with host Terry Dengler who graciously invited all of us to his home for pasties and éclairs with sweet cream tea and good conversation. We toured the city, which gets this designation because it has a cathedral, and saw all the sights there. Plenty of time was spent in the shops using up our pounds and getting souvenirs.

A poignant stop was made at Gwennap Pit where John Wesley preached in the 1880s. It is the site of a natural amphitheatre carved out of a hollow formed by a mine cave-in. Here John Wesley preached a new message to common people who were sidelined by the church of England. Farmers, miners, and fisherman who did not possess much wealth were made to feel that they were not pleasing God as much as those who bought ornate carved pews and tithed large sums. For the first time a man of God came to the people, preaching



JulieBeth and her family pose with their Cornish cousins, Andrew and Anne Lawry. From left, Andrew, JulieBeth, Amanda, Christine, Savannah McCormack, Clayton (behind Anne) and Rachel. Photo by Rex Lamb.

in this caved-in mine, on the fishing docks, at the mines, in the town squares, telling them all that Jesus loved them and that He cared about their hearts and lives, not how much money they paid to the tithe. Once again a man of God was bringing freedom and change to the people of

Cornwall and sharing the love of our Lord Jesus Christ with them all, just as St. Piran had done hundreds of years before.

An early morning departure by train to London, then flew out of Heathrow finally landing back in the US after 24 hours of travel. Our children are planning to make another trip in the next couple of years, figuring out how they can do it and talking about bringing their own children there someday. We look forward to visiting again and continuing to get to know this lovely country, see some of the many sights we missed, visit with our family members more, and perhaps even bring a tour from the U.S. to help others get to know their Cornish heritage as we have come to appreciate it even more.

• **JulieBeth Lamb** is the 2007-2008 president of the California Cornish Cousins with lots of help from her husband Rex, a naturalized Cornishman with some Devon ancestry. Cornish family names include Lawry, Martin, and Pengilly. They have been attending CCC

gatherings for 10 years and enjoy learning more about their heritage along with their five children, all a hardy independent lot.

U.S. Stamp Highlights Cornish Auto Designer

Our US Postal Service churns out a wonderful selection of postage stamps. Since many go into stamp collections so that no mail service must be provided they constitute a profitable sideline for the Postal Service. A recent set pictures "1950s Sporty Cars" which are drawn from Ford, Chevrolet, Studebaker, Kaiser, and Nash. The last named is a '52 Nash Healey.



Almost certainly this is the Healey known to sports car fans as the British Austin Healey and its smaller "Sprite." Healey was a Cornishman from Perranporth, a resort area on Cornwall's north coast. Its name is derived from St. Piran because that was the site of his arrival in Cornwall and of his oratory, now buried in the shifting sands. **Dick Chamberlain**

Mineral Point, Wisconsin Scene of Cornish Festival 2007

CORNISH FESTIVAL 2007 is the 15th annual festival presented by the Southwest Wisconsin Cornish Society. Held on September 28-30, a full weekend of activities is planned in Mineral Point, named one of the twelve top historical destinations in the United States for 2007.

Friday will feature From Then to Now, a Day of Learning and end with Kiddleywink Pub Night featuring guest contralto Angela Davy-Thomas from Cornwall at Pendarvis, a restored Cornish village.

Saturday events include a pancake breakfast, storytelling, Celtic classes at Shake Rag Alley, guided walking and bus tours to view Mineral Point architecture, the Taste of Mineral Point with free entertainment, Sporting Day of Traditional Driving, children's activities hosted by Mineral

Point High School students, an afternoon tea at the Royal Inn, and the Miners Buffet at the Hodan Center. Special Saturday features will be the presentation of The Diary of William Stephens, a reading by Coleman with music by Willie Sterba. Mr. Stephens came to Mineral Point from Perranzabuloe in 1853, and Coleman has adapted the story of his dramatic Atlantic crossing in Stephens' own words.

Our featured entertainer from Gunwalloe, Cornwall, has been recognized by the Cornish Gorsedd with the Sampson Hocking Cup for Music 2006. Ms. Davy-Thomas, will present an evening of song.

Sunday's events include a service at the Methodist Church featuring guest soloist Angela Davy-Thomas, a gallery talk: "Equal to Any in the Market: The Furniture Trade in Mineral Point" with Emily Pfothenauer at Pendarvis, a bagpipe led parade, Lowender Pendarvis with Jim Wearne and Angela Davy-Thomas on the

lawn at Pendarvis, High Tea at the Royal Inn, and a euchre tournament.

Free shuttle bus service Saturday and Sunday.

For more information, check their website: www.cornishfest.org or contact dorothy@cornishfest.org by email.

Cousins Contribute Cassette Players to Foley Library

At the annual meeting in June the California Cornish Cousins approved the gift of a cassette player and a CD player to the Doris Foley Library in Nevada City.

The players will be used by patrons who want to hear audio or musical recordings from the A. C. Todd Cornish Studies collection. The players will have ear phones for individual listening.

Librarian Barbara Messer suggested the idea. She directs the Foley Library, which is the historical research (non-circulating) branch of the Nevada County Libraries. Mary Ann Trygg is director of the county libraries.

The CCC's Todd Collection is the largest collection of materials related to Cornwall and the Cornish in the western United States. It includes about 300 volumes and is growing.

The audio collection includes Cornish music, poetry, dialect stories and radio interviews.

The club is looking for a new director for the collection to replace the late Bev Hailer. Gage McKinney is interim director. Brita Rozynski is a volunteer at the Foley.

Parishioners at Pencoys Send Thanks to California Cousins

St. Andrew's Church at Pencoys, Cornwall, recently sent a letter of thanks to the California Cornish Cousins for support in restoring the church roof.

The Cousins were among the first contributors to the church's "Raise the Roof Appeal" six years ago. In May the Rt. Rev.

Bishop Llewellyn, Bishop of Truro, visited Pencoys to dedicate the new roof.

St. Andrew's houses the Thomas Merritt organ, used by the composer when he wrote his Christmas carols more than a century ago. Merritt's carols have been sung around the world ever since.

The Grass Valley Cornish Carol Choir sings several carols by Merritt every year. At one time, when there was an abundance of singers before World War I, Grass Valley had a second carol group called The Thomas Merritt Choir.

The California Cornish supported the restoration of the Merritt organ, which the church uses in its weekly services. After the organ was restored, the church needed a new roof to protect it.

Church Wardens Paul Holmes and Christine Walker wrote on behalf of the parish, which is located near the settlement of Four Lanes. It's on the high ridge between Redruth and Helston.

The church invites any of the California Cousins to come visit when they're in Cornwall. **Gage McKinney**

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Membership in the California Cornish Cousins is from May 1 to April 30. Annual dues are US\$12.00. Membership questions to Maureen Roberts (209) 931-2722. Dues and new membership checks to Joe

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