



**CORNISH ASSOCIATION  
OF  
VICTORIA, INC.**

**NEWSLETTER  
No. 136**

**FEBRUARY 2021**

Corporation Reg. No. A0008264A

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**PRESIDENT'S  
MESSAGE**



'Dydh da' ('G'day'),  
Welcome to 2021.

It's hard to believe that the last time we met together at Oakleigh was 12 months ago. It seems like a lifetime.

2020 was indeed a difficult year for all of us.

On behalf of my family I want to thank so many CAV members for their thoughts and prayers as well as their condolences in relation to the passing of Lyn's father just before Christmas. It was and is a difficult time for our family.

Everyone said goodbye to 2020 in the hope that 2021 will be better. I am certain that it will be.

Your Committee has established that we will not meet together physically until we are sure about the restrictions on numbers as well as the cleaning requirements at the Oakleigh Baptist church. Members of your Committee will meet with members of the church later in February to discuss future developments. We will keep CAV members posted about these arrangements.

Your Committee has continued to meet during the restrictions thanks to Zoom.

This has been very successful and we will continue to meet in this way into the future.

Even when we are able to meet face to face again at Oakleigh, we still plan to hold these meetings on Zoom at the same time.

As I said last year that will be a world first when it happens.

This is a way of involving many more of our members, especially those who cannot attend our meetings in Melbourne.

I think that this is an exciting and fantastic prospect for us, ensuring the future of the Association for many years to come.

For the first half of 2021 we plan to use in-house speakers from our membership who will speak to us about all things Cornish. You will receive more information about the program soon with all the relevant details.

We look forward to our first Zoom meeting for 2021 on February 20th, where CAV Vice President Brian Rollason will entertain us with photos and stories about two cliff top walks he did in Cornwall. The first is Trevavis Head to Rinsey Cove (Porthleven) and the second is Godrevy Point to Hell's Mouth (Portreath).

Personally, I'm eagerly looking forward to Brian's presentation.

On the 6th December last year I was invited to attend a Zoom meeting of the Toronto Cornish Association.

It was 6.00 am (on the 7th) Melbourne time, but it was a terrific meeting and I thoroughly enjoyed the camaraderie of our Canadian friends.

Special thanks go to TCA President Marion Stephens and John Webb who put on the entertainment at the meeting.

The TCA meeting was so good that I had to borrow some of their material for our CAV Christmas meeting on the 12th December.

As many of you know I invited a number of TCA members as well as some of our American friends to our meeting and the feedback from them was very positive.

I think that there should be more sharing like that across the Cornish diaspora if we can get over the time differences.

I came away from the TCA meeting knowing that

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OF VICTORIA INC.**

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**Fees:**

**Membership:**

Single: \$40.00

Family: \$60.00

Life Single: \$400.00

Life Family: \$600.00



**Saturday 20th February at 1.30 pm** - Brian Rollason will speak about two cliff top walks he did in Cornwall. The first is Trevavis Head to Rinsey Cove (Porthleven) and the second is Godrevy Point to Hell's Mouth (Portreath).

The meeting will be held via Zoom  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84861447829?pwd=dENjZU9CN09KOWtSWThjNDJmenRzZz09>

Meeting ID: 848 6144 7829  
Passcode: 814429

Or enter Zoom by Phone (Audio only): (03) 7018 2005 Australia  
Add Meeting ID: 848 6144 7829 and Press #  
Then add Meeting Passcode: 814429 and Press #

Important Phone numbers in case you get stuck:  
Ken Peak:  
0400 309 469 or (03) 9717 0786  
Arthur/Robyn Coates:  
(03) 9478 6135 or 0419 551 320

Details for subsequent meetings will be circulated prior to the meetings.

**Saturday 20th March 2021 at 1.30 pm** - Neil Thomas

**Saturday 17th April 2021 at 1.30 pm** - Helen Dwyer will speak on her trek on the Kokoda Track.

**Pastoral Care**

If you know of someone who is unwell, celebrating a special birthday or just needs a cheery greeting, please let Evelyn Jones know the details so she can be in touch.

Evelyn's details are:

Ph: 0417 160 658

[ejo65074@bigpond.net.au](mailto:ejo65074@bigpond.net.au)

**CAV NEWSLETTER**

The CAV Newsletter is published in February, May, August & November and distributed via email and in some cases by mail.

If you have an email address, please consider having your newsletter emailed. For distribution contact The Secretary.

Deadline for contributions for the next issue:  
**Saturday 17th April 2021**

Articles for inclusion are welcome at any time but **must be received by the deadline date.**

Please use plain text font size 12, without formatting. Photos and tables should be included separately - not as part of a document.

Acknowledgment of source is required.

The email address for the CAV Newsletter -  
[robyncoates@hotmail.com](mailto:robyncoates@hotmail.com)

Please mark - Article for CAV Newsletter.

the strong common bond we have with these folk is our Cornish heritage.

A sub-committee of the CAV Committee will meet with CHSI representatives in February to develop a 'Memorandum of Understanding' for ratification by both organisations.

We will have to discuss, for example, things like CAV access to the materials and how we intend to transport the library to Castlemaine.

Once details are agreed, we will communicate with you on these exciting developments.

We have officially closed off contributions to the 'Agan Kernow' project. We now have enough material for the CAV to send to a publisher a book or an anthology of stories about 'Our Cornwall'.

I am in the process of editing the contributions already received. I will keep you posted.

I believe that 2021 is an exciting time for the Cornish Association of Victoria as we move into a new COVID-normal era, making use of technology to further enhance our objectives.

I'm hoping to see you all at our meeting in February.

'Oll an Gwella'

Ken Peak

President, Cornish Association of Victoria



## VALE

### Richard John Snedden (1938-2021)

Richard, the son of George Hamilton Snedden and Catherine Quick Harris was born on the 8th October 1934, in Melbourne, Victoria. He married Joan in 1972 at Hampton, Victoria and together they researched their Cornish family backgrounds.



A lawyer, teacher, university professor and administrator by profession, Richard had Degrees in Law, Arts (Political Science, History) and Education. He was Dean of the Faculty of Professional Studies, at Monash University, 1990 – 1993, Deputy Director of the Chisholm Institute of Technology, and Dean of the Faculty of General Studies at the Caulfield Institute of Technology.

His personal career in the educational field resulted in him living and working in the United Kingdom, mainly Cambridge, for extended periods.

Whilst there he spent some time at the Institute of Cornish Studies.

In 1985, Richard and Joan joined the Cornish Association of Victoria Inc. (CAV).

He became Vice-President in 1990; two years later, succeeding to the position of President, which he held for the following two years.

In 1992 Richard became a Life Member and thereafter participated actively in the activities of the Association.

From 1994 to 1996 he held the position of Senior Vice-President (now Immediate Past President).

He was delegate to the Council of British and Commonwealth Societies and represented the CAV at Governors' Levees at Government House in Victoria.

During his term of office as President of the CAV, he instigated the first ever international conference to be organised by the Association.

He took the first steps in staging a Cornish Miracle play in Victoria at the 1996 St Piran's Day Celebrations in Norton Park, Wantirna, Melbourne, when *The Life of St Meriasek* was produced and directed by him.

In 1999, Richard was inducted as a Bard of Gorsedh Kernow at Hayle.

He chose the Bardic Name *Dyscajor Ertach Gwyr* (True Heritage Teacher).

Richard published various conference papers and academic articles in journals, as well as reports and pamphlets on aspects of Cornish history, particularly the Cornish contribution to the development of Australia.

He had researched the contribution of Sir John Quick (born 1852) to the Federation of Australia in 1901 (he was Richard's great uncle) ready for the centenary of Federation.

He was asked to do the national launch of the postage stamp bearing Sir John's likeness.

Richard was appointed Patron of the Cornish Association of Victoria Inc in March 2016 at the St Piran's Festival at Daylesford, Victoria.

A Service of Thanksgiving for Richard's life was held at St George's Anglican Church, Malvern on Friday 22nd January at which several CAV Members were present.

## SIR EDWARD NICHOLL

(with thanks to Jill Beard who presented at our November meeting)

I first came across Edward Nicholl whilst researching my own ancestry.

His mother was a Mary Hannah Michell and initially I thought she was part of my family. It turned out that I had wandered down one of the many wrong paths that have been part of this journey.

So, whilst I cannot count him as a relative, I had already developed quite an admiration for Edward and today, I would like to tell you his story.



He was born in Poole, a small village between Camborne and Redruth on 17th June 1862.

He was the son of William Nicholl and Mary Hannah Michell, the 4th of their 11 children. His father was employed for the whole of his working life on the Cornwall Railway, first as a draftsman, then as chief accountant.

When he was a very young man, William was associated with the great engineer, Brunel, in the building of the Saltash Bridge. He then worked on the West Cornwall Railway, the South Devon and West Cornwall Railway and finally with the Great Western Railway when they acquired the line. He retired at the age of 65 and died in Plymouth in his 73rd year.

I don't know much about his mother, except that Edward said this about her, "I will never be able to pay sufficient tribute to my mother's influence and loving care, she was one of the sweetest women who ever lived, always ready to foster my ambitions, she did more to set my feet on the path to success than anyone else. She died at my house in Cardiff in 1915 at 83 years of age."

His paternal Grandfather was an auctioneer and estate agent at Redruth.

His maternal Grandfather, James Michell, was a well-known engineer who lived at Perranwell, near Falmouth and worked in the large engineering works of John Michell Williams which employed 600 men - he was the manager of these works.

So, while he definitely wasn't born into poverty, he was certainly not born with the proverbial silver spoon in his mouth either. By grit, determination and a healthy ambition, this humble railway

apprentice became, at a comparatively young age, one of the foremost marine engineers and ship owners in Britain.

He became a very rich man, a very glamorous man of great ability, at times a ruthless business man, but he always showed kindness.

His early years in Redruth were those of the average boy. He attended school and played games. He was still under 11 years of age when he got a holiday job stamping letters at the local post office and delivering telegrams. He was earning two shillings and sixpence a week.

When he had to return to school the postmistress reported that he had proved to be one of the most willing workers the office had ever known.

On his twelfth birthday, upon feeling he had been unjustly thrashed, he threw an inkpot at the head of his teacher, left the school and never returned.

The next day he entered the Carn Brea Railway Works as an assistant timekeeper, with a starting wage of five shillings per week.

At this time he was also a drummer in the Redruth Volunteer Rifle Corps, a choirboy at Redruth Church and a member of the Redruth Choral Society. A couple of years were spent timekeeping, drumming and singing.



It was in the drawing office that he first heard the story of Trevithick's engine which stirred his imagination and inspired him to greater things. When he was 14, he entered the engineering and loco shops of the Great Western Railway as a full blown apprentice.

He joined Camborne Science and Art classes and at 15, won a prize from the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic for a detailed plan and drawing of a locomotive engine.

At 16, he was doing the work of a man and spending his evenings studying. He earned certificates from the Camborne Science and Art school for Advanced Machine Drawing, Geometry, and Model and Freehand Drawing and won a good number of the prizes offered.

At 18, he was sent to Swindon to complete his apprenticeship and left home for the first time. Finding it impossible to live on his wages, he became

as assistant teacher at the Science and Art School. He also joined the Swindon Town Band.

In his 20th year, however, discontented with his wages of 15s a week, he left Swindon upon hearing of a shipping boom in the North, and became a journeyman fitter.

After three months of this he joined the Amalgamated Society of Engineers and obtained positions in steamers in this new trade.

Edward's personal life was also moving along. He married Frances Garby in 1884. She was the daughter of William Symons Garby, a noted Cornish mining engineer. Over the next few years Edward and Frances had four children - one son and three daughters. In 1889, Edward was given a commission in the Royal Naval Reserve.

From 1895 to 1903, he was a lecturer on engineering subjects at Cardiff College, and started the Hero Metal Co Ltd of which he was chairman of directors.

Discovering he had quite an inventive mind, he patented a device called a Movable Grain Division for the carriage of grain cargoes, and also invented a tramway life-saving appliance.

In 1903, he became a shipowner and within three years his Cardiff Hall line comprised a fleet of 12 vessels. He was elected to many positions of importance on councils and associations in Wales and other parts of the country. Ten years after his first shipping enterprise, he started the Nicholl Steamship Company.



In 1912, he was the President of the Cardiff Cornish Association and hosted the biggest dinner ever held in the town which was attended by over 500 people. Everything came from Cornwall. He showed the Welsh people that everything in life worth living for comes from Cornwall. Entertainment was provided by Cornish Wrestlers, choirs and Brass Bands.

He was by now a wealthy man. He was generous in local community especially with children. In 1909, he invited thousands of children to his daughter's wedding and in 1914 he hosted the children from Nazareth House.

During the war he was the Chief Examining Officer of the Bristol Channel, and in the course of his duties saw the ruthlessness of German submarine warfare at first hand. He was active in foiling the work of German spies in Bristol Channel ports. On many occasions ships sailing from those ports were stopped by German U Boats at the mouth of the Channel and the German commanders were found to be in possession of all particulars as to the time of sailing, the destination and cargoes the ships were carrying. He constantly urged and helped to provide greater supervision and surveillance and as president of the Merchant Seamen's League in the war, he conducted a public campaign for adequate compensation for British and Allied sailors who suffered from the German submarine warfare. He constantly urged that no false peace should be made with the enemy.

Because of the demands of his war work, he sold his shipping business and so ended his direct connection with shipping. The value received was £1,000,000 equal to 45 times that amount today. He donated £300,000 to the War Fund.

In 1916, he was knighted for his war service.

Being a man of large fortune, he celebrated the occasion of his knighthood by giving £10,000 towards the extension of the King Edward Hospital in Cardiff and offered £50,000 to the same institution for the maternity and child welfare homes.

However, it came to his attention that not every mother and child was welcome there.

This caused Sir Edward to state publicly that if illegitimate children were to be barred he would use the money he had offered to build a home elsewhere and so he also founded the Edward Nicholl Home for Waifs and Strays.

"If some poor girl comes to the hospital, she is not to be turned away from the front door. If she is in trouble and wants assistance, she must come in,



never mind who she is, or what she is, or where she comes from. She must have the best attention, and the child afterwards be looked after.”

These were the first of many charitable gifts that he made. He was famous for his charitable gifts to Cardiff, Cornwall and to Redruth, his native town, in particular.

He endowed a scholarship of £2000 at the Cardiff Technical Schools.

He offered £100 to the first Cardiff man to be awarded the VC.

He paid the cost of the annual treat of the Redruth Town Mission Sunday School, and for a playground for the children of Redruth.

He built a spacious hut for soldiers at the Cardiff Barracks.

He guaranteed £5,000 for the establishment of a War Savings Bank.

In memory of his mother, he renewed and repaired the bells of Llanishen Church, where his mother is buried.

1918 He then purchased and moved to Littleton Park, near Middlesex.

1919 gave a cup to the Cornwall County Football Association.

To encourage the apprentices of the city of Cardiff to obtain a first-class technical education at the outset of their professional careers, Councillor Nicholl generously founded the "Councillor Nicholl's prizes," amounting to £25 annually. In 1918, Sir Edward was elected MP for Penryn Falmouth Division, but Parliament proved a disillusion to him and after four years he decided not to seek re-election.

In 1919, whilst he was a Member of Parliament, he revived his early training on the railway by driving three trains



a day from London to Reading during the railway strike, after offering his services early in the dispute.

In fact he loved railways; he was the proud possessor of what was acknowledged in 1929 to be the finest model railway in the world, which he had himself constructed. This was complete with tunnels, level crossings and a signalling system.

He gave £200 towards the County of Cornwall War Memorial

He donated money for the Annual Sir Edward Nicholl essay competition at Royal Cornwall Polytechnic where he himself had studied.

1922 Cornish Male Voice Choir taken to a dinner – I believe this was Cornish Tin Miners Choir  
1922 Organ recital and concert to aid Cornish Miners Relief fund.

His 60th birthday was celebrated at Shepperton Park by a large gathering of shipping, political and personal friends, and he entertained the guests with music including songs by a Cornish choir, Cornish wrestling experts

1923 President of the West of England Bandsmen festival - 50 years later there was still an Edward Nicholl Shield and Cup being awarded

1924 Wrestling belts for champion - Still going in 1955.

1925 Deputy Lieutenant for the County of London  
1928 KBE was conferred on him

1925 Prizes for the Falmouth Penryn District Exhibition

1920's He was the President of the Cornwall County Bowling Association, being the donor of the Nicholl Cup.

1927 Federation of Cornwall Chambers of Commerce

1935 supported the Cornish Industries Fair

At the Cornish Gorsedh on August 31st, 1935 he was initiated as a Bard of Cornwall, his bardic name being, in recognition of his services to his native country. (Bardic Name - *Gwythias* - Guardian of the Channel)

1936 Christmas gift for Redruth poor, a parcel of meat and provisions and a gift of coal

1937 £15000 to the West Cornwall Miners and Women's Hospital at Redruth

1937, children's playground in Redruth.

In 1938 he presented a beautiful oak reredos to St Andrews Church in Redruth.

This was in addition to the £2000 he gave a year earlier to enable the completion of the building.



Though he did not live there for most of his life, in his native place of Cornwall, and especially in Redruth, he was beloved.

His journeys there were a procession of lavish donations and gifts to hospitals, churches of every denomination, societies, clubs and individuals. A true good Samaritan, no deserving case was ever passed by on the other side of the street.

In his homes, both in Cardiff and Littleton Park, he offered the most generous hospitality, and his happiest hours were passed entertaining hoards of children from orphanages and homes and joining in whole-heartedly with their games.

Wherever he went, and whatever he did in any area of his life, he never failed to notify everyone of one fact, that he was Cornish.

He died on the 31st March 1939.

### December meeting - 12th December

Our December meeting was somewhat different to our normal end of year activity, as this time it was conducted via Zoom.

Our President, Ken Peak, welcomed all CAV members including those from rural Victoria and interstate. An added bonus was some visitors from the Toronto Cornish Association and a visitor from Wisconsin USA.

With our microphones turned down/muted we sang *Trelawny* and *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*.

Derek Trewarne had discovered an old film from 1916 recorded in Cornwall, called *The Cornish Riviera* which Ken showed - we could identify many of the places and it was fascinating to see the fishing boats in the harbours as well as the townsfolk going about their daily activities - the women in their long skirts, hats and white aprons and most of the men in hats and caps.

You can watch it here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGoLkflTtuQ>

We played a Quiz about Cornwall and sang a few more Carols before watching a short presentation from Truro Cathedral - *Carols from the Cornish Diaspora*. This included Carols the miners of South Australia and California may have sung.

Many of our members would remember Kate Neale when she visited a few years ago whilst she was completing her PhD and this project was her idea. It was also good to see Sally Geraghty.

You can watch the snippet of the concert here:

<https://vimeo.com/328371270>

More songs followed including Tom Bawcock's Song -the history of Stargazy pie was related and included images of the Mousehole lights and Tom Bawcock's Eve.

A time of chatter finished a very pleasant afternoon.

A screen shot of a few participants



### A touch of humour

Methodist preachers found enthusiastic audiences in Cornwall, but it did not always go their way.

One preacher in West Cornwall opened his sermon with the words "In my Father's house are many mansions ..." but found the congregation were looking back at him with clear distrust. He started the text again, only to be interrupted by an indignant farmer.

"Tes nothen' more than a great 'strammin' lie what thee art telling! Cried the farmer. "We do all know well enough that your father's house haven't got but three rooms in it— and one of them's no bigger than a pig sty."

(Thanks Brian Rollason)

## Geelong Branch

After a long break, due to the COVID restrictions, the Geelong Branch enjoyed our November meeting together outside the Edina Waterfront Cafe at Portarlington.

The venue overlooks the bay and the weather was ideal.

A most enjoyable day of fellowship was had especially with several of our past members being able to attend.

Due to COVID restrictions, at our normal church venue, our January meeting was held at the Portarlington Golf Club.

We had a room to ourselves enabling us to commence the meeting with the singing of Trelawny.

That is the first time in a long while that we were able to sing that song.

Once again a very pleasant afternoon was had by current and past members.

Neil Thomas.

Branch Chairman.



Photo of group at Edina Waterfront Cafe by Ruth Taylor.

## Ballarat Branch

Twenty Ballarat Members (+Neil and Marilyn Thomas) enjoyed a wonderful time together at Barklys Restaurant in early December.

It was terrific to be able to see and talk with people in person after so many months of lockdown and there was much chatter and 'catching up'.

Ballarat Committee Meetings and Meetings have been held via Zoom during the year and will continue until April when hopefully meeting arrangements can be sorted under COVID restrictions.

We have had several CAV and interstate members join in our meetings which has been a bonus.

In October, following a meet and greet session and short meeting, Di Christensen and Wendy Benoit shared segments on two influential Ballarat identities - Josiah Pearce and William Hicks - both with connections to their families. Both talks were very interesting.

At the February meeting Robyn Coates will share information about 'Thomas Curnow - the hero of Glenrowan'.



## Kernewek Lowender - 17th -23rd May 2021

This Festival is held on the Copper Coast of South Australia - in the towns of Kadina, Wallaroo and Moonta - and is a wonderful gathering.

The programme below is what has been received from Cornish Association of SA, regarding Cornish Activities.

### Tuesday 18th & Wednesday 19th May

Dressing the Graves will be held in Greens Plains, Kadina, Wallaroo and Moonta

### Thursday 20th May

Our Seminar will be held in the Wallaroo Town Hall (once again – dress warmly!)

The theme for the 2021 Seminar is:

*“Cornish contributions to medicine, health and welfare”*

### Friday 21st May

'Sup and sing' – a three-course evening meal (including pasties, of course), and concert by our Association Choir, in the Wallaroo Town Hall.

There will be a greater chance for the audience to join in the singing.

Bardic ceremony rehearsal during the afternoon.



## Saturday 22nd May

The Bardic ceremony is being planned for Davies Square, Wallaroo.

## Sunday 23rd May

Heritage Church Service, Moonta Mines.

It appears (at the moment) that numbers allowed in the building will be severely restricted.

For information about the Festival:

<https://www.kernewek.org/>

Several people from the Association have booked on this tour - I have no idea of the cost:

<https://www.oshannessys.com.au/store/p388/>

[Kernewek Lowender -](#)

[Copper Coast Cornish Festival May 2021 -  
7 day Tour.html](#)

This is a commercial enterprise and has nothing to do with the Cornish Association of Victoria. The information is included as many people have indicated that driving prohibits them from attending.

**DON'T MISS THE NEXT**  
**kernewek**  
**Lowender**  
**COPPER COAST**  
**CORNISH FESTIVAL**

**May 17-23, 2021**

- ✓ Traditional Cornish Pasties
- ✓ Maypole and Furry Dancing
- ✓ Classic Cavalcade of Cars and Motorcycles
- ✓ Cornish Ceremonies and Activities
- ✓ Feasts and Exhibitions
- ✓ Dressing the Graves
- ✓ Many more attractions...

Web: [www.kernewek.org](http://www.kernewek.org)  
Email: [kernewek@coppercoast.sa.gov.au](mailto:kernewek@coppercoast.sa.gov.au)

**Major festival activities:**

**Friday, May 21st –**

- Drakes Moonta Parade and Welcome Ceremony
- Art Prize Exhibition

**Saturday, May 22nd –**

- Rotary Village Fair
- Gathering of the Bards
- Bond Store Wallaroo Street Party

**Sunday, May 23rd –**

- Blessing of the Waters
- RAA Cavalcade of Cars and Motorcycles

Plus entertainment and exhibitions,  
local produce and fun for all ages

Programme information will be available at  
[www.kernewek.org](http://www.kernewek.org) and our Facebook page

**Drakes. Rotary**

**RAA** **NEWBERY CHEMISTS** **BOND STORE**

## A new GenealogySA Project

Cornish-born South Australians and their first-generation descendants

Over 10% of people living in South Australia today have an ancestor who migrated here from Cornwall in the United Kingdom, more than twice the percentage that settled in any other Australian State or Territory.

Many of these came in response to vigorous recruitment campaigns in London and Cornwall, seeking a wide variety of skilled tradespeople and labourers in our State's early days.

This was especially true of miners after rich deposits of copper and other ores were found as early as 1841.

The recruiting campaigns were very successful, as evidenced by the large numbers of Cornish people who arrived on our shores in SA's first 50 years and contributed significantly both to agricultural expansion and our colony's growing wealth.

Over the past several years, GenealogySA has assembled very comprehensive databases of both the early German and early Irish settlers, each with well over 20 000 entries.

Now, with the Cornish-born South Australians (CBSA) project, the aim is to construct an equally large and comprehensive database of people who were born in Cornwall (before 1900) and emigrated from their birth country to South Australia. Genealogy SA already has some small data sets of limited scope which will be augmented by the results of this widespread, ongoing CBSA survey being launched today.

We expect the database will be of invaluable use to family historians in South Australia, and also to others well beyond our boundaries.

So that Genealogy SA can begin gathering information about these early Cornish pioneers, forms for compiling this information, along with "How to" samples of the forms and guides are now available for download from our website:

<https://www.genealogysa.org.au/resources/handouts>

We welcome and encourage your involvement in this uniquely Cornish project.

Some notes:

1) A Cornish-born person must have been born by 31/12/1899 to be eligible for this database. Any eligible person is relevant even if they were in SA for under a day on their way to somewhere else (e.g. a gold rush). (Note that family members of the Cornish-born individuals can be born after 1899.)

2) Before 1837, records of births in Cornwall will almost all be of baptisms in Parish churches. This may also be true for records up to the early 1870s, though decreasingly so. If you know that a date is a baptism (or christening) date, please enter or write it in the line for baptism.

3) If the main Cornish immigrant to SA in your family had children who were also born in Cornwall and came to SA, these children must be listed on the first survey form you completed, but all pages of the form need to be filled in for each of the children separately, to show their spouses and children. The children need not have been Cornish-born as long as one of their parents was.

4) Remember, if you need more than 10 lines for children, please use an extra copy of page 3.5

Time limit

The project will be on-going and has no firm time limit. However, we hope you can manage to send in your information for this first round of data collection within six months, or earlier if you have it available.

If you don't have all the data and can find more by searching, of course we would like to have the additional data

Sue Lear President – Genealogy SA  
Jan Lokan Bard of the Cornish Gorsedh (*Myrgh Golsery*) Project Leader – CBSA

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## **KERNOW and the KINGDOM OF KERNOW**

Where did the name Cornwall and the surname Curnow come from?

It is important to note from the outset that the history of ancient Cornwall is often overlaid with legend and speculation.

In a similar way the studies of epistemology (words), hagiography (saints) can hardly be called an exacting science and neither can this short historical summary, but hopefully it may provide a helpful overview.

### **3rd - 4th Century Migration. (201- 300 AD--- 301- 400 AD)**

Even before the Roman occupation of Great Britain (43 AD), the Ancient Britons and Celts were a distinct community occupying Cornwall and Wales. In the south west of Ireland there was a Gaelic tribe of warriors called the Kerns.

The Kerns were light-infantry warriors who were described as "the hags of hell." (referring to their fierce fighting style.) (Barnaby Rich 1542-1619) Another description says, "They were more a movement of nature than professional soldiers."

As early as the 3rd - 4th century the Kerns began sailing from Ireland to the Cornish coast where they established a community on the south west tip of Cornwall. (St Just/Lands End.)

(This is possibly the first source of the name Kernow)

Epistemologist, the late Richard Blewett says, "Evidence points to a continuous Irish settlement taking place on the Peninsula during the 5th century."

At the same time many of the native Celtic Brythons migrated and escaped across the English Channel to Brittany.

### **5th - 6th Century Happenings.(401-500 AD-- - 501-600 AD).**

This period was a very eventful time in Cornish history.

(1) Migration continued across the Celtic sea to Cornwall and the English Channel to Brittany.  
(2) The Romans had a presence in Cornwall but the Cornish were never conquered or dominated by Rome. Following the withdrawal of the Roman Legions from Brittany (410 AD) Anglo-Saxon invasion and settlement took place pushing the native and Celtic culture to the extreme fringes.

(3) It was in this period that the disciples of St Patrick were travelling from Ireland and Wales to the Cornish Peninsula to share the Christian faith. (some missionary saints may have brought soldiers

for personal protection?)

(4) Not long after 577 AD, the earliest Christian Church on the mainland of Great Britain opened as St Piran's Oratory and the early saints, Piran/Gwinear, systematically converted the Cornish to Christianity.

This was before the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon people of England.

(5) It was the time of the warlord ARTHUR (not King) who became a champion of the native Britons and 'Christian' Celts. Arthur united the resistance against the heathen Saxon invaders.

At the end of the Roman occupation of Britain, in the south there were two ancient Briton/Celtic tribes:

(a) The Cornovii tribe in Cornwall---meaning dwellers of the headland, promontory or Horn, the plural of Horn was thought to be Kern. (The Phoenician traders who visited Cornwall for tin also had a word 'Coran' meaning Horn with a similar plural ending. It is difficult to know if the plural came from the ancient Briton or the Phoenicians) (This is the second possible source of the place name Kernow

(b) The Romans called the Dumnonii tribe in Devon ---Dumnonia and made no distinction between Cornwall, Devon and Wales. They all spoke the same Bythonic language. This tribe dominated the south west of Devon, and to the Romans Dumnonia covered the whole area.

#### **490- 510 AD Battle of Mons Badonics**

The Romano-Briton /Celts combined to defeat an invading Anglo-Saxon army.

#### **537-542 AD Battle of Camlann (perhaps) near the river Camel Cornwall.**

It was the final battle where Arthur died or was wounded. His enemy being, Mordred who also died.

By this time the Kerns occupied an area that stretched from Land's End to Truro and it became known as "the land of Kerno" or "many Kerns." So out of the Bythonic-Celtic kingdom of Dumnonia the Kingdom of Kernow emerged. ( It was not until the time of the Norman conquest that the Tamar River separated and marked Cornwall as a distinct ethnic community.)

The late G. Pawley White and Richard Blewett, both Cornish Bards, held the view that the name KERN found its way into Cornish vocabulary. It was given to the descendants of the Irish Kern and the place where they settled in West Cornwall. In August 2003, American Bard, William (Bill) Curnow wrote,

"It would not surprise me that a nation of people who thought of themselves as adept warriors would choose to call themselves KERNOW, a nation of warriors. They seemed to have assumed it as one of their defining characteristics." However, without suggesting an answer, Bill also thoughtfully raised the question as to why the native Cornish Bythonic language remained common to Cornwall rather than the Irish Gaelic.

#### **577 AD Battle of Deorham Downs near Bristol.**

By this time the advance of the Saxons had destroyed the remains of the Roman civilisation. This battle resulted in the separation of the Cornish from Wales.

#### **The Name KERNOW=CURNOW**

It was about this time in the early medieval period that the Saxon tribal term for foreigner was WEALAS (Welsh- foreigner-stranger) The Britons of Wales were the Northern Wealas and the Cornish were the Western Wealas. Over time this Anglo-Saxon way of describing the ancient Briton tribes in the West became CORN (WEALAS) and the Cornish adopted it to as a way of distinguishing themselves.

So from the word Cornovii (or Kern)--meaning Horn/Headland, compounded with the word Wealas--- meaning foreigner-stranger, the Cornish became known as the "The foreigners/strangers of the Horn or headland."

In a shift from the native Cornish language to the Anglo-Saxon English, the original K was dropped and changed to C probably when the Cornish language and culture was suppressed during the 16th-17th century.

Many surnames ending in O or OW then indicated an ancient plural ending, e.g. PASCO (Easter children) Clemmow/Clemmo (Clements children) thus Kern (the Irish Celtic tribe), + OW--- meant, "the sons/descendants of." The Kern became CURN – OW. So today "Cornwall" is thought to be an Anglo-Saxon/English, misinterpretation of the original Kernow.

#### **664 AD Synod of Whitby**

The Celtic church in Dumnonia (West Wealas) was not part of the decision of the Synod. The Cornish church remained monastic rather than following Rome.

**682 AD Saxon King of Wessex, who entered**

Cornwall in the parish of Calstock on the Cornwall-Devon border, “drove the Britons of the West at sword point as far as the sea.”

This resulted in the West Saxons colonisation of the North East of Cornwall. The Saxons often changed the old names of the towns they conquered and this enables entomologists today to trace their geographical advance.

The Old name Haefen became Crackington Haven, the old name Wid became Widemouth (located South of Bude), the old name Worthig became Canworthy, (located between Bostcastle and Launceston)

**710 AD King Centwine of Wessex** attempted to destroy Dumnonia but this did not happen quickly. Over the next 50 years many battles took place. Dumnonia covering Devon survived into the 8th century (701 AD+) but Cornwall survived for another century.

**814 AD Saxon Egbert of Wessex** ravaged Cornwall but it was not a complete conquest. Egbert was not successful in subduing all of the people.

**838 AD The Cornish allied with a “ship-army” of Vikings (Danes)** that sailed up the Tamar to Calstock and a creek called Danescombe Valley. The combined army was defeated by the Saxons at Hingston Down. Hingston Down is east of Kit Hill near Callington. This is said to be the last recorded battle between the Cornish and West Saxons. Cornish military power was destroyed and Cornish independence was lost. Some say the last real King of Cornwall was Dungarth died in 875 AD but he was thought to be an under-king to the Saxons of Wessex.

**936 AD King Athelston of Wessex** made a treaty with Cornish King Hywel saing that Cornwall would have a boundary line at the high water mark on the Devon side of the Tamar—“in perpetuity”, which has lasted until today.

“The Last Onslaught of the Saxons in West Cornwall”

An unpublished paper with this title by Richard R. Blewett suggests another final battle took place on the slopes of Trencrom Hill Cornwall. After living together for three centuries the forces of the remaining Cornish Britons and the local Kerns united against a strong Saxon invasion.

The Kerns regarded themselves as better warriors and bore the brunt of the action, while another

local Celtic tribe, who were thought to also have Irish origins, the Cornish Haervi (Harvey) formed a second front or reserved force. (According to Morton Nance the name means ‘battle worthy’ or ‘battle honoured.’)

To confront the Saxon invasion via the sea, the Kern-Irish troops were posted at the headwaters of both the Fal and Helford estuaries. Both areas have been identified as places where indigenous Curnow’s lived.

The Saxons are said to have come ashore on the Lizard at Porthsawsen without opposition (a name meaning ‘Saxon landing place’.)

Blewett followed the progress of the invasion by tracing Saxon place-name-endings.

The (Kerns) Curnow’s of Mawgan in Meneage were positioned to defend Henlis (Helston). Henlis (hen=old; lis=court) Henlis was captured.

The Saxons usually accepted the Celtic place names and added a suffix. eg. TON= farm, town. Thus Henlis became Helston. The Saxons moved south to what is now the parish of Gunwalloe and attacked Wynyan (Winnianton).

Pushing the Kerns back in retreat the Saxons then turned into Northern West Penwith for a final awesome struggle at Trencrom Hill-fortress.

Here the Cornish Kerns were forced down the western slopes to where today the parishes of Towednack and Ludgvan exist.

Many of the Cornish escaped to Armorica (Brittany), France, where three centuries earlier the Bythonic Cornish had fled and found refuge.

The Saxons then had to contend with the Haerviu (Harvey) who stationed themselves on the heights of what is now Paul Parish, the highest point being at Penolver.

The Harveys were defeated not long after 900 AD and the Saxons reached Land’s End completing their military conquest.

### **Curnow Locations Today**

Saxon power came to an end four generations after with the landing of William, Duke of Normandy, on the coast of south-east England 1066.

With this background Blewett claims there were three groups of indigenous Curnows.

- (a) One group near the headwaters and along the Fal Estuary.
- (b) A second group in the Lizard Peninsula spreading from Probus and Mawgan in Meneage parishes at the head of the Helford Estuary.
- (c) A third group in the parish of Towednack and Ludgvan at the base of the Iron-Age fortress,

Trencrom Hill. In these latter areas the Curnows are said to have resided for over 10 centuries. It is claimed that the Curnows of Towednack kept largely to themselves until the 18th century when they began moving into Penzance and St Ives.

#### Sources:

G, Pawley White, A Handbook of Cornish Names, Helston Printers, 1972.

Richard R. Blewett, The Last onslaught of the Saxons in West Cornwall, Un published paper, Cornish Records Office 1968.

www.Wikipedia, Cornish Names, also Timeline of Cornish history, the free encyclopedia. See also, Battle of Hingston Down.

William (Bill) Curnow, Email: Re [CON] CORNEW=CURNOW?, 8th August 2003.

Charles Whyne-Hammond, English Place Names Explained, Countryside Books.

The Cornish were known as the 'West Barbarians' in the 18th century.

The image of Cornwall as a wild and uncivilised periphery has a long pedigree. (determined non-conformist, smugglers, wreckers etc.)

"In 1506, a Venetian diplomat, Vincenzo Quirini, his ship holed up in the Fal estuary by stormy weather, wrote back to his masters in Italy saying that he was in a very wild place which no human being ever visits, in the midst of a most barbarous race." The Cornish Family, p183.

Fortesque Hitchens, History of Cornwall from the earliest Records and Traditions, Vol. I&2. p 8-9, 1842.

Curnows known today from area (b) include Mr Lionel Curnow and Ms Greta Curnow, Porthleven, Cornwall. Prof. Robert Curnow, Reading, U.K. Rev Ted Curnow, Australia. Mr Jim Curnow, Suffolk, U.K. Area (c) Mr Howard Curnow St Hilary Cornwall, Mr William (Bill) Curnow, U.S.A, Rev Matthew Curnow, Australia.

E. A. (Ted) Curnow September 2016.

#### **A Cornish Mutiny**

During the holidays Di Christensen sent me a link to a newsletter from a group to which she belongs – Lost Cousins – thinking it might be the basis for an article in the newsletter.

Di had pointed out a book review she thought maybe of interest –An American Uprising: Mutiny in the Duchy - by Kate Werran.

So, my search began to discover what this mutiny

was about. Being a Baby Boomer and not being born in Cornwall it was all news to me.

An internet search found a few reports at the time of the book's launch – one of which I have included from CornwallLive, 9th May 2020 written by Keith Rossiter.

This led me to searching some of the British Newspapers online and I have included a few articles for you to read.

A link to a talk by Kate Werran on YouTube is also included.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yOpmI-Gr9Ok&t=7s>

Kate is a journalist and has produced programmes for Channels 4 and 5 and the BBC.

From CornwallLive

*A new book sheds light on how racial tensions among US troops boiled over into bloodshed in 1943, as Keith Rossiter reports. The town square in Launceston in Cornwall was the unlikely battlefield in one of the Second World War's forgotten clashes – a "Wild West" shoot-out between black and white American servicemen, a new book reveals.*

*On September 26, 1943 what seemed like "a whole company" of American soldiers trooped from Launceston town centre back to their camp at Pennygillam.*

*At the time millions of American soldiers were stationed right across the Westcountry, preparing for the D-Day landings of 1944. The Launceston soldiers – all African American and angry at being excluded from the town's pubs – armed themselves and marched back to confront a group of US military policemen gathered in the town square.*

*Armed with rifles and tommy guns they opened fire on the military police at around 10pm, causing British and American soldiers and Land Girls to scatter.*

*Two Americans were injured in the attack, and the shooters dispersed through the town to be rounded up in the early hours.*

*The drama captivated the town and made national news, causing one elderly resident to tell the Mirror newspaper that, "There hasn't been anything like this since the days of the smugglers."*

*What the tabloids labelled a Wild West mutiny became front page news in Britain and the United States. For three days the story raged before the war-torn world moved on and forgot.*

*The story is finally told in Kate Werran's new book, An American Uprising in Second World War England: Mutiny in the Duchy.*

*She has painstakingly pieced together for the first time the details of a shocking drama the authorities tried to hush up.*

*Ms Werran said her interest began when she was a*

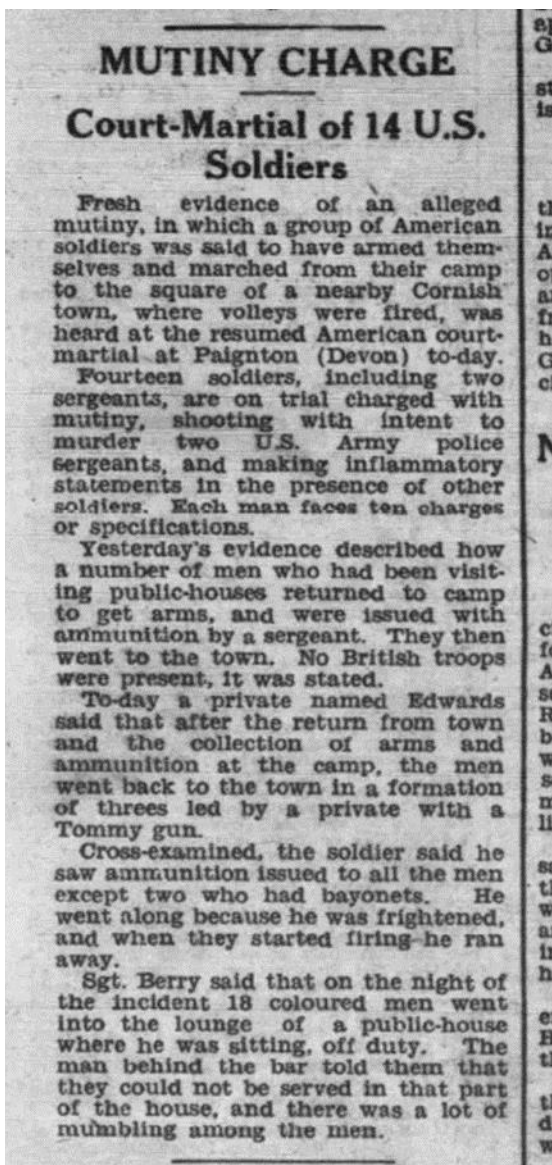
child. One summer, holidaying in her father's home town of Launceston, she put her fingers in decades-old bullet-holes left in the town's war monument and asked the question, Why?

Finally, she can attempt to answer it.

The subsequent court martial had to be held at Paignton's Palace Avenue Police Station court because it was the only one big enough to accommodate the 14 soldiers – two sergeants and 12 privates – who were charged.

The court martial president tried to censor the reporting of the men's race but was challenged by the Mirror, which had been the only newspaper to report one significant detail – that it was a group of African American soldiers from the 581st Ordnance Ammunition Company firing on white military policemen. The trial lasted three days and was headline news in Britain and America.

The reason it caught the public mood was because this was about race. The British public had witnessed racial tension between Americans up and down the country wherever the segregated US Army was based and they almost always sided with the African Americans.



Article above

16 October 1943 - Yorkshire Evening Post - Leeds, Yorkshire

Article below

15 October 1943 - Halifax Evening Courier - Halifax, Yorkshir



# U.S. SOLDIERS ON MUTINY CHARGE

## Adjutant And Ban On Leaving Camp

Fresh evidence of an alleged mutiny, in which a group of American soldiers were said to have armed themselves and marched from their camp to the square of a nearby Cornish town where volleys were fired, was heard at the resumed American court-martial at Paignton, Devon, to-day.

Fourteen soldiers, including two sergeants, are on trial charged with mutiny, shooting with intent to murder two U.S. Army police sergeants and making inflammatory statements in the presence of other soldiers. Each faces ten charges or specifications.

Yesterday's evidence described how a number of men who had been visiting public-houses returned to camp to get arms, and were issued with ammunition by a sergeant. They then went to the town. No British troops were present, it was stated.

To-day a private named Edwards said that after the return from town and the collection of arms and ammunition at the camp, the men went back to the town in a formation of threes led by a private with a Tommy gun.

Cross-examined, the soldier said he saw ammunition issued to all the men except two, who had bayonets. He went along because he was frightened, and when they started firing he ran away.

In answer to further questions he said that the men of his unit had been restricted (confined to their camp or quarters) both in the United States and since arriving in this country.

Evidence was given of a statement by Pte. Albert Smith that ammunition was given him on September 5 by one of the accused, who told him it would be needed later.

Sgt. Blanchard was cross-examined about "a spot of trouble" in a pub, and said that one soldier remarked to others, "That was out."

### No Knives Order.

Captain Bossom, adjutant of the Ordnance Company to which the men belonged, said he had given an order that no one was to leave camp as the proper dress had not been issued. There was a standing order that no knives were to be carried, particularly if the blade was over three inches in length.

Answering the defending officer, the captain said that the men had been restricted to camp for eight weeks. He knew, however, that some of them had been going into town wearing greatcoats. There was a recreation field next to the camp, but the company had been so busy that there had been little time to use it in daylight.

The men were each issued with a weapon, and as there was no secure place to lock them up they were ordered to keep them in a prominent place on their bunks. A check-up on the ship after they had left America showed that three men had the wrong weapons, and he understood that they had picked up another.

Left: Dundee Evening Telegraph 16 October 1943  
Top: 17 October 1943 - Sunday Post - Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Scotland  
Bottom: 18 October 1943 - Aberdeen Press and Journal - Aberdeen

# U.S. SOLDIERS' MUTINY TRIAL

—Verdict To-Day

Fourteen American soldiers, including two sergeants— all coloured—appear at a U.S. court martial at Paignton, Devon, to-day to hear the findings of the court in their trial on a charge of mutiny.

The men deny they marched from their camp to the square of a nearby Cornish town where volleys were fired. They also deny charges of shooting with intent to murder two U.S. army police sergeants, and making inflammatory statements in the presence of other soldiers.

The prosecution contended that the military police were ordered to put their hands up, and when that was done the accused opened fire. It was only by chance the two sergeants were shot in the legs instead of in more vital parts of the body.

The defending officer said the men of the unit concerned had been restricted to their camp or quarters since before leaving the United States.

On the night of the incident there had been trouble with some white soldiers and the coloured men were very excited. Fourteen possible participants had been selected out of a large number and most of them were innocent of taking any part in the offence.

# U.S. Mutiny Court Martial Ends

The three days' U.S. "mutiny" court-martial at Paignton, Devon, ended last night.

After the ten officers constituting the court had deliberated in private for nine hours, the president stated that the court had decided not to announce its findings.

Throughout the day the fourteen accused coloured soldiers sat on benches in the town's police court passing away the time reading newspaper reports of their trial.

Each soldier faced ten charges or specifications alleging mutiny, shooting with intent to murder two U.S. Army police sergeants, rioting, unlawfully taking and firing firearms, and making inflammatory statements in the presence of other soldiers.

The shooting followed an incident at a public house, when eighteen coloured soldiers who entered the lounge were told that they could not be served in that part of the house.

## CORNISH tidbits

### Captain Phillip Melvill

Many of Falmouth's guest houses and hotels are situated along Melvill Road which was named after Captain Phillip Melvill (1762 -1811) who served in the 73rd Regiment in India as a lieutenant. He was wounded in battle and left for dead, naked and



dehydrated. He lay under the blazing sun for three days and was then taken prisoner and held for four years by the Indians in Bengal, during which time he suffered great deprivations and was tortured.

In 1786, following his release and recovery he returned to England where he married and became Commander of an invalid company and set up a school for the children of the soldiers.

In 1796, he was appointed to the post of Governor of Pendennis Castle where he served until his death in 1811 aged just 51 years.

However, his short life was very productive and fulfilling as he not only fathered nine children, he was a soldier and prisoner, set up schools, helped to establish the "Pendennis Voluntary Artillery" and founded the "Misericordia Society" that offered relief and support to the vulnerable and poor in the town.

Rather than becoming bitter and resentful toward the hostilities and challenges life threw at him, Melvill remained positive and a much respected member of Falmouth.

At his funeral, the streets of Falmouth were lined with soldiers, locals and members of the Society wishing to pay their final respects to the open topped cart drawn by four horses as it passed through the town.

Fifty 'minute' guns were fired from the Castle and when they were finished an ordnance Jack was raised on the flagstaff as a signal to St Mawes Castle for another fifty minute guns to be fired,

The body was not laid to rest in the Killigrew vault but in a new grave dug in the aisle of the Parish church.

In memory of Melvill a new road and major thoroughfare was named after him.

(Thanks to Alan Thompson for this story and Brian Rollason)

### Why I chose Cornwall for the G7 summit - by Boris Johnson

Versailles, Houston, Genoa, Tokyo. The annual summit of the world's seven richest democracies has always taken place in a cultural or economic powerhouse. This year, the United Kingdom assumes

the presidency of the G7 and it fell to me to select the location of the 2021 summit.

My duty was to ponder long and hard and decide which British name should be added to the roll of honour.

One benefit of the UK's seat at all the world's top tables is that we can bring vital international events to every home nation. You will remember that NATO gathered in Wales in 2014, the G8 met in Northern Ireland in 2013, and this year's climate change conference, COP26, will be held in Glasgow. So I am delighted to announce that I have chosen Cornwall for the G7 summit.

In June the new President of the United States, the Chancellor of Germany, the President of France and the Prime Ministers of Japan, Italy and Canada will assemble at my invitation in Carbis Bay.

I cannot think of a better venue for a gathering of the world's most powerful leaders.

It is not simply that they will be entranced by the majestic coastline of craggy cliffs and gentle coves. Nor is my choice solely explained by the fact that Cornish tin and copper powered the first industrial revolution, or that Cornish names are dotted across the maps of the G7's two biggest members (Penzance, Arizona; Falmouth, Massachusetts; Cornwall, Ontario). And it has nothing – okay, only a little – to do with my own pride in being probably the first half-Cornish Prime Minister.

No, the reason why Carbis Bay is the obvious place is that all of the UK's themes and priorities for our presidency of the G7 converge in Cornwall.

As we revive the global economy after COVID, we want to help the world to build back better and greener.

Both of these ambitions are summed up in Cornwall, where the UK's renewable energy industry and conservation projects point the way to a green industrial future, and where Newquay spaceport and Goonhilly Earth Station showcase the best of British technology.

This year's summit will include even more countries with whom we share interests and values because I have also invited the Prime Ministers of India and Australia and the President of South Korea to attend as guests. The ten world leaders who will meet at Carbis Bay jointly represent two out of every three inhabitants of the world's democracies.

Our gathering will also help to spur Cornwall's recovery from COVID by attracting more visitors and injecting £50 million into the local economy. We shall work alongside local leaders to ensure the benefits last.

So let's look forward to a great occasion when Cornwall takes its rightful place on the proud list of locations of G7 summits.