

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dyth da.

It seems that all Presidents start their reports with that, albeit it is almost my entire Cornish vocabulary.

So here I am, my first attempt to stay in Robyn's good books by getting my report in by the deadline and simultaneously trying to keep up with the Cornish traditions of the CAV.



Now, if you missed the AGM, you are probably still none the wiser who is writing this, although you have probably worked out, I am not Brian Rollason.

So let me put you out of your misery, my name is Ronald Hawken.

Mumm, that doesn't look very Cornish! Whilst that surname is common in Cornwall, it is genealogically Kentish in origin.

Be this as it may, and as a bit of trivia, the biggest concentration of Hawkens in the world is to be found in Cornwall, making them, like me, probably all fake Hawkens and more likely renamed Hockens, Hockins or Hockings.

The corruption to "Hawken" in my family can be traced back to the 1851 census. If you want to know more about that, it's in the book! (Agan Kernow Page 155). Those genuine unrelated English Hawkens are probably not amused.

So, a bit more about me.

My wife Jannette and I have been members of the CAV since 2018, when for my 60th birthday, my family gave me a CAV membership.

That year, 2018, was also the year I retired, allowing me more time for all the things I have always wanted to do.

Included in this list, was work on the family tree, tracing ALL the Hawkens in the world! Or at least rounding up our bunch of fake Hawkens.

For those still concerned about my Cornishness, I can confirm from this work that DNA-wise I should be 50% Cornish, despite being third generation Australian. And of course, for this family tree work was able to utilize the material in our library, now located in Castlemaine.

What's the other 50% you ask? You won't believe the pure coincidence, but my mother's family is related to the Filmer's of ... wait for it ... Kent.

I have visited Cornwall twice, once in 1990 and the second time in 2016.



CORNISH ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA, INC.

**NEWSLETTER
No. 154**

November 2025

Corporation Reg. No. A0008264A

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Single: \$40.00

Family: \$60.00

Life Single: \$400.00

Life Family: \$600.00

Cornish Tid Bits may be sourced from the Cornwall Council, BBC Cornwall, Pirate FM News, Falmouth Packet, CornwallLive, Kresen Kernow, Wikipedia



Wednesday 19th November - visit to St Erth Garden in Blackwood - see further notice on page 4.

Saturday 6th December - Ballarat Branch is holding its Christmas Function at The Grand, 203 Dana Street, Ballarat at 12 noon. Two course Christmas meal. Cost \$40.00. All welcome. Please RSVP to Keith Lanyon 0411 512 160 by Thursday 27th November with numbers and any food requirements. Transport from Ballarat Station can be arranged.

Saturday 13th December - at 12 noon for 12.30 pm - **Christmas Lunch** at Darebin NW UC, 399A Murray Road, West Preston. We are asking people to bring a salad or dessert to share. Cold meats will be provided. Please RSVP to Robyn Coates 0419 551 320

There is parking behind the church (enter from Murray Road) and also in Murray Road.

A route 11 tram, runs from Collins Street, along Brunswick Street, St George's Road and then Gilbert Road and it is just a short walk, a block and a half, from tram stop 43, on the corner of Gilbert and Murray Roads. (cross over the tram lines and **walk east**).

A Mernda Line train stops at Preston, (from platform 1 at Flinders Street and platform 9 at Southern Cross) and it is about a five-seven minute **walk west** along Murray Road to the church, past Preston West PS.

Saturday 21st February - Zoom only Meeting

The topic for this meeting is '**Villages and Towns in Cornwall close to the hearts of CAV members**'.

This was very successful when we did it last time, people enjoyed the presentations and some asked could we do it again.

We are asking CAV members to talk for four to five minutes about a village/town known to them. It doesn't matter how small the village/town.

Please send your information and photos to Robyn (robyncoates@hotmail.com) who will put together a PowerPoint presentation whilst you talk to the slides by 7th February 2026.

Agan Kernow

The purchase price is \$25 Australian plus the appropriate postage. For overseas postage rates speak with Robyn Coates 0419 551 320

This is a 262-page book of 76 stories by 51 authors from across the Cornish diaspora.

CAV NEWSLETTER

The CAV Newsletter is distributed via email and in some cases by mail. Deadline for contributions for the next issue: Saturday 17th January 2026.

Articles for inclusion are welcome at any time but **must be received by the deadline date**. Please include pictures or tables as a separate file.

The email address for the CAV Newsletter -

robyncoates@hotmail.com

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. Ph: 0417 160 658

ejo65074@bigpond.net.au

My great great grandfather was killed in a mining accident in St Austell in 1845, the same year my great grandfather was born in Tywardreath. My great grandmother was from Leedstown. My great grandparents having met in Leedstown came to Sandhurst (Bendigo) in 1896 and here we are today.

During COVID, I decided to go back to university and do a Master of Engineering Structures course, just for fun, which I completed in 2023.

I now work a whopping one hour a week at Melbourne University as a Tutor in a couple of my old subjects.

This of course is not enough to start paying off my rather large Fee Help debt.

During my lifetime to date, I have been a member of a few other clubs and societies, some of which no longer exist, and others are still hanging in there.

Post COVID, most social, charity and sports organizations have suffered greatly, with memberships dropping to new low levels with past members choosing not to return after their forced absence.

The CAV too is a smaller group than it was when I first joined, but to its credit, it has survived when many other organizations, such as the dog training group that I and my Border Collie Rosie belonged to, have gone under.

From my experience, the most successful groups are those which the members enjoy participation in extra activities that are interesting to them rather than just attending the general meetings. (Although I know many like me enjoy the talks and fellowship at our meetings and look forward to them.)

The CAV has many opportunities for people to pursue their specific interests, and I would like to see us make the most of this advantage we have. For example, we know many people are interested in family tree research but some struggle, and other members are quite experienced and could help. Can we facilitate a Family Tree Research Interest Group?

We also have members who take an active interest in what's happening in Cornwall today, perhaps we could facilitate a "News from Cornwall Group", who could maybe be tasked with collating and reporting news at each of our meetings or even the Cornish Tid Bits in this newsletter.

We also have members who have done a marvelous job with our Library behind the scenes, perhaps a formal "Library Group".

We believe there are more opportunities to make it even better given time and resources!

Perhaps a "Cornish Language Interest Group", or a "CAV Promotions Group" doing the Celtic Festivals such as Ringwood or other things to promote the CAV.

I am sure there are other interesting activities of which I haven't thought.

Now this is not a new concept for the CAV.

We already have two very important "groups" who have been up and running for a long time, Ballarat and Geelong branches.

I did enjoy meeting members of both branches at Geelong recently.

Well done Neil and the Geelong Branch.

My only issue now is that with my memory for names, I will be getting you all mixed up for the short term. Apologies in advance.

If anyone has any other ideas or suggestions on how to make the CAV even better, please let us know.

And how can you contact me directly?

You can now email me on

ronald.hawken.CAV@gmail.com anytime.

Our next event is the visit to St Erth Gardens in Blackwood and following that we have our Christmas Party to round off the year.

Till next time,

Duw genowgh hwi.

Ronald

Membership Fees

Several people have deposited money into the CAV Account but without any identification.

If you may have done this, could you please contact Max Procter and inform him of the date and amount?

Ph: 0435 602 453

mandf.procter@gmail.com



St Erth Gardens in Blackwood

We are visiting St Erth Gardens and Nursery in Blackwood on **Wednesday 19th November**.

This will be in place of the meeting which would normally be held on **Saturday 15th November**.

Blackwood is an historic gold mining town within the Lerderderg State Park and Wombat State Forest and is located about 89 kilometres northwest of Melbourne, off the Western Highway (M8),

The reason for a midweek outing is that the weekends are very busy.

The cost is \$15 per person and \$20 if you wish to do a tour with a guide.

A small café is located on site and an outdoor eating area if you wanted to BYO lunch.

If you are a Digger Foundation Member entry is free.

The original sandstone cottage, still standing, at St Erth, was built by Matthew Rogers, a Cornish stonemason.

He and his wife arrived in Victoria aboard the Ship Geelong on 11th August 1854.

Michael and Mary Ann were married at Phillack in 1852 and both were living at Bodriggy. Michael was baptized at St Erth and Mary at Phillack.

Matthew, his father and Mary's father are all listed as stone masons.

After a short time mining at Clunes, they settled at Blackwood. Matthew did very well from his gold ventures and was a generous benefactor to the area. They had no children of their own but adopted a young woman named Elizabeth (Lizzie).

There is a huge memorial in the local cemetery.

If you would like to attend and haven't received a notice please contact Robyn Coates 0419 551 320



Photo from:

<https://www.visitmelbourne.com/regions/daylesford-and-the-macedon-ranges/see-and-do/nature-and-wildlife/parks-and-gardens/garden-of-st-erth>

Grand Bard's 2025 Award to Lillian James OAM

This year's Grand Bard Award goes to the other side of the world, to Lillian James, who, at 96, is the oldest Bard in Australia and very possibly in Gorsedh Kernow.



Lillian has taught Cornish and published books in the language for many years and in May this year announced her 'probable' retirement from teaching at the Kernewek Lowender Festival.

This award is a testament to the work she has done to keep Cornish culture and in particular the language, alive and kicking in Australia where the challenges are greater than they are for those teaching in Cornwall and to the tenacity of the Cornish diaspora in maintaining their links and culture.



Arthur and I were privileged to attend the Awards' evening and it was an honour to be able to accept this award on behalf of Lillian.



CAV Visit to Geelong

On Saturday 11th October, 23 CAV members from Geelong, Ballarat and Melbourne met at the Geelong East Uniting Church for a wonderful day of Geelong Cornish History.

After a mouth watering morning tea, we ventured to Point Henry where Neil Thomas, Chairperson of the Geelong Branch, gave us an insight into the importance of Point Henry.

Point Henry is located about five kilometres east of Geelong on a peninsula jutting out into Corio Bay. We returned to the Church's Bay Room for lunch provided by the Geelong group.

With our tummies replenished, we drove into Geelong CBD, where parking was in short supply near the Old Customs House.

Many chose to walk to the Town Hall and Art Gallery and some energetic members even walked to Wesley Church a few more blocks away. At each place, Neil provided us with some well prepared information.

We then returned to the Geelong Church for afternoon tea, after a wonderful day. Special thanks to Neil Thomas for organizing the event and for all the information about the sites we visited and to the Geelong members for their generous hospitality.

Neil has given us the information below and the photos are from Arthur and me.

Point Henry

The commander of a brig, a Cornishman named Edward Primrose Tregurtha, named Point Henry, after his ship *Henry* in 1836.

Tregurtha was the brother in law of Alexander Dennis, ancestor of Tom Dennis who the CAV visited at Tarndwarncourt several years ago.



It was he that recommended the Dennis family should move to this verdant area. Shortly after, Point Henry was the landing point for sheep from Van Diemen's Land.

Point Henry was a bustling hub of trade and new arrivals in the 19th century, as Victoria's then second-largest immigration port.

The ships landed here because of the nearby sand bar, said to be the reason Geelong did not become the capital of Victoria.

It was on a recommendation by Cornishman, Sir John Coode, in 1879, that a channel was dredged through the sand bar that unlocked the port of Geelong to take much larger ships.



Tea Gardens

On 28 June 1849, the *Geelong Advertiser* announced the opening of the Point Henry Tea Gardens. The proprietor had "spared no expense" in creating a "paradise," according to the announcement. Visitors would be able to see the ships "gliding majestically on the water's surface," to carry wool and Barrabool stone (Building stone, e.g. Old Geelong Customs House) back to "our beloved sovereign," it read.

The opulent tea garden became a tourist mecca where up to 70,000 visitors a year danced, played quoits, raced horses, had athletic events and shot pigeons all overlooking Corio Bay. Bay steamers would bring most of the guests.

Industry at Point Henry

Howard Smith Limited was established in 1854 by Captain William Howard Smith, who began transporting both people and supplies to the goldfields and also grass hay for the many horses in Melbourne.

Howard Smith Co. became part of Wesfarmers Retail group in 2001. (now Officeworks, Coles,

Bunnings among many other companies).
On 3 October 1854, the Smith owned *Express* began operating the first regular passenger service in Australia from Melbourne to Point Henry.

Australia's first successful salt works was established at Point Henry by Richard Cheetham. Cheetham Salt is now Australia's largest producer and refiner of solar salt.

I understand the Cornish lugger *Mystery* spent time in Port Phillip Bay carting shell grit from Point Henry to Melbourne before becoming a pilot boat at Rockhampton in Queensland.

So the site has quite a few Cornish connections with its naming by a Cornishman, the neighbouring shipping channel being proposed by a Cornishman, it is the site of mass Cornish immigration during the gold rush era and the Cornish lugger *Mystery* visited here.

Of interest is the fact that this is the only site of immigration in Australia that a person who landed here in the 1850s would recognize the very site where they first set foot in Australia.

Former Geelong Customs House.

The building replaced two earlier structures: a prefabricated building of c1838 (now in the Geelong Gardens) and a stone building of 1845.



The Colonial Georgian style Customs House, built on a site associated with customs activities since 1838, has historical significance as a physical expression of the commercial importance of the second most prosperous port in the colony after Melbourne.

The scale and impressive design of the building reflect the importance of a busy commercial port which at the height of its activity briefly challenged Melbourne as the principal port in the colony.

The tender for construction was awarded to Melbourne contractor W. C. Cornish in 1855 and building started later that year and was completed by December 1856

The building served as a Customs House for 140 years. (and was originally much closer to the sea front)

The former Customs House has architectural and historical significance for its association with builder William Crocker Cornish who was a significant and controversial contractor in Melbourne from his arrival in 1852 aboard the *Kent* from Cornwall until his early death in 1859.

Cornish was known for his disputes with trade unions, in particular his refusal to accept the eight-hour day.

In the building boom of the 1850s, Cornish established a very successful contracting business. His first contract, for the Melbourne Post Office in 1853, was followed by many others for public and private buildings throughout the colony.

In April 1855, he contracted for the Geelong Post Office and Customs House.

Throughout 1856, he was building the Houses of Parliament, a contract worth well over £50 000, but by his insistence on a ten-hour day he clashed with the trade unions who demanded an eight-hour day. When the unions declared that the new system was to begin on 21st April, Cornish refused to recognise their claims even though all other contractors had done so.

The government, anxious to have the new legislative chambers completed on time, negotiated a compromise.

Cornish was given more than £1700 in compensation for the difference between wage costs of the ten-hour and eight-hour systems, despite strong evidence that his loss had been offset by a general reduction of 1s. a day in wages.

In May 1856, he joined six other Melbourne businessmen, who jointly made a loan of £2400 to Ebenezer Syme enabling him to buy the Age Newspaper. Cornish's action is mysterious in view of Syme's radicalism.

In 1857, Cornish built the Castlemaine and a large part of the Melbourne gaols (Pentridge), and in 1858 completed the Bank of New South Wales building in Melbourne at a cost of £38 000.

In June, he began the major work of his career. He had formed a partnership with John Bruce to tender for constructing the Melbourne to River Murray and the Geelong to Ballarat railways. The partners won the contract for the first thirteen sections of the Melbourne-Murray railway, to be built at a cost of some £3,357,000.

Cornish & Bruce employed more than six thousand men, and from the beginning tried to make large profits by exploiting unemployment in the colony: their irregular payments, attempts to reduce wages, and methods of subcontracting caused much discontent.

Before the work began, Cornish & Bruce tried to arrange for the introduction, under contract, of thousands of non-union English workmen. When the railway was opened to Sunbury, on 13th January 1859, Cornish & Bruce arranged elaborate festivities to mark the occasion. However, William Cornish died, aged 44, on 31st March 1859 at his Brighton home, leaving his partner to complete the major part of the contract.

He was survived by his wife Jane, née Rowell, and six of their seven children.

John Maxwell - This article was published: About W C Cornish in the Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 3 , 1969

Geelong Town Hall

Geelong was declared a town in 1838.

In 1854 a competition was held to design a town hall. A £100 prize was awarded to winning architect, Joseph Reed.

The Geelong Town Hall is of historical significance as Victoria's earliest surviving municipal building. It is one of the oldest surviving public buildings by Joseph Reed and very rare in Victoria as an essay in the Greek Revival.

The south facade to Little Malop Street was completed, in 1855, in the form of the Greek Temple of Apollo.

The east and south fronts were completed in 1913-1917, in conformity with Reed's design. It was Classified in 1968.



Photo shows Art Gallery to the right

Joseph Reed (1823-1890), architect, was baptized in the parish of Constantine, Cornwall on 23rd February 1823.

He arrived in Melbourne in July 1853 and in January 1854 won the competition to design the Public Library.

The same year he designed the Bank of New South

Wales in Collins Street.

In 1858, Reed designed the Wesley Church, Lonsdale Street, and the premises in Victoria Street that later became the Royal Society of Victoria building.

He drew up the plans for the National Museum. He did three designs in 1866 - . the Collins Street Independent Church, St Jude's, Carlton, and the National school in Carlton.

In 1868, he designed Rippon Lea, at Elsternwick. the Melbourne Town Hall, the Menzies Hotel.

In 1873 he designed the Trades Hall building and later the Exhibition Building (1879-80) and the widely admired Gothic building of Wilson Hall (1878-82) and the Scottish baronial of Ormond College (1879). The firm continued work on St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, in 1884 after the distinguished London architect William Butterfield had resigned.

Reed was recalled as 'practical and decisive, an aggressive little fellow but very kindly'. He earned the nick name of the Australian Terrier and worked so much he died of exhaustion.

Reed is considered Melbourne's greatest architect, his prolific works include many of Victoria's most loved buildings and significant heritage listings.

Among his most famous designs is the World Heritage-listed Royal Exhibition Building, completed for the 1880 International Exposition.

Francis Tuckfield, a Man on a Mission.

Unlike many of our Cornish pioneers, at least Tuckfield's name has been perpetuated and that is by a street name at Ocean Grove near Geelong.

Even the nearby township of Drysdale was originally named after this man.

A poverty stricken world was the world into which Francis Lee Tuckfield was born..

He was born at Germoe, Cornwall in 1808. In his youth he was a tin miner and a seasonal fisherman.

At the age of 17, a significant event occurred in his life when he was converted to Christianity, at a large

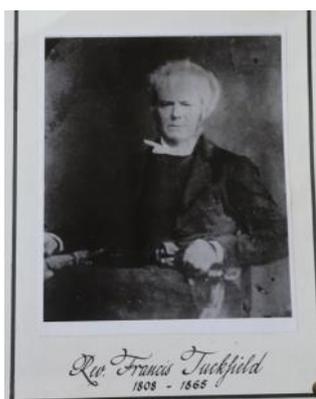


Photo - Wesley Uniting Church Geelong

Methodist revivalist meeting held at Gwennap Pit. Later, Tuckfield became a Wesleyan Minister and offered himself for foreign service stating he would be prepared to go anywhere.

The Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society had a dream to send missionaries to the heathens all over the British Empire; their missionaries would bring *light into the darkness*.

The Wesleyan Missionary movement's intention was to *Christianize and civilize the new nations of the British Empire*.

In 1837, Francis Tuckfield was appointed as a missionary to serve the Aborigines, at Port Phillip, in New Holland.

On November 9th 1837, the Tuckfields set sail on the sailing ship *Seppings* from Gravesend.

On 17th November, the captain announced that they were off Lands End.

Francis hurried upstairs to get one last glimpse of his homeland but was too late.

He wrote in his journal " *Cornwall, happy Cornwall, beloved Cornwall, perhaps no more shall I enjoy its sight or participate in its privileges*".

After a voyage of seventeen weeks, leaving England, they arrived at Hobart, 188 years ago.

The Tuckfields lodged with the Reverend and Mrs Orton at the Mission House in Hobart.



Rev. JOSEPH ORTON.

Rev. Joseph Orton had the distinction of being the first ordained minister to conduct a church service in Melbourne.

Mr Orton had broached the subject with the New South Wales Governor about establishing an Aboriginal Mission at Port Phillip

The governor sought advice from the British government who were keen to see this sort of project go ahead.

By the mid to late 1830s, there was an onslaught of land seekers that led to the inevitable outbreak of violence between the races.

The need for a mission station at Port Phillip now became urgent.

In June 1838, the Tuckfields sailed from Hobart to Port Phillip.

Photo - A Century of Victorian Methodism - Rev. C Irving Benson

Under violent storm conditions that voyage took 22 days.

Soon after, the Tuckfields journeyed to Geelong where Francis became the first ordained Minister to conduct a church service in Geelong.

Tuckfield spent his time in Geelong travelling with Aboriginal clans, learning their language and customs whilst searching for a suitable site for the mission. These searches were often accompanied by William Buckley as an interpreter.

Finally, they chose a site on the Barwon River near Birregurra.

On the 13th May 1839, in Geelong a bullock wagon was loaded up. The party consisted of two missionaries and three fine young men from the local Wuthourong clan.

At this time, no overland trips were taken without the assistance of Aboriginal guides.

The Frontier Mission got off to a positive start.

It was reported back to London that twenty-five natives attended the mission per day.

The Aboriginals were supplied with food and clothing and were taught the alphabet.

And, more importantly, they were understanding the fundamental doctrines of scripture.

Regular attendees were taught farm work.

There were times when up to 100 Aboriginal people attended the Mission but there was traditional animosity between the tribes and intertribal fights were common.

Tuckfield and his family were often in real danger.

However, by 1847 the number of Aboriginal people at the Mission was noticeably decreasing and questions were raised about its usefulness.

The government became convinced that the mission was a failure and informed Tuckfield that the grazing licence would be cancelled at the end of 1850.

The Tuckfields regretfully left the Mission, taking up an appointment at the Yarra Street Wesley Church in Geelong.

He later took up other appointments in Victoria and New South Wales before he took charge of the Portland Wesleyan Church in 1864.

The following year he caught pneumonia after attending a funeral, and died on 21st October 1865. He was buried in the Methodist section of the Portland cemetery.

After the Buntingdale mission was abandoned in 1848 the neighboring property of *Tarndwarncoort*

became a meeting place for the local Aboriginal tribe and many were employed there.

The owner was Alexander Dennis from Trembath near Penzance, whose descendants are still on that property.

With their common Cornish and Wesleyan heritage, the Dennis and the Tuckfields had a good relationship, unlike many of the other neighboring properties.

A cairn and plaque was erected on the centenary of the opening of the Buntingdale Mission in 1939 at the Uniting Church Birregurra.

The Buntingdale Mission Bell is now in the Birregurra Anglican Church.

A Wesleyan church, known as the Tuckfield chapel, was built in Drysdale in 1850.

A plaque marks that site.

With the laying of the foundation stone at the Yarra Street church in 1844, prayers were offered up by the Reverend Francis Tuckfield.

In 1849, the immigrant ship, the *Larpent* arrived in Geelong.

Many of the passengers were ill and Tuckfield looked after them.

Grateful passengers later placed a marble plaque in the church in appreciation of what Tuckfield had done.

There is an identical plaque in the church at St Erth in Cornwall.

One passenger, James Oddie, set up a foundry in Geelong before joining the Gold Rush in Ballarat.

He became wealthy at the Ballarat gold diggings and later was a great philanthropist and established the Ballarat Art Gallery.

He witnessed the Eureka rebellion and later erected a statue to Peter Lalor.

The Portrait Gallery in Canberra displays a paintings of Francis and Sarah Tuckfield next to a well known painting of Joseph Latrobe.

So Francis Tuckfield is someone of whom we Cornish can be very proud.

Editor's Note - Rev. Joseph Orton's great grandson, (Joseph) Russell Orton was also a minister as was his great, great grandson, Alistair.

Russell Orton was our Minister in West Preston from 1950-66 having had placements in Springvale, Tasmania, Traralgon,. Murrumbeena/Oakleigh and finally Essendon South.

Article for the Century of Methodism in Victoria

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/11029945/574398>

Cornish Wrestling – The Search for Cups, Medals and Belts

I recently received a copy of The London Cornish Summer newsletter via the Cornish Association of Victoria.

I have a number of Cornish diaspora newsletters emailed to me on a regular basis but not this one, so I settled down to enjoy the articles.

It's always interesting to get a different perspective on how different associations record their activities and how they celebrate Cornwall.

One of the articles, *Cornish Wrestling – the search for cups, medals and belts* written by Simon Margetts from the Cornish Wrestling Association, really struck a note with me.

My great grandfather on my mother's side, Philip Hancock was a Cornish wrestling champion.

Born in 1846 in Carthew, near St Austell, he started his wrestling career in 1864 at the age of 17.

He competed in matches around Cornwall and Devon, and on three occasions took part in the Grasmere Sports in Cumberland, wrestling in the Cumberland style.

He won the champion belt of Devon and Cornwall, wrestling in front of the then Prince of Wales (afterward King Edward VII) and in 1884 was the World Cornish Wrestling champion winning the "Open to the World" belt in Penzance.

He claimed that from Land's End to John O'Groats he was never thrown or beaten in 28 years in Cornish or any other wrestling style.

He was a big draw with the Cornish public who attended "Wrasslin" matches in their thousands.

The 1891 Census shows him living with his family in Churchtown, Mullion.

The hunt by Simon Margetts to find these cups, medals and belts, led me to look out the family photographs given to me by my mother.

There amongst the collection was a picture of my great grandfather pictured with his "Open to the World" wrestling belt.



Whenever the subject of my mother's grandfather was spoken about, she never failed to remind me that his belt was on display at the Helston Museum, now known as the Museum of Cornish Life.

My first port of call was to email the museum, thinking, wouldn't it be great if I could email Simon Margetts and say I had found the wrestling belt.

The reply I received and I quote
"We did once have Pip Hancock's Cornish Wrestling Championship belt on display in the 1970's loaned by Major P R Hancock on behalf of the family. It was returned to the lender on 20 February 1987"

However, they did send me a drawing of the index card of the belt from 1977.

This was disappointing but has giving me more to investigate on my family history journey.

Not to let this news deter me, I did email Simon Margett.

I referred to his article, and introduced myself and my relation to Philip Hancock and my investigation and response from the museum of Cornish Life.

He responded with a record of his wrestling placings, and some photographs and newspaper articles.

Any information that adds to my already extensive research of the Hancock family is a bonus.

This began a two two-way exchange of information, – including more photos, my ancestry evidence that included newspaper articles and contact names of surviving family members on the Hancock side, who may be able to help with the mystery of the missing belt.

We have agreed to keep in contact if any new leads come about to its whereabouts.

Judy Wright

National President, NZ Cornish Association

Simon's details from the London Cornish Newsletter

The Cornish Wrestling Association is very keen to gather more information on wrestling tournaments around the world, and the awards given at them.

With luck, they may even trace the awards themselves. If any of our readers knows of past wrestling tournaments, or has come across a wrestling ancestor – anywhere in the world – please do get in touch with Simon Margetts -

smargetts@uk.ey.com

Summary of the Gorsedh Seminar held on 5th September 2025

For those of you who were unable to be in Marazion, here is a summary of the three reports given at the seminar.

1. Kate Neale (Gwandryades an Mordik) on the UK government's ratification of the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.



Last year the UK became the 183rd party to the 2003 UNESCO International Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, and responsibility for delivering the processes and activities required by the treaty has been given to the DCMS (Department of Culture, Media and Sport).

Intangible cultural heritage is the non-physical aspects of culture - e.g. practices, skills, knowledges, or expressions - which are passed down through communities and forms part of their cultural heritage and identity.

The UK government opened up a wide public consultation on the process for the UK last year, and Lowender, along with other Cornish organizations, responded and highlighted the need to represent Cornish intangible cultural heritage clearly given Cornwall's National Minority Status.

While DCMS has ultimately decided that each of the four devolved nations will have its own inventory, and that Cornwall therefore falls within the English inventory, DCMS does specifically take note of Cornwall's National Minority Status and is supporting our visibility, as shown in this extract from the consultation response: *"we will establish separate (online) inventories for each of the nations that will combine into a single inventory of living heritage in the UK. Where there are other distinct groups, including those in the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities such as Cornish, we will support their inclusion and ensure the living heritage of these groups can be viewed together on the inventories, but will not establish separate inventories beyond the devolved governments."*

Lowender therefore anticipates that there will be a 'tick box' or some equivalent mechanism for people to nominate specifically Cornish items, so

that it will eventually be possible to view a list of Cornish ICH items in the overall inventory.

Although DCMS have not yet confirmed the exact date, the submissions process is expected to open this autumn.

Initial indications are that there will be a four month window within which communities and individuals will be able to submit an intangible cultural heritage 'item' to the inventory. It is important therefore that individuals, communities and practitioners across the wide spectrum of Cornish intangible cultural heritage (egg, pasty-making, feast days, calendar customs, music and dance, gig rowing, Cornish hedge building, Cornish wrestling and much more) are aware of this process and that they have the opportunity to submit their practice within this window.

Lowender is therefore a local point of contact for support and information on the submissions process for individuals and communities.

Further details regarding the treaty and the submissions process can be found on the Lowender website here: <https://www.lowender.co.uk/ich/>

Sign up to Lowender's ICH updates on their email newsletter here:

<https://mailchi.mp/aff59cddb94/ich>

The Lowender team welcomes any queries or questions from bards which can be directed to ich@lowender.co.uk

2. Jowdy Davey (Alargh Gwynn) on the 2025 – 2035 Cornish Language Strategy

Jowdy Davey, Cornish Language Lead at Cornwall Council, presented results of the first phase of the consultation which has taken place over the summer and a broad strategy framework for feedback and discussion based on this research.



There will be another opportunity to respond to the framework at the Dalva an Yeth Kernewek at an in person/online event on 22nd November 2025, 10.30 – 12.30 at Kresen Kernow.

Sign up to the Kevren e-newsletter to receive updates from the language office and details of how to register:

<https://cornwall.us18.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=bf4f692a0a5222c4195dba7bc&id=13808c25d4>

Following consultation on the framework, a detailed draft of the 2025 – 2035 Cornish Language Strategy will be available to view for comment early in the new year, before going to Cabinet in Spring 2026.

3. Kensa Broadhurst (Kensa) on the REVIVE project

Cornish Heritage and Language are one of the two case studies in the REVIVE project, a three-year, cross-European initiative led by StoryLab at Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge.



REVIVE is a Horizon Europe project that brings together researchers and language communities to explore how digital innovation, Extended Reality technologies, and participatory storytelling can promote revitalisation and engagement with Endangered Intangible Heritage Languages in Europe – focusing on Cornish (UK) and Griko (Italy).

Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek are one of the partner organizations of this project, the aim of which is to involve the Cornish language and heritage community in the creation of new digital assets which tell the history, stories, and modern use of Cornish heritage and language.

These will include apps, a podcast series, and virtual reality experiences. These will be introduced at an exhibition in September 2027 and will be available for the community to use from that point.

The wider Revive project team are visiting Cornwall for a week beginning 20th October.

As part of this, they will be taking digital scan of sites around Cornwall (they have already scanned St Just plen-an-gwari and the Glasney College site) and are offering to make 3-D scans of items which might play a role in these new digital assets.

What does this actually mean?

For example, imagine putting on a virtual reality headset and being instantly transported to St Just in the 14th century where one of the Cornish mystery plays is being performed.

Or clicking on an app and being able to listen to the history of a site in Cornish, or English, or both. Or a series of podcasts in which Cornish legends, heritage tales, or history are told.

These can be interactive activities.

You might need to say a word or phrase in Cornish

to proceed through an activity, or find a particular object and click on it to discover more.

There are also opportunities for individuals to get involved in planning these stories and how they should be told. We need volunteers for two roles in workshops taking place from October to March, in Cornwall and online :

- Co-creators helping to create compelling stories about the Cornish Language;
- Observers helping to document the process.

For more information go to:

<https://cornish-language.org/revive/>

Or email Kensa Broadhurst (Kensa), the Revive Project Coordinator:

kowethasrevive@gmail.com



Information is from Gorsedh newsletter

Concert in the evening following the Bardic Ceremony

In the evening, there was a concert where a Cornish version of Alfred Lord Tennyson's the Lady of Shalott - Arlodhes A Shalott - was performed.

This work was created in residency at Endelienta Arts in 2024, with music composer and pianist Matthew Thomason, translated by Elizabeth Ellis, soprano Elizabeth Freeborn and a cellist normally Kath Buckler (who was unable to be there so there was another cellist whose name I cannot recall).

Elizabeth was a guest speaker earlier this year for the CAV and it was wonderful to catch up with her in person and present her with a small gift on behalf of the CAV.

She has a wonderful voice and the performance was outstanding.

We were issued with Cornish and English versions so we could follow the story and it was a wonderful performance

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

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

Part I & II: The Curse

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

Part III: Sir Lancelot

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

Part IV: The Cursed Death

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



John William Waterhouse (1849-1917) painting of *The Lady of Shalott* (1888) in the Tate Gallery London

The Murder of Richard Roskruge St Meneage 1797

(from Maureen Fuller - a direct descendant)

Richard Roskruge (1731-1797) was the great-grandson of Anthony Roscruge Esq. who, according to *Lake's Parochial History of the County of Cornwall*, sold the family seat about 1680, presumably due to a decline in their fortunes.

From then on the family continued to live in the parish as respectable yeomen leasing rather than owning land.

When Richard's father, also called Richard, died in 1758 he made him executor of his will and bequeathed him all his goods and chattels, apart from two small bequests to his brother John and sister Elizabeth.

This inheritance included the leasehold of my estate at Carne.

As well as farming, it appears that the Roskruges were also involved in the fishing community around the Helford River, as Richard is also noted as leasing a fish cellar in Helford village, in 1760.

Interestingly, the Royal Cornwall Gazette mentions Richard Roskruge's attempt to invent a new kind of pilchard net in around 1782.



Richard Roskruge was a Surveyor of Roads in the Manaccan area.

In the 18th century, each parish was required by the government to keep its own roads in good repair. Every man in the parish who owned or occupied land worth £50 a year or more was obliged to supply a cart, horses, tools and two men for six days to work on maintaining the roads in their area.

The Surveyor of the Roads was appointed by the parish to try and organize this work and more importantly persuade his neighbours to supply the necessary funds and labour.

It was a responsible job that required a friendly manner, powers of persuasion and tact.

On 14th August 1797, a man called John Rashleigh, described as a neighbouring farmer, struck him over the head with a biddax.

A biddax is the Cornish name for a kind of broad-bladed mattock or pickaxe often used for removing turf and breaking up hard ground. Just the kind of tool that might have been used while repairing roads.

It isn't clear whether Rashleigh was a workman employed by Roskruge or a landowner in the area who had been asked to contribute financially to repairs - evidently he was notorious in the neighbourhood for having a bad temper.

It was said that the two men, Roskruge and Rashleigh, had been in dispute over a trivial matter but what exactly that was wasn't recorded.

What is clear is that Rashleigh lost his temper, something he was apparently known for, and attacked Richard Roskruge.

Richard though critically injured didn't die straight away - he lingered long enough to identify who had attacked him.

However, by the time the police arrived, Rashleigh had escaped.

Richard Roskruge and his wife Joan had been married for twenty years at the time of his death. We can easily imagine that she would have been distraught by what had happened to her husband and bitter that his murderer was on the run.



At some time between her husband's death and his funeral at St Anthony in Meneage Church, the church where they had been married, Joan must have approached Rev. Richard Polwhele with the words that she wanted carved on her husband's headstone.

*"Ah! Rueful Fate! Beneath in dust I lie,
Doomed by a cruel ruffian's hand to die:
By a merciless blow he struck my brain so sure
That death ensued & lo! I am no more."*

Somehow the minister persuaded Joan that the words were not appropriate and they settled on the ones that can be seen on Richard's headstone to this day:

"This stone is dedicated to the memory of
Richard Roskruge
who was killed while in the execution
of his office as Surveyor of the
Highways by a blow on his head with a biddax.
14th August 1797 aged 66

Doomed by a neighbour's erring hand to die,
For him my spirit breath from Heaven a sigh,
O! While Repentant Prayers the dead attone,
Be mine to waft them to the Eternal Throne."



Joan herself passed away three days after the 30th anniversary of Richard's death in 1824 and was laid to rest in the same grave.

John Rashleigh was never caught or charged with Richard Roskruge's murder.

My great grandmother was Sophia Roskruge, my mother's Granny. She loved hats and when she died my grandfather had to have a bonfire in the garden as there were so many of them!

I'm known for my hats at weddings. So I know where my love of hats comes from - Sophia!!

With thanks to Maureen Fuller for this story.

Vale Frances Brown

For those of us who have been researching your family history at the State Library of Victoria for many years, the name Frances Brown will be familiar.



Sadly, Frances died in late July after a short illness.

She was known to us as the first family and local history librarian at the State Library of Victoria.

She was appointed in 1986.

A team of other genie librarians joined her over the years. Anne Burrows succeeded Frances when she retired.

Frances introduced the very helpful Genie Guides which were a listing of all resources for a particular area.

Frances was a co-author of Family and Local History Sources in Victoria, commonly known as the little red book.

Frances spoke at many conferences and seminars in Victoria and interstate, and in May 1995 convened the First Victorian Family History State Conference. In November 1996 the second conference was held at Maryborough, and it was here that Frances suggested the formation of VAFHO (Victorian Association of Family History Organizations) – bringing family history societies together.

Frances was the first president, and nominated me as the second president. This was a highlight of my genealogical life.

VAFHO introduced the Frances Brown Award – for people who had made a significant contribution to family history in Victoria.

She was also behind the introduction of First Families in 2001, a celebration of the centenary of federation. It was also a forum for all Australians to tell the story of the first arrivals in their families to Australia.

Frances, thank you for your contribution to family history and genealogy in Victoria. We researchers thank you.

Rest in peace.
Di Christensen

Fisherman's Friends in Australia

Fisherman's Friends will be playing in Brunswick, Geelong, St Kilda, and Frankston, in January 2026 as well as other states.

Specifically, they'll be at The Brunswick Ballroom on January 8th, Costa Hall Geelong on January 9th, the Palais Theatre St Kilda on January 10th, and the Frankston Arts Centre on January 11th.

You would need to contact the venue closest to you for information and tickets if you are interested.



Halton Quay Chapel

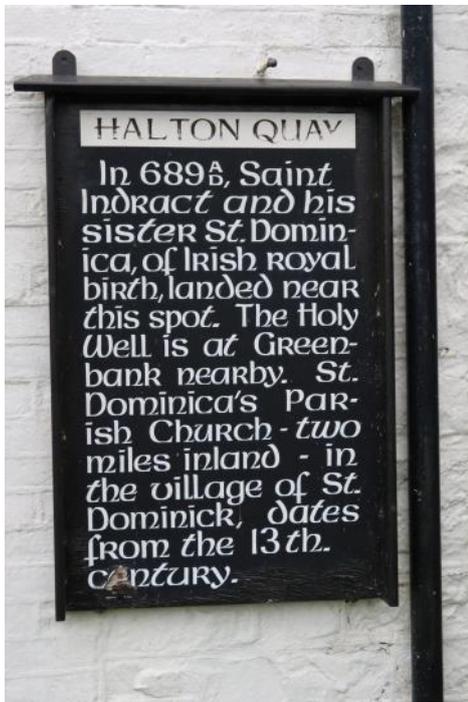


In June 1959, on the River Tamar, a tiny building on the quay that had variously been used as a custom's house, a coal merchant's office and a clerking office was reincarnated as a chapel.

The chapel is dedicated to St Indract, who is supposed to have been the son of an Irish king, who

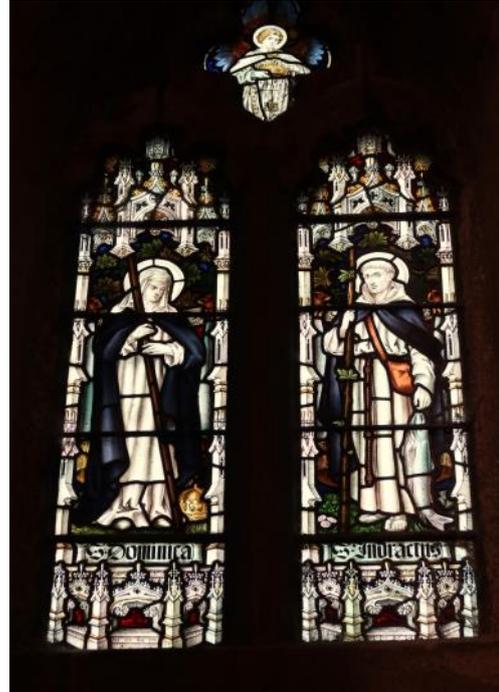
arrived in Cornwall in the 7th century (c 689 AD) along with his sister St Dominica.

Legend has it that the pair landed at Halton Quay, decided to settle here on the banks of the Tamar and built a chapel, now lost to the tides of time, and holy well nearby at Chapel Farm.



The top of the tower and all the other walls are of granite and were erected in the late 15th or early 16th century.

There are several stained glass windows in the Church, the oldest believed to be in the tower above the West Door showing St. Dominica and St. Indract, the latter holding a Tamar salmon.



Tradition has it that St Indract left his sister and continued his pilgrimage to Rome returning to Glastonbury to visit the Shrine to St Patrick, where he was murdered.

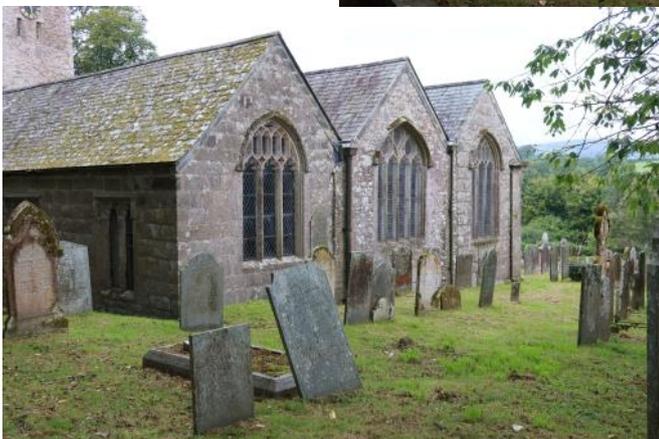
The Church of St Dominica

The Church of St. Dominica was dedicated in 1259.

For a number of years, the name of the Saint was confused with St. Dominic the Founder of the Dominican Friars.



The barrel-vaulted ceilings have moulded ribs and plaster panels; there are 96 carved bosses and the chancel roof was painted blue with gold stencils early in the 20th century.



The 13th century walls of the original Church are of shillet (crushed shale) and freestone (a type of limestone or sandstone).



Carved wood featuring Domenica and Inractus