

Onen hag oll

# The Cornish Association of Victoria Inc. Ballarat Branch

A.C.N. A0008 264A

## December 2021 Newsletter

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**Nadelik Lowen ha Blythen Nowydh da  
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year**

### DATES TO REMEMBER

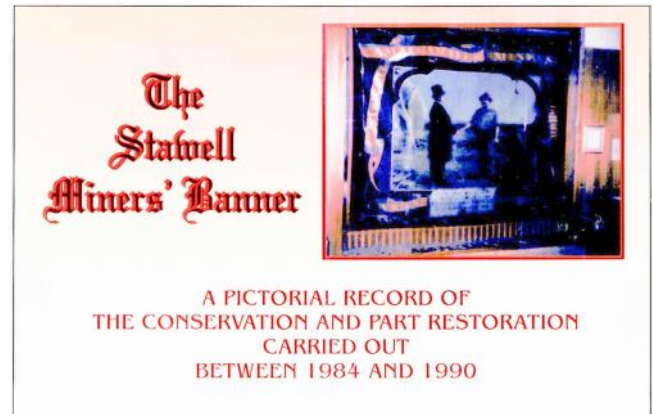
**Saturday 4th December** at 12 noon - Gathering at Barklys, corner Barkly Street and Main Road. A notice concerning this has been distributed.

**Saturday 5th February 2022** - Bring a 'Cornish Treasure' and share its history. If you don't have a 'Cornish Treasure', please bring something that is special to you.

We are hopeful that all restrictions will have been removed by February and are planning on meeting back in the Skipton Street, Uniting Church Hall. More details will be in the next newsletter.

### RESTORING THE STAWELL MINERS' BANNER - VAL D'ANGRI

I am sure everyone who watched Val's presentation at the October Meeting, on Zoom, was amazed at the time and effort Val and her assistant had devoted to restoring this old union banner made in the early 1900s.



In 1927, the Banner was discarded along with many other records to be thrown into a disused mine to make room for office space at the Stawell Town Hall.

One of the employees at the Town Hall, Ted Mills, was upset about so many records being thrown away that he sneaked the banner home for safe keeping before it as thrown into the mine.

In 1981, Ted Mills handed the Miners' banner back to the Town Clerk and it was displayed in the Town Hall until 1983, an archivist from the University of Melbourne, Andrew Reeves, thought it should be preserved as it was a significant part of the Stawell Union history.

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.





The banner was forwarded to the Galleries and Museums Conservation centre in Ballarat and following its closure was housed in the Ballarat School of Mines where restoration of the fragile banner was undertaken. Val worked for about 400 hours in restoring the banner.

The work entailed dismantling the banner, re-dying and painting sections of fabric, weaving new fringes, unpicking and rewinding cording and then re-assembling all sections.



Weaving the new fringe



Faded fabric before tinting



First and second tinting



CONSOLIDATING PAINTED AREAS  
(SHARON TOWNS )



THE RESTORED BANNER  
1989.

## Zoom Meetings

More meetings on zoom - I love Zoom as I can see people from all over Australia.

Friends I would never see, even without lockdowns. Hopefully these are all finished within Victoria and life can return but maybe not quite as it was before.

This week we used Zoom with our daughter in Melbourne to assist us adding our vaccination certificates to our mobile phones.

Today a friend told us a seven year old had helped him with this same task.

Technology is great, but for those in the older age bracket or without internet and mobiles, life has not been made easier.

In a talk I gave recently on Zoom to the Narre Warren and District Family History Group, I mentioned the Geoffrey Blainey Research Centre at Federation University and its curator Clare Gervasoni.

Recently Clare was awarded a prestigious award from the Australian Museums and Galleries Association Victoria (AMaGA Victoria). The Martin Hallett Award for individual contributions to community heritage recognizes Clare's work in enabling preservation and digitization skills in museum and gallery volunteers and best practice through use of Victorian Collections historical digital archive.

Evidently Martin Hallett saw regional collections going into decay. As a public servant he had some research done into this and then was able to go to government and put forward a case for the Collections Victoria website.

Many ideas came out of the 2009 bushfires where places like Marysville lost their whole collection. Now a great conservation copy sits on a server at Melbourne Museum, so that if disaster strikes, you have a copy.

Clare is the consummate champion of preserving and making accessible grass roots community collections using Victorian Collections

Congratulations Clare and Thank You

*\*Thanks to Caleb Cluff of the Ballarat Courier for this information.*

*Di Christensen*

## Ballarat Cemeteries - an update

My sister and I have been searching for the grave of our great grandfather this week.

After looking unsuccessfully, she contacted the cemetery office and they printed a list of names of nearby graves.

I suggest you find the location using Ballarat Cemeteries Deceased Search online, then contact the office on (03) 5332 1469.

Give them several days' notice.

Sadly the touch screens do not show the exact location.

*Di Christensen*

## The Twelve Days Of Genealogy Christmas (# 1)

On the twelfth day of Christmas my true love sent to me:

- 12 subscriptions to family history societies,
- 11 census returns,
- 10 ancestral newspaper articles,
- 9 passenger lists,
- 8 baptism records,
- 7 books on family history,
- 6 wills of ancestors,
- 5 marriage banns,
- 4 probate returns,
- 3 trips to graveyards,
- 2 prison register records and a birth certificate for my tree.

<http://www.familyhistoryresearchengland.co.uk/blog/the-12-days-of-genealogy>

## The 12 Genealogy Days of Christmas (#2)

On the twelfth day of Christmas my true love sent to me:

- 12 well-sourced family trees
- 11 genealogy subscriptions
- 10 Eureka Moments
- 9 DNA test results
- 8 tombstone photos
- 7 marriage records
- 6 new found cousins
- 5 brickwall solutions
- 4 family photos
- 3 Pedigree Charts
- 2 Source Citations
- and a Family Bible for my McGinnis family

*Original lyrics by Lorine McGinnis Schulze 2013*





## **West Briton News 1855**

(a report on Eureka)

### **THE AUSTRALIAN INSURRECTION**

We understand that Lieutenant WILLIAM HENRY PAUL, 12th regiment (son of the late Mr. Paul, solicitor, Truro,) who was wounded in the contest with the insurgent diggers at Bakery Hill, Ballarat, was doing well when the last despatches were sent to England.

He was returned, in the official account, as severely wounded by a gunshot in the hip, yet, that he continued to do his duty in the ranks.

Captain WYSE, of the 40th regiment, who was dangerously wounded, died on the 21st December, and was buried at Ballarat, with military honours.

## **CORNISH CHRISTMAS SNIPPETS**

### **West Briton News 1854**

#### **INCIDENTS OF COLONIAL LIFE**

(Christmas)

A young gentleman of Geelong, Australia, writing to a relative at home, in Cornwall, under date of January, 1854, says:

One peculiarity of Colonial life, or at least of life in the colony of Victoria is this, that many carpenters, blacksmiths, and the like, have made large fortunes, but still retain their old acquaintances, and cannot shake off their bad grammar and worse manners. This produces a great mixture in society, and the woman who scrubs your floors in the morning, and also makes your pies and starches your shirts, may say to you in the evening, "I am engaged," or "thank you, I will take an ice.

Among his neighbours, he says, is a widow of 24, was married at 16 to a small settler up the country, who broke his neck, stock-driving, seven months after their marriage.

A few months ago she was engaged to a young solicitor from Bristol.

The wedding clothes were got, and the handkerchiefs were marked with her future's name. The young man was dissipated, and ran away from his creditors three days before his intended marriage.

The whole story is an odd one.

He, the solicitor, met the widow in the street, was struck with the appearance and followed her home; dodged about the house for a few days, and at length threw a letter, declaring the state of his

affections, into a room where he had just before seen her standing at the window.

The affair proceeded rapidly after so bold a stroke, and but for the cruelty of the young gentleman's creditors, no doubt they would have been man and wife.

I had invitations from different persons to spend my Christmas at their stations in the bush.

But I had had sufficient experience of that kind of thing to know, that three or four days of Christmas spent with a settler would settle me for a fortnight, and I therefore stopped at home, and this is the way my Christmas went.

My Irish neighbours (with whom he boards while lodging in weather boarded rooms of his own) considered it better to keep up Christmas eve than Christmas day, and the young widow aforesaid, her sister, and four others came up to dance, sing, eat cake and drink strong punch.

We commenced at ten, and, so far as I was concerned, left off at three next morning, when I went to bed.

Getting up at eight, I found my young widow busy stuffing a goose, and the others culinarily employed, and, much to my surprise, I learnt that none of them had been to bed. For, intending to go to mass on Christmas day, after the manner, I suppose, of the Irish, they had been afraid to go to bed lest they should miss it - mass commencing at five in the morning - and had kept themselves dancing and romping all through the night.

Well, I breakfasted, and in order the better to enjoy my dinner, I took a long walk, returning about two, thinking we were to have a downright Christmas dinner.

Christmas eve, however, had been too much for my neighbours.

They were all sound asleep, except the little ones, and the consequence was that I sat down alone before a huge goose, a boiled turkey, a large ham, and a vast plum pudding.

At public dinners there is usually a band in attendance; on the present occasion the music that I had was such as is caused by the loud breathing of persons asleep.

That was my first specimen of an Irish Christmas; and remarkably Irish I consider it to be.

## CORNISH 'CURLS' BY CANDLELIGHT

Mail (Adelaide, SA : 1912 - 1954), Saturday 18 December 1948, page 1 - Oswald Pryor

At Christmas there'll be carols by candlelight . . . Well, 80 years ago, Moonta miners sang 'curls' by the light of fatjacks (tallow candles) stuck on their hats with wet clay. The shift on Christmas Eve was too short to do much work at the face. So, Ernie from Penzance and Johnnie from Camborne sat in the shaft-plot and 'guv un lip,' while cap'n turned a blind eye, if not a deaf ear. The carols they sang were those their cockfighting smuggler grandfathers sang after they had 'found grace.'

In fact, the Cornish 'curl' owes its origin to the Wesley revival in the eighteenth century. Characteristics of the tunes are a florid air, a rolling boss, and frequent points of imitation' - one part after another imitating a phrase proposed by the air. Words are from the psalters and Nonconformist hymn books, and in some instances from 'made-up poytry.'

Singing in the chapels was accompanied by instrumentalists playing flutes, ophicleides, serpents, and bassoons. On one occasion seven bassoons played the bass, and it was said 'when they all closed down on low F it was like heaven.' Critics complained the tunes ignored all the rules of harmony; they all sounded alike; the working miners who composed them merely cribbed from one another.

It made no difference to Cousin Jack. His 'curls' were some of his choicest possessions, and at Christmas he made a musical feast of them. Hundreds walked miles to attend the Christ-mas morning service in the little chapels decorated with evergreens. It was held at 6.30 a.m., and throughout the day and on the following day itinerant parties sang carols in the better homes, in hotel bars, and at street corners.

Moonta was like that in the early days. The band played in Captain Hancock's garden before breakfast. Children went from door to door singing for pennies. Parties of young fellows invaded private homes and under the generous influence of swanky (home-brew) sang till all hours. Householders dared not go to bed lest their slumbers be disturbed by 'Martels Awake.' In a few years the 'boays' had begun to compose new tunes which differed little from the old ones. Moonta's leading musician, Mr. J. H. (Johnnie)

Thomas, edited a collection of both kinds which was published under the title 'The Christmas Welcome.' Included was his own 'Calm oh the Listening Ear,' now almost a classic.

In days gone by Moonta lads used to greet one another with, 'What about a verse of 'Carm On?' The opening phrase is taken up by each part in successions.

Having explained that to his singers, a local conductor exclaimed, 'Neow boays, altogether - one after t'other.'

Carols singing was at its best in the famous Christmas night rotunda concerts in Victoria Park. Originated by Mr. Thomas in the nineties, they were to continue without a break for more than 30 years. By the light of Chinese lanterns suspended from the native pines, hundreds listened to the combined choirs in a two-hour program. It was the kind of hearty singing the Cornish enjoy. 'Like ee used to be before they moosic teachers spoilt singun,' said an old-timer.

With the end of mining and dispersal of population the concerts had to be abandoned. But not the carols. The Cornish are a singing people - like the birds, they sing because they must - and in 1927 the Moonta Harmony Choir was formed in Adelaide. Avowed objects: '*To perpetuate the happy celebration of Christmas by the singing of Cornish carols.*' It is still going strong with its name changed a year ago to, Cornish Carol Choir. Each year it gives a broadcast program. Instead of a few hundreds, thousands now listen to 'High Let Us Swell' and 'Hark, What Means.'

One can almost hear the ghost of that popular Moonta musician 'Fiddler Jim' exclaiming in idiomatic phrase, 'Darney, boay, 'ee's a corshun!'



### **The First Carols by Candlelight**

It was hard in the Moonta Mines that year  
For the miners, down in the pit,  
It wasn't a place for a weak man, but  
The Cornish Miners had grit,  
They burrowed deeper with every day  
Extracting the copper ore,  
And the skimps grew high in the heaps that piled  
Not far from the Moonta shore.

They wore their helmets deep in the mine  
With a candle fixed to the brim,  
And worked in the glow of the candlelight  
While the pumps pumped out and in,  
They pumped for water, they pumped for air  
For the air in the mine was rank,  
And water seeped at the lowest lode  
Where the atmosphere was dank.

They built their cottages out of lime  
And mud, with a building board,  
On Sundays, that was the only time  
Once they had prayed to the Lord,  
The Cornish Miners were Methodists  
Built numerous churches there,  
And Cap'n Hancock had said, 'Attend!  
Or your job is gone – Beware!'

Those men of flint had hearts of gold  
And they raised their children fine,  
Sons would follow their fathers then  
And go to work in the mine,  
One Christmas Eve they were gathered there  
By their hundreds, on the green,  
A candle lit on their helmets each  
Like a glittering starlit scene.

The wives and children were there as well  
With their voices raised in praise,  
The swelling sound of an angel choir  
With their humble miners ways,  
They called it Carols by Candlelight  
And the movement grew apace,  
It spread all over the world from this  
The Moonta Miners grace.

David Lewis Paget

<https://hellopoetry.com/poem/556894/the-first-carols-by-candlelight/>

### **A Christmas Story from St Ives (1887)**

A funny story is told in St Ives to the effect that an elderly lady, one of the most respected inhabitants of the town, was awakened one night, about Christmas Time, by a loud knocking at the street-

door. She looked out of her window and asked who was, and what they wanted.

'Mr Jones, Esquire!' answered a voice in the darkness.

'Ah, well,' replied the lady, 'he doesn't live here, so please go away.'

In a short time, however, the knocking was repeated, while a sound as of voices in concert was borne on the midnight air.

Again the disturbed lady asked, 'Who are you?' and again came the vague reply, 'Mr Jones, Esquire!' Indignantly she re-joined that Mr Jones, Esquire would receive the contents of her water-jug unless he quickly took himself off.

She was no more disturbed, nor was it till a later day that the good lady learned that her rest had been troubled by 'Mr Jones's Choir' from the Parish Church, singing Carols to honour the approach of Christmas.

### **The Child Jesus - A Cornish Carol**

Moreton Mail (Qld. : 1886 - 1899, 1930 - 1935), Saturday 25 December 1886, page 4

Welcome that star in Judah's sky,  
That voice o'er Bethlehem's palmy glen:  
The lamp far sages hailed on high,  
The tones that thrilled the shepherd men;  
Glory to God in loftiest heaven!  
Thus angels smote the echoing chord;  
Glad tidings unto man forgiven,  
Peace from the presence of the Lord.

The Shepherds sought that birth divine,  
The Wise Men traced their guided way;  
There by strange light and mystic sign,  
The God they came to worship lay.  
A human Babe in beauty smiled,  
Where lowing oxen round him trod:  
A maiden clasped her Awful Child,  
Pure offspring of the breath of God.

Those voices from on high are mute,  
The star the Wise Men saw is dim;  
But hope still guides the wanderer's foot,  
And faith renews the angel hymn:  
Glory to God in loftiest heaven!  
Touch with glad hand the ancient chord;  
Good tidings unto man forgiven,  
Peace from the presence of the Lord.

An internet search for this Carol suggests it is *A dramatic setting of words by Robert Stephen Hawker focusing on the Nativity.*

## Oxen Pray on Christmas Eve

I REMEMBER, when a child, being told that all the oxen and cows kept at a farm in the parish of St Germans, at which I was visiting with my aunt, would be found on their knees when the clock struck twelve.

This is the only case within my own knowledge of this wide-spread superstition existing in Cornwall.

Brand says, " A superstitious notion prevails in the western parts of Devonshire, that at twelve o'clock at night on Christmas-eve, the oxen in their stalls are always found on their knees, as in an attitude of devotion ; and that (which is still more singular) since the alteration of the style, they continue to do this only on the eve of Old Christmas-day.

An honest countryman, living on the edge of St Stephen's Down, near Launceston, Cornwall, informed me, that he once, with some others, made a trial of the truth of the above, and, watching several oxen in their stalls at the above time, at twelve o'clock at night, they observed the two oldest oxen only, fall upon their knees, and, as he expressed it in the idiom of the country, make ' a cruel moan, like Christian creatures.'

I could not, but with great difficulty, keep my countenance; he saw, and seemed angry that I gave so little credit to his tale ; and, walking off in a pettish humour, seemed to ' marvel at my unbelief.' There is an old print of the Nativity, in which the oxen in the stable, near the Virgin and the Child, are represented upon their knees, as in a suppliant posture. This graphic representation has probably given rise to the above superstitious notion on this head."

*The Drolls, Traditions and Superstitions of Old Cornwall* - Robert Hunt 1908

## Nine Lessons and Carols

Although the tradition of Nine Lessons and Carols is popularly associated with King's College, Cambridge, its origins are attributed to Truro Cathedral in Cornwall.

Up to the late 19th century, the singing of Christmas carols was normally performed by singers visiting people's houses, and carols - generally considered to be secular in content — had been excluded from Christian worship.

In the Victorian era, the rising popularity of hymnody encouraged church musicians to introduce carols into worship.

An 1875 book of carols, *Carols for Use in Church During Christmas and Epiphany* by Richard Chope and Sabine Baring-Gould, was an influential publication.

At around this time, the composer and organist John Stainer was compiling a collection, *Christmas Carols New and Old*, and during Christmas 1878 he introduced carols into the service of Choral Evensong at St Paul's Cathedral in London.

Other cathedrals also began to adopt carols at Christmastide that year and the Royal Cornwall Gazette reported that the choir of Truro Cathedral would sing a service of carols at 10:00 pm on Christmas Eve:

*The Choir of the Cathedral will sing a number of carols in the Cathedral on Christmas Eve, the service commencing at 10pm. We understand that this is at the wish of many of the leading parishioners and others. A like service has been instituted in other cathedral and large towns, and has been much appreciated. It is the intention of the choir to no longer continue the custom of singing carols at the residences of members of the congregation.*  
— Royal Cornwall Gazette, 20 December 1878

Two years later, the Right Rev. Edward White Benson, at that time Bishop of Truro, conducted the first formal service of "Nine Lessons and Carols" on Christmas Eve (24 December) 1880.

Benson, concerned at the excessive consumption of alcohol in Cornish pubs during the festive season, sought a means of attracting revellers out of the pubs and into church by offering a religious celebration of Christmas.

The idea for a service consisting of Christmas music interspersed with Bible readings was proposed by the succentor of the cathedral, the Rev. George Walpole (who later became Bishop of Edinburgh). The cathedral - a Victorian gothic building - was still under construction, and services were being held in a temporary wooden structure which served as a pro-cathedral.

The first Nine Lessons and Carols service took place there at 10:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve and was attended by over 400 people.

Bishop Benson was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 1883, and the Nine Lessons service began to gain in popularity across the Church of England and the wider Anglican Communion. The original liturgy has since been adapted and used by other churches all over the world

In December 2013, Truro Cathedral staged a reconstruction of Bishop Benson's original 1880 Nine Lessons with Carols Service which was attended by a congregation of over 1,500 people

Wikipedia



## CORNISH NEWS

### **Poppy wreaths from south-west England have been laid on a memorial train to mark Remembrance Day**

The Poppies to Paddington event, organised by The Veterans Charity and Great Western Railway, started in 2020 as memorial services had to be cancelled due to the pandemic.



The journey symbolises the long journey made by soldiers on their way to war.

Wreaths were laid in Penzance and Paignton on the train heading to Paddington.

Mayor of Penzance, Jonathan How, was joined by St Ives MP Derek Thomas and representatives of the armed forces in laying wreaths on the train.

The wreaths were due to be placed on Paddington's war memorial in London.

### **Landmark Trees**

Landmark Trees celebrating community heroes, places and events are to be planted in towns and villages across Cornwall.

As part of the Forest for Cornwall programme, with funding support from the Woodland Trust Emergency Tree Fund, 213 trees will be supplied for free to local town and parish councils.

The trees, which can be planted to commemorate an individual in the local community, a specific place or an event, will be ready for planting between November 2021 and March 2022.

The saplings will include 20 young oak trees grown from acorns from Cornwall's oldest oak, the Darley Oak, which is estimated to be between 500 and 900 years old.

### **Council buys 130 affordable homes in garden village near St Austell**

130 affordable homes in a garden village have been bought by Cornwall Council as part of a multi-million pound deal. Officials say the houses, based at West Carclaze on the outskirts of St Austell, are part of plans to help tackle the housing crisis.

The deal with developers Eco-Bos is the largest acquisition the authority has made to date for its new 'council housing' development programme, which was set up in 2019 following the lifting of borrowing restrictions by the Government.

Once completed, the homes will be available for social rent and affordable rent to local households

in need.

Shared ownership homes will also be available, helping people to take a first step on the housing ladder.

Crucially, 100 of the 130 homes would have been open market homes. The deal will see these converted to additional affordable housing using Council funding, meaning that the site will now deliver significantly more than the original 35 per cent affordable housing required through the planning process.

The homes are due to be handed over to the Council over the next three to four years, with the first expected in the coming months.

They will feature air-source heat pumps and solar panels, saving an average of 4.6 tonnes of carbon a year, using just 32 per cent of the energy of an average house.

The investment helps to ensure a balanced and sustainable community, providing access to genuinely affordable housing to local households in the years to come.

**Heritage sites across Cornwall** have been listed as 'at-risk' because of issues such as neglect, decay or inappropriate development.

Historic England recently published its annual Heritage at Risk Register for 2021. The Register is the yearly health-check of England's most valued historic places and those most at risk of being lost forever.

A total of 31 sites in the South West have been added to the Register because of concerns about their condition. They are at risk of being lost forever as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development.

They include 24 Foundry Square, part of the historic Harvey's Foundry complex in Hayle which is important to the story of mining heritage and its communities.

### **60th birthday of the Tamar Bridge**

The Tamar Bridge recently celebrated its 60th birthday. The link between Cornwall and Devon now carries around 40 000 vehicles a day.

