

## VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BLYTHEN NOWYDTH DA  
Dyth da. Fatla genes?



As our President Ron is away on holiday, it gives me great pleasure to be able to write this report on his behalf.

Unfortunately, we have not had a good start to the New Year as two of our long-standing members, Glen Grigg, A Past President, and Lorice Jenkin, Past Secretary of the Ballarat branch have died and we send our thoughts to their families.

They were very active members of our Association making significant contributions and they will be greatly missed.

As we face the coming year, we will have problems with membership numbers and maintaining our members interests as people move away from Melbourne and find it difficult to travel.

There was certainly a relief during the holidays with the traffic around Melbourne being lighter but soon we with the school holidays over we will be back to normal.

We hope to continue our mix of Zoom meetings and attendance at Darebin North West Uniting Church, as it is most important that we can keep in touch.

I urge our older members to ask their children, or should it be grandchildren, to help set up Zoom so more members can join us and explore Cornwall.

There are also many more sites on your computer which gives you a very visual picture of Cornwall and all its aspects.

We hope to give you a number of sites you can log into in the next newsletter.

The next meeting of the CAV will be on the 21st February 2026 and will be a talk held on Zoom.

Our President Ron is keen to have another show and tell or members talking about their favourite places in Cornwall or the towns and villages which they have an interest in.

So, members it is up to you to dig out your photos and memorabilia and to talk for a number of minutes.

This is an advance notice that I, with the help of the Vicar of St Peters Church, Murrumbeena, will be holding a St Piran's Day service followed by lunch and activities in the Hall.

I hope those who went to visit the gardens of St Erth had



## CORNISH ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA, INC.

**NEWSLETTER  
No. 155**

**February 2026**

**Corporation Reg. No. A0008264A**

### CONTENTS

Report from Vice-President	pp 1-3
Information for Members	p 2
Vale - Brian Tresidder Lorice Jenkin Glen Grigg	pp 3-4
World 9s football	p 4
The Builder from Cornwall	pp 5-7
Cornish Placenames Pronunciation	pp 7-8
St Erth Gardens Visit	p 9
Botallack Mine Disaster And the Nicholas Family	pp 10-13
Cornish Tidbits	pp 14-16

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### Membership Fees

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



### Saturday 21st February 2026

#### 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](mailto:robyncoates@hotmail.com)) who will put together a PowerPoint presentation whilst you talk to the slides asap.

### Sunday 1st March - St Piran's

**Day** Church Service in Ballarat - 10.00 am at Skipton Street, Uniting Church.

Lunch will follow at The Flying Horse Bistro, Brays Raceway, Bell Street. Redan

### Sunday 15th March - St Piran's

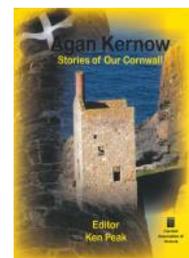
**Day** - Church Service at St Peter's Church of England Murrumbeena - 371A Neerim Rd, Carnegie - at 10.00 am - followed by Lunch

**Possible stall** at the Highland and Celtic Festival - **Sunday 29th March** from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm at Eastfield Park, Croydon

### Saturday 18th April - TBA

### 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

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](mailto:robyncoates@hotmail.com)

**Membership Fees are now overdue and reminder notices will be sent out shortly.**

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](mailto:mandf.procter@gmail.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](mailto:ejo65074@bigpond.net.au)

a wonderful day and we will see what next excursion can be arranged.

Thanks to Robyn and Arthur for their good work in producing the Newsletter and I hope you enjoy it. Please send in any articles which may be of interest to members of the CAV.

Oll an gwella,  
Brian Rollason  
(Vice-President)



## VALE

it is with great sadness that I report the deaths of three members of the Cornish Association of Victoria (CAV)

Brian Tresidder, 9th September 2025; Lorice Jenkin, past Secretary of the Ballarat Branch, on 13th January 2026, and Glen Grigg Past President of the CAV, on 21st January 2026.

All made valued and significant contributions to the CAV and will be greatly missed.

### **Brian Francis Tresidder 9.9.2025**

It was Brian's wish that details not be published, at the time of his death, but his wife, Michelle, seen with Brian in this photo taken at Oakleigh, has agreed to us informing CAV members.



Brian was often on the door to welcome and chat with members as they entered. He was always cheery and his bright blue eyes sparkled as he chatted to each and every one as they arrived.

Growing up in Preston, Brian and I would often chat about current happenings in Preston, where we also lived, and reminisce about buildings and places which no longer existed.

Brian was so encouraging of Michelle in her artwork, of her work in their wonderful rose garden and so proud when she published her books.

Brian and Michelle keenly participated in many Cornish festivals in South Australia, NSW and throughout Victoria and Brian's friends in South Australia and NSW will also be saddened to hear of his passing.

We extend our deepest sympathy to Michelle.

### **Lorice Anne Jenkin**

17.7.1945 – 13.1.2026

Lorice was a valued member of the Ballarat Cornish group joining the Association in June 1990 and was a life member.



She was the assistant secretary from June 2012 and became secretary in June 2015, after Lenice Stuchbery retired, holding that position until 2024 when she retired following her stroke.

Lorice was born in Maryborough where her father John Welham Jenkin (Jack) was a teacher.

He had married Eleanor Annie Henry (Nellie) in 1932. She was a tailoress.

Lorice had three sisters, Joy, Bette and Lavinia (known as Gaye).

Lorice lived most of her life in Queen Street, Ballarat East until she moved to Mercy Place Residential Care.

For most of her primary schooling, she attended Queen Street State School and for her secondary education, Ballarat East High School, before studying at Ballarat Teachers' College for her Trained Infant Teachers' Certificate.

She taught for a short time in Melbourne and then in Redan and her final teaching appointment was at Alfredton Primary School where she was the longest serving teacher.

Lorice was a regular attendee at the Salvation Army Corps in Main Road, although her father had been a local Methodist preacher.

She loved a chat about politics, current affairs and world happenings and was very proud of her garden - particularly her begonias.

Her main Cornish ancestry was from Jenkin in Madron and Crago in Liskeard.

Lorice will be sadly missed by our Cornish group.

### **(Alfred) Glen Grigg**

2.12.1933 - 21.1.2026

Glen and Gladys joined the CAV in 1987 and were in the first hundred members to do so, with member number ninety-seven.



Glen joined the Committee in 2004, as incoming Vice President, and was CAV President during the years 2006 to 2008.

He remained as a committee member until 2014.

All of Glen's eight great grandparents were born in Cornwall and former CAV President and Patron, Bill Phillips, once announced that Glen was more Cornish than many Cornish residents..

His Cornish name interests were Grigg, Hosking, Nancarrow, Jenkin, Clemmo, Pedlar, Pollard, Quintrell and Trevillian.

Glen was born in Footscray and lived near the Western Oval, hence his lifelong association with the Bulldogs. One of his early friends was Ernie Sigley.

His early education was at Tottenham State School and later Footscray Technical School where he obtained a Diploma of Mechanical Engineering. After a period of compulsory National Service, he worked for a company designing electrical components.

He and Gladys, also Footscray born, were married in 1957 and shifted to their home in Box Hill, where they lived for most of their lives, before moving to Strathdon in Forest Hill.

Glen's cricket team was in the Grand Final, and on their wedding day, he played after the ceremony and before the reception.

Thankfully, Barkly Street, Footscray Methodists were successful!

Glen was a keen sportsman and encouraged his three children, Peter, Christine and Neil in their sporting activities and took leadership roles in coaching and as a Committee member of their clubs. Glen was a Freemason and became a Grand Master.

Glen had a lifelong involvement with the church and his Christian faith was very important to him. He served in many roles, at various churches, within the church and on many committees.

Glen and Gladys regularly attended interstate Cornish activities including Kernewek Lowender, in South Australia, and attended he Southern Sons of Cornwall's Cornish Cultural Celebrations in Nowra. In Victoria, CAV activities at Clunes, Eaglehawk, Bendigo, St Piran's Day events, Ballarat festivals and Bendigo Church Services, at Long Gully, were all important to both Glen and Gladys.

Glen will long be remembered for his enthusiasm, hard work, his friendliness, good humour, 'dad type' jokes and commitment to the CAV.

We will miss him and extend our loving sympathy to Gladys.

## World 9s Australian Football International tournament

From Marcus Curnow

Cornwall's first ever team to play in the World 9s Australian Football International tournament in Melbourne occurred on Saturday 7th February. We lost to the Dutch, Got up against Malawi and kicked two late goals to tie with Mexico  
7 Curnows were in the squad with partners and close friends.

Big shout out to Cornish Association of Victoria, Aussie Oogie Pasty Co. and @darcie\_curnow photography for the good photos here!

<https://darciecurnowphotography.pixieset.com/world9skernowfooty/>

### THE BASICS OF FOOTY NINES

Footy 9s matches are played on soccer or rugby playing fields, using existing posts and field markings.

- Each team consists of 9 players – 3 forwards, 3 midfielders and 3 backs.
- The game starts with a jump ball in the middle of the field.
- The ball is moved around the field by either a kick, handball or running with the ball.
- A goal is scored when the ball is kicked through the posts.
- If the ball hits the posts and continues through the posts, it is a goal.
- If the ball hits the posts and comes back into the field of play, it is play on.
- No kicking off the ground is permitted.
- When the ball goes out of bounds by either foot or hand, the nearest opponent shall kick the ball back into play.
- Players can go anywhere on the field and there is no off-side rule.



## THE BUILDER FROM CORNWALL.

(This article was originally published in The Pivot Tree - Newsletter of the Geelong Family History Group and was sent to me by Di Christensen who contacted the editor, Carolyn Williams who contacted the writer, David Wilson, and asked if we could include it in a CAV newsletter. They both gave permission David has no connection with Cornwall but his connection is through Alfred Trevena's partner John Gubby)

Alfred TREVENA was born in Ponsanooth, Cornwall and was christened on the 23rd June 1833 in the Parish Church of St Gluvias.

He was the fifth child of James and Grace TREVENA; Mary was his stepmother.

James a labourer became skilled as a gunpowder maker, and the family lived in a street of gunpowder makers.

James was keen to see all his children educated with good trades so saw them suitably apprenticed.

The seven children were.

Elizabeth born 1826 Dressmaker

John born 1829 Cooper

Amelia M born 1830 Dressmaker

Samuel born 1831 Sadler

Alfred born 1833 Joiner

Jane Ann born 1838

William James born 1839 Land Agent

James TREVENA died aged 76 on 20th February 1876.

His death was registered at Bodmin.

Probate was issued on 19 March 1876 on an estate valued less than £300.

Mary continued to live firstly with her son William and later until her death at age 91 years in mid-1889 with her son John.

One by one the children left the family home to pursue their lives.

In October 1854, Alfred sailed from London aboard the Dutch vessel *Twee Gebroeders* which arrived in Victoria early in January 1855.

Whether it was gold fever or the wish for a fresh start in the Colonies, the reason for his immigration may never be known.

Living in Cornwall, he would have had some knowledge of mining, but it was his training with working with timber with which made his place in history.

Building skills were urgently needed in the Colony of Victoria.

Following his migration did he visit the gold fields? It is not known, but somewhere he met a young colonial named James GUBBY and together circa 1862, they formed the business Trevena and Gubby, in Geelong, operating from a property in Clare Street Geelong.

Early on building repairs and maintenance provided their income, also supplying timber and other building materials, but for the future bigger things were in store.

John GUBBY following his arrival from his native Hobart married Rothes HISLOP.

They had one child who was named for her mother but who lived for less than a year.

In 1862 Alfred TREVENA married Eliza HOCKEY the second child of her widowed mother Charlotte, who with her four daughters arrived in Victoria aboard the *Star of the East* on 23 August 1854.

The family on arrival were.

Charlotte aged 34

Charlotte Ann aged 13

Elizabeth (Eliza) aged 12

Amelia aged 8

Sarah aged 4

Eliza was born in 1842 in Shepton Mallet, Somerset, England.

Her father was John HOCKEY.

The marriage of Alfred and Sarah was a tragic one with four of their five children dying very young. Sadly, followed by the death of their mother at only 27 years of age in Geelong. She is buried at the Herne Hill cemetery.

Their eldest and only surviving child, Alfred died in early adulthood.

The children were:

Alfred James b. 1863 Ashby d. 1887 Geelong Hospital

Leonard b. 1864 d. 1865 Ashby

Laura Amelia b. 1865 Ashby d. 1866 Ashby

Laura Amelia b. 1867 Geelong d. 1867 Ashby

Evelyn Lille b. 1869 Geelong d. 1870 Ashby

Alfred was a staunch and active Christian who was very involved with the Wesleyan Methodist Church. His involvement was with the Sunday School.

He was appointed the Sunday School Superintendent of the Newtown Wesleyan Sunday School, Pakington Street Newtown from August 1884.

In 1871, Alfred married Elizabeth (Eliza) TOWERS who was a neighbour and friend of Alfred's late wife, Sarah. She was the daughter of William TOWERS and Sarah SIMPSON.

More Trevena children arrived.

Louisa Isabelle b. 1872 Geelong d. 1876 Geelong  
Grace Eliza b. 1874 Geelong d. 1947 m. 1901

Thomas W BUTCHER

Emmeline Sarah b. 1876 Geelong d. 1956 m. 1905  
Phillip PEART

Laura Amelia b. 1877 Geelong d. 1955 Geelong

Alice Mary b. 1879 Geelong d. 1954 Rushworth

Ernest Henry b. 1882 Geelong d. 1959 Melbourne

As Alfred's family grew so did the firm of Trevena and Gubby.

The firm's early business was mainly small repairs, extensions, fences etc.

Their first major job was building the Cowie's Creek School, at Duck Ponds, in 1864.

They received numerous Government contracts for work over the Western District.

At Hamilton, the Court House and police quarters; at Stawell the Police Superintendents quarters; at Streatham the Post Office; and at Ararat work at the mental hospital.

Of course there was work in Geelong.

Repairs to the Barwon Bridge, work on the Corio Bay jetties, work at the Geelong Gaol and lots of tasks at the Industrial school.

They outgrew their workshops several times moving from Clare Street to Malop Street to Little Malop and finally to Brougham Place.

As well as building, the firm was a major supplier of building materials, tools and hardware.

They also advertised self-assemble prefabricated cottages.

Portable / prefabricated homes were imported to Geelong in the early 1850s in response to the housing shortage caused by the gold rush.

At some stage another partner was taken on by the firm, Thomas PERMEWAN of Bourke Street Melbourne.

However, no documented evidence can be found that the business was shared with him, as following the death of Alfred, the business was divided in two for the purpose of probate.

All the woodwork at Fenwick St Baptist Church and Sunday school was a job faithfully completed by Alfred.

Still in Geelong, the grandstands and fencing for the Geelong Racing Club and the Claire Street Wool store for the SYNNOTT Brothers.

A different job was the careful demolition of the Lethbridge lock up and re-erection at Bannockburn.



Another task was the erection of Christ Church at Birregurra for the Anglican Church. These last two buildings have been classified by the National Trust.



Christ Church, Birregurra. Built 1870.  
(Source: D. Wilson)

In the 1870's they were involved in a lot of work at Portarlington.

The Forester's Hall, the Bathing House, major renovation at Calhoun's Family Hotel and again for the Anglican Church, St John's Church.

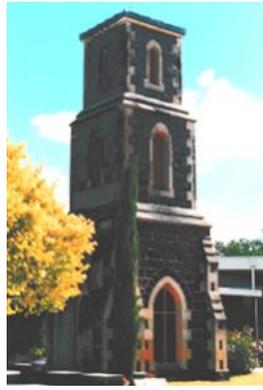
This too is classified by the Trust.

In this same period, they also erected the Church at Lara, sadly destroyed by bush fire in 1969.

All that remains is the tower without its spire.  
Holy Trinity Church, Lara  
Opened in 1877.

The original church building and hall were destroyed in the 1969 fires.

The tower, which formed the base to the spire, was repaired and incorporated into the replacement church building in 1971. (Source: D Wilson)



Renovations and extensions of Geelong Markets, the erection of Geelong West Fire Station in 1886 and work at the Geelong Show Grounds were further major works in the 1880's.

In this period, it seems that most of the work was the erection of homes and supply of materials. Both Alfred and John build homes for themselves and their families now being secure in the business they could think of themselves as well as the business.

Alfred's Home was Ponsanooth in Pakington Street, Newtown, John's was Tarcoola in Mount Pleasant Road Highton.

After a long illness Alfred passed away in March 1891, and although the business had been offered for sale the nation's economic climate deterred purchasers.

The partnership was dissolved in 1896 leaving John GUBBY leasing the business to the PETTIT Brothers.

John GUBBY died in January 1904.

David Wilson GFHG

#### Sources:

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- . Investigator (9)3, 1974 p. 74; (12)1 1977 p. 4,6; (15) 2 1980 p. 33; 1(17)4 1982 p. 106.

- . National Trust Database.
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#### Note:

The stone lock-up at Bannockburn was originally constructed by Thomas BROOKING and Co of Geelong and located at Lethbridge.

The rectangular plan gaol of square coursed basalt with gabled entry porch and iron grille gate was completed in June 1860.

In December 1869 TREVENA and GUBBY removed the lock-up from Lethbridge to Bannockburn, each stone being numbered.

These structures were to provide overnight security for gold escorts, however the principal function was to house prisoners awaiting trial.

The lock-up at Bannockburn is used as a store house by the present owners, the Shire of Bannockburn.

It was classified by the National Trust in 1967 (National Trust Database)



#### Cornish place names can be tricky to get your tongue around.

<https://www.facebook.com/cornwalllivenews/posts/cornish-place-names-can-be-tricky-to-get-your-tongue-around-so-heres-a-handy-guide/1279661804187137/>

Posting this from a Facebook post, so I am unsure how accurate or in accurate it is.

*So here's a handy guide to pronouncing the more tricky ones - just for tourists, of course...*

*Mousehole* - The old chestnut. No, it's not mouse hole but Mowzle said in your best Cornish fisherman's accent.

*Delabole* - I once persuaded a young colleague from upcountry that this village was pronounced De La Bolé as if it was the very centre of French sophistication. It's actually Dellerbowl.

*Trewoon* - Some say Tre-woon, others say Tre-win for this village near St Austell. It should actually be pronounced Troon, not to be mistaken with the actual Troon in Camborne.

*Doublebois* - Not the French for two woods, double bois, but Doubleboys.

*Launceston* - If you're a proper Cornish person, it's not Launston or, worse Lawn-sess-ton, but Lanson, with the emphasis on the aaaaaa.

*Hewaswater* - Not He-woz-water but Hugh'ass-water.

*Tideford* - Bideford is Bidderford so Tideford is Tidderford, right? Wrong. It's Tide-ford.

*Breage* - Don't get all Gallic again. It's not Breash or even Briage, but Breeg.

*St Austell* - Surely there's only one way to pronounce the town? It's Saint Ostell, not Saint Ore-stell. Better still just call it Ozzle like the locals.

*Chûn Castle* - The Iron Age hill fort near Penzance is not pronounced Chun but Tune.

*Fowey* - Another favourite. Foy as in hoi polloi.

*Polzeath* - You can always tell a visitor when they say Pole-zeeth. It's Pol-zeth.

*Praa Sands* - A contentious one this. No one knows the definitive answer. I say potato you say potarto, I say Prar Sands you say Pray Sands.

*Liskeard* - You'd think no one could mispronounce Liss-card. But we've heard Lis-keer-d.

*Tywardreath* - Like Polzeath, it's Ty-w'dreth not Ty-ward-reeth.

*Truro* - Again, surely you can't mispronounce the capital city? It's Tr'row not True-row. If you're a true Truronian though, you pronounce it Tr'ra.

*Roche* - It hasn't got an acute accent on the e, so it's not pronounced as in Ferrero Rocher, but simply roach as in cockroach, which is no slight on the Clay Country village. It's not Rosh either.

*St Ive* - The village near Callington is not pronounced like St Ives without the e. It's Saint Eve.

*Marazion* - Not ma-razzion, but Marra-zion.

*Illogan* - It's amazing how many people say Iller-gn. It's I-luggan.

*Maenporth* - This place can confuse visitors to Falmouth. It's Main Porth and not Mine Porth.

*Trescobeas* - Another area of Falmouth to confuse – it's Tresco-bays as in a Scilly harbour not Tress-co-bay-as or even Tresco-bees.

*Dracaena* - And another Falmouth tongue twister – Dra-seen-a.

*Tresillian* - It's a hard 's' so Trez-illian not Tress-illian like my mother-in-law pronounces it even though she lives there.

*Mevagissey* - Similarly, Meva-gizzey not gissey. Though just call it Meva.

*Luxulyan* - For some strange reason a lot of people say Lux-illian. There's a 'u' in it – Lux-ullian.

*Zelah* - Not Zeller, but Zeeler.

*Caerhays* - The estate and beach near the Roseland peninsula is pronounced Car-haze not Care-haze.

*Cury* - No, not curry but cury as in Marie Curie.

*Porthleven* - It's Porth-leven, people, not Port-leven. It's amazing how many people say that.

*Perranuthnoe* - Perran-ooth-no or Perran-uth-no? The jury's out in our office. Fair enough though.

*Pelynt* - You may think the village near Looe is pronounced Pell-int, but you'd be wrong. Plint, innit.

*Devoran* - Not D'vor-an or Dev-oh-ran but the much more Cornish, Devrun.



### **Burra To Bendigo by Bike**

In April 2026, eight Bendigo cyclists will be riding from Burra (S.A) to Bendigo to experience the journey made by Cornish family members in 1852.

Thomas Ninnes and several family members left Burra for Bendigo diggings in 1852.

It took 10 weeks to cover the 700-mile journey in horse drawn carts and bullock wagons.

Unfortunately, Thomas's wife Mary and 2 small children died when close to Bendigo and are buried in a marked Pioneers Grave in the Robin Hill Estate Maiden Gully.

The cycle ride will begin in Burra on Sunday 19th April and arrive in Bendigo on Wednesday 29th April.

The group has been planning the trip over the past three months and are all members of the Bendigo – Kilmore Rail Trail friends' group.

The ride will follow the route taken in 1852 and described in Thomas Ninnes diaries which were re-discovered in the State Library of South Australia in recent times by Neil Field.

Neil is a descendant of Thomas Ninnes sister Mary.

Greg Ralton  
Mob 0419 290 966



## Visit to St Erth Gardens in Blackwood - 19th November 2025

Eighteen Cornish Association members, from Melbourne, Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo, and six members from Darebin North West Uniting Church enjoyed the visit to St Erth Gardens, the plant nursery and also their wonderful cafe.

It was a very pleasant day weatherwise and the gardens were beautifully cared for.

A couple of disadvantages were that there were quite a few steps without handrails and the gate which would have enabled better access for many was locked.

*The Garden of st Erth was created by Tommy and Penny Garnett in the late 1960s.*

*Tommy was a passionate and knowledgeable plantsman, naturalist and educator, as well as one of Australia's most stimulating and provocative garden writers, penning his weekly column, 'From the Country', in the Age newspaper for many years.*

*In 1996,*

*The Diggers Foundation took on the Garden, enhancing the vision of the Garnetts to showcase this fine example of a cool climate garden.*

*The Diggers Foundation Vision - to inspire a love of gardening in Australia, for the joy and fulfilment of connecting to the natural world and each other through gardening*

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. 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.



## Christmas Luncheon - Saturday 13th December 2025

The final activity for CAV members was a Christmas Luncheon at Darebin NW Uniting Church, where eighteen members gathered for a shared lunch.

It was wonderful to see people in person rather than on a screen and there was lots of chatter.

A pictorial quiz tested people's memories of visits to Cornwall in person or through newsletters.



## **The Botallack Mine disaster of 1863 and Michael Nicholas**

The Botallack Mine is situated in Botallack, in Cornwall, between St Just and Pendeen. It was a submarine mine, dating back to the 1700s and produced tin and copper, as well as arsenic.



Photo - Wikipedia

The mine used a tram carriage, known as a skip, to transport workers in and out of the mine shaft. The skip was equipped with wheels that ran on rails, similar to a train. It held eight men and it was customary to add a boy/young man as well.

On Saturday 18th April 1863, one load of men had safely reached the surface before the skip descended to bring up another group. There were eighteen miners below, waiting for their turn to get to the surface. Eight men and a boy were loaded into the skip, when it began its climb to the top.

However, it was halfway up when a chain broke, causing it to travel down the shaft, and tragically the men plummeted to their deaths. An inquest was held and the jury's first task was to view the bodies, at the mine, which was gruesome. They returned to the count house in Botallack, where they heard testimonies and deliberated, and after finding that nobody was at fault, they returned a verdict of "accidental death".

The accident did not deter tourism at Botallack, which was a popular destination for various Royals and other notables. In 1865, the Prince and Princess of Wales (who later became Edward VII and Queen Alexandra) visited, and descended down into the shaft.

After the accident, it was decided that visitors would be charged a half guinea to descend into the mine shaft, with the proceeds going to the widows and orphans of the men who died.

Botallack mine closed in 1895, due to the falling tin prices.

Today, it is owned by the National Trust and has been part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2006.

The names and circumstances of the deceased were as follows:

**John Chapple**, of Nancherry aged 50, a second wife living. He left six children by his first wife, his second wife also having two alive by a former husband.

**John Chapple**, his son, aged 18, unmarried. According to the rule of propriety, John Chapple was entitled to a seat in the skip, at the time of its first ascent. He took his place, but resigned it at the request of Thomas Wall, son of one, and brother of another of the unfortunate men, who said that he wished to get to the surface earlier, in order to attend the funeral of a neighbour.

**Thomas Wall**, North St Just, 45, left a wife and three or four children

and **Richard Wall**, aged 17, his son

**Michael Nicholas**, 39, left a wife and family of seven children, his wife having nearly approached another confinement.

**John Eddy**, of Botallack, 17, unmarried. He was the son of the man who laid down the shaft, and whose duty it was to keep it in order. On hearing of the accident, his father went to the count-house in his underground clothes and wished to go beneath but was not permitted.

**Peter Eddy**, 17, of Nancherrow, cousin of John Eddy, was the principal support of his widowed mother.

**Thomas Nankervis**, 16, was one of a large family.

**Richard Nankervis**, 12 years of age, was the lad who was taken in to make up the number. He had a mother living, but no father.

The above gives some background as to the death of **Michael Nicholas**.

**Michael Nicholas** was born c1822 in St Just in Penwith. His parents were Michael and Alice (Thomas).

On 9th November 1844, Michael married, after Banns, Elizabeth Thomas, born c1820, at St Just in

Penwith. Her parents were Thomas Thomas and Honor Lawry.

Michael and Elizabeth were both living at Botallack, at the time of their marriage.

Michael signed his name and Elizabeth made her mark. It is recorded that Michael was a miner. According to the marriage details, both of their fathers were miners.

Michael and Elizabeth had seven children – their ages are sourced from census returns of 1851 and 1861.

All born in Cornwall.

Michael's wife, Elizabeth died in 1895

**Michael** b c1845/1846 d 1913 South Melbourne  
Elizabeth Ann b c 1847 d 1932 (Trezise) South Australia

Jane b c 1849 d 1892 (Mills) Ballarat

Thomas b c 1854 d 1900 ? USA

Mary b c 1856 d 1902 St Just in Penwith

Eliza baptized 1857 d 1927 (Grenfell) Truro

Nicholas baptized 1859 d 1891 Victoria

I can find no evidence of the child that Elizabeth was supposedly carrying at the time of Michael's death.

Sometime after the 1861 census and before the 1871 census, Michael Nicholas, left for Australia and in 1872, in Victoria, he married Ellen Anstee, who may have been born in the Geelong area, as other family members were born around Geelong – her parents were Richard Anstee and Carol Rich.

#### Children of Michael and Ellen:

Sarah was born in Moonta in June 1873 d 1964 m Thomas Castles (1964-1927) in 1926; m William Edgar (1858-1948) in 1935

Elizabeth born Maryborough in 1876 – died Craigie aged four in 1881

Mary Ellen born Timor in 1878 died 1959 South Melbourne

Alfred Michael born in 1881 in Craigie died 1937 m Isabel Cook (1878-1962) in 1915 – two children Maurice Alfred and Margery

George Richard Rich born 1884 in Majorca died 1960 m Ruby Campbell (1883-1928) in 1912; (four children) m Shirley Alcock (1910-1998) in 1936 (two children)

William born 1886 in Majorca and died aged one day

Frances Caroline born 1888 in Majorca died 1981 m Arthur Wall (1882-1966) in 1915 (one son)

Hubert Ernest b 1892 in Majorca died 1964 m Edna Leona Davis (1897 – 1988) in 1933 in Canada (one child)

According to the Electoral Roll, in 1906, Michael and Ellen are living at 45 Howe Crescent, South Melbourne – he is listed as a boot maker, Ellen is a housewife, Sarah is a nurse and Mary Ellen a saleswoman.

In 1913, living at 93 Raglan Street, Albert Park with Michael, a bootmaker, and Ellen are Alfred – traveler; Frances Caroline - clerk; George - chemist; Mary Ellen – saleswoman; and Sarah – nurse.

Michael died in 1913 and Ellen in 1933.

George qualified as a pharmacist in 1912 at The University of Melbourne, and Alfred established himself as a grocer and later as an importer and merchant. Hubert was a mechanic and later a poultry farmer who lived in Canada for a few years and also the UK.

Alfred and George's claim to fame was their development and production of Aspro.

The following article from the Australian Dictionary of Biography, describes their lives.

*The family lived at Moonta, South Australia, and in Victoria at Majorca, Rutherglen and South Melbourne. Alfred and George were educated at state schools. George qualified as a pharmacist in July 1912 and opened a pharmacy in Punt Road, Windsor. He maintained his registration until his death. Alfred established himself as a grocer and later as an importer and merchant.*

*When World War I cut off German supplies of acetylsalicylic acid, better known as aspirin, Attorney-General W. M. Hughes, announced that German patents and trade marks would be suspended and then granted to any home-based manufacturer who could meet the required standards of purity. Using kerosene tins and kitchen utensils borrowed from his wife, George set out to react salicylic acid, a white powder, with acetic anhydride, an acrid-smelling liquid.*

*No information existed in Australia and the plant was of the most primitive kind.*

*After much perseverance, he made the first Australian acetylsalicylic acid, or aspirin, but it was impure.*

With the help of freelance entrepreneur Henry Woolf Shmith, after many weeks of experimenting he had a batch of pure aspirin.

On 12 June 1915, they applied under wartime legislation to take over the trade name 'Aspirin' from Bayer. Officialdom ignored their application until Frank Anstey prodded Hughes into having the government analyst test their product.

On 17 September Hughes announced that it was absolutely pure, that it contained no free salicylic acid and that in all respects it complied with the requirements of the British Pharmacopoeia. He granted Shmith, Nicholas & Co. a licence to make and sell aspirin in Australia.

Various technical problems still had to be overcome. Converting the powder into tablet form involved developing a special dry granulation process so that salicylic acid would not be released. The tablets were then punched out with the aid of a single hand-operated machine.

The product was initially sold as Nicholas-Aspirin but George, realizing that the name 'Aspirin' could be reclaimed by Bayer after the war, sought his own trade mark. In April 1917 the name 'Aspro' was adopted and registered.

The war had seriously upset Alfred's business and as George needed assistance they agreed to work together. Physically frail and short of formal schooling as a result of poor health, Alfred none the less brought ambition and tenacity to the infant drug firm. By the end of 1917, the business was carrying heavy debts and losing so much money that Shmith pulled out.

In 1921 the company changed its name from G. R. Nicholas & Co. to Nicholas Pty Ltd and moved from Windsor to larger premises in South Melbourne.

Throughout the 1920s it extended its operations. Manufacturing began in New Zealand in 1923. The first sales were made in England in 1924 and, despite initial heavy losses, Alfred, who had moved there temporarily with his family, launched an English company, Aspro Ltd, in 1927. In 1935 it became a public company. Expansion into Europe began in 1925 and into Asia in 1927.

Success enabled both Alfred and George to lavishly endow the public. Many large gifts were made, often anonymously, chiefly to Wesley College and Methodist Ladies' College, to Melbourne hospitals and universities

throughout Australia.

Charities as diverse as the Missions to Seamen and the Lord Mayor's Camp at Somers benefited from their interest and generosity.

By 1934, the constant strain of expansion was telling on Alfred's health.

He was totally committed to the business, dominant and intolerant of others not equally committed. This created strains with management and of necessity with George who had largely left business management with Alfred. Increasingly Alfred devoted himself more to his horticultural and agricultural interests.

He had established gardens at Carnbrea, Auburn, and Burnham Beeches, Sassafras, for which he imported seedlings and shrubs and also the staff to tend them.

In later years Burnham Beeches was divided—the house used as a research and development centre by the company and a substantial portion of the garden, now known as the Alfred Nicholas Memorial Gardens, donated to the local shire.

Owner of a prize-winning Jersey herd, in 1934 he provided funds to the council of the Royal Agricultural Society for a new cattle pavilion and was made a life governor of the society.

Alfred had married Isabel Lorden Cook at Balwyn on 11 September 1915; they had a son and a daughter. He died of coronary vascular disease at Burnham Beeches on 26 February 1937 and was buried in Brighton cemetery.

His estate was valued for probate at almost £827,000. It was estimated that he and his brother George had donated more than £500,000 to charities and educational institutions.

Rev. (Sir) Irving Benson described Alfred as 'a man of simple Christian character and princely generosity'.

On Alfred's death, George became managing director and took a more active part in the business.

Before his retirement in 1947, he saw it expand and diversify into production of vitamin supplements, veterinary goods, and pharmaceuticals, initially for war use.

His last official appearance was to open the large, new Aspro headquarters at Chadstone in 1957.

In 1969 Nicholas Australia Ltd bought the English Aspro-Nicholas Ltd and in 1970 it became Nicholas International Ltd, selling in over one hundred countries.

In 1981 the company merged with Kiwi International Ltd.

Like his brother, George had wide interests.

He was a keen horticulturist and his garden at Mount

Macedon is recognized as one of the best collections of rare plants in the country.

His horses, from his Shirley Park stud at Woodend, won many big races and he was a committee member of the Victoria Racing Club in 1941-60.

An example of his extended help to others was the purchase in 1933, with Herbert Brookes, of 2000 acres (809 ha) of land carrying valuable mountain-ash trees at Noojee, to provide forestry work for many hundreds of unemployed youths.

Brookes described him as one of the most notable philanthropists of his generation.

George had married Ruby Dorcas Campbell (d.1926) at Hawthorn, on 12 November 1912; they had two sons and two daughters.

At Wesley Church, Melbourne, on 14 March 1936 he married Shirley Austin Alcock, by whom he had a son and a daughter.

In 1944 he was appointed C.B.E.

Survived by his wife and children, George Nicholas died in St Vincent's Hospital, Fitzroy, on 20 September 1960, and was cremated.

His estate was valued for probate at over £2 million.

Source Citation:

John M. Wall, 'Nicholas, Alfred Michael (1881-1937)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/nicholas-alfred-michael-7836/text13607>, published first in hardcopy 1988, accessed online 20 January 2026.

This article was published in hardcopy in Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 11, (Melbourne University Press), 1988

In 1991, the company sold the land in Chadstone. Harvey Norman, Officeworks and Chadstone Village now occupy the site.

George Nicholas had a son Lindsay who at one stage was married to Hephzibah Menuhin – the concert pianist - they had two sons.

Hephzibah spent most of the 1940s in Australia, rearing her two sons, Kronrod and Marston, and performing at concerts.

Wesley College alumni may remember them.

Hephzibah Menuhin once held a ball at her 'Terrinallum' property in the Western District and with the proceeds bought books and took these to district schools.

In 1954, the travelling school library became the Western District Children's Library.

After World War II, Hephzibah's marriage to Lindsay Nicholas ended.

She married Vienna-born sociologist Richard Hauser and their daughter, Clara, was born in 1956; they later moved to England.

Lindsay's daughter, Nola, married Yehudi Menuhin in 1938 – the violinist - sister of Hephzibah - they had two children.

Later, Nola married Anthony Williams and Yehudi Menuhin married ballerina Diana Gould.



# CORNISH TIDBITS

## Cornish language officially granted Part III status

The Cornish language has been officially recognized under Part III of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

Having initially been protected under Part II of the Charter since 2002, the intervening 24 years has seen a resurgence of the use of Kernewek in everyday life.

It means Kernewek enjoys the same level of promotion as all the other Celtic languages recognized across the British Isles, including Welsh Manx and Gaelic.

The recognition is the culmination of many years of work by Cornwall Council, MPs, community groups and cultural organizations to ensure the language plays a key role in life in Cornwall.

Member of Parliament for St Ives, **Andrew George**, said: *“Pur da! Spladn! This is such wonderful news for Cornwall. We’ve come so far since I took our campaign around five Government departments in the late 1990s, until Ministers realized we weren’t going away. With the Cornish language community, we successfully fought to secure official recognition in 2002. Alongside our success in securing national minority status in 2014, Cornwall’s distinctiveness, language and cultural history has come a long way. This further enhanced status will amplify Cornish pride.*

*“I remember being the first to speak Cornish in Parliament with my opening remarks in my maiden speech in May 1997. It caused quite a stir then. But now it’s considered a norm. I was then proud to introduce the Cornish oath when swearing in to the 2005 Parliament, but now it’s used by all our MPs, and with pride. Though fluent speakers are few, that doesn’t undermine the significance of this important further recognition. “For me, this is not driven by a desire to cut Cornwall off or to become insular. Quite the opposite. It is all about cutting Cornwall into the celebration of diversity in a wider world and contributing effectively to that international celebration.”*

Member of Parliament for Camborne and Redruth, **Perran Moon**, said:

*“Many in Cornwall have long coveted Cornish language Part III status, placing it on a par with all other Celtic languages. We have now had the welcome confirmation that, following this Government’s request, the Council of Europe has approved Part III status for the Cornish language.*

*“I have already personally asked the Prime Minister this week to consider the obligations inferred from Part III*

*status and in particular the changes required to allow anyone that wishes to learn Cornish to do so.*

*“This is yet another example of this Labour Government’s commitment to protecting the culture, language and heritage of Cornwall and comes after the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Steve Reed MP, confirmed last month that Cornwall will receive a bespoke devolution deal that recognizes our national minority status.”*

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/council-news/environment-culture-and-planning/cornish-language-officially-granted-part-iii-status/>

## Cornwall to receive close to zero government funding

Cornwall has gone from receiving around £100m of funding a year from the European Union over five years ago to “effectively zero” this year now that the Government’s post-Brexit replacement Shared Prosperity Fund comes to an end in March.

Cornwall Council’s cabinet member for economic regeneration and funding has said that “at best” the Duchy will now receive around £10m a year if the new Kernow Industrial Growth Fund is considered part of the Government’s structural funding aid for Cornwall, though that will only target specific sectors and is for a limited period.

Cornwall is one of the poorest regions in the UK and Northern Europe, often ranking as the second poorest after West Wales, due to low wages, reliance on seasonal work, a high cost of living, a housing crisis and a struggling local economy outside of tourism.

Due to its economic status, Cornwall received Objective One funding from the EU to the tune of around £100m a year from 2000 to 2006.

Cornwall continued to receive the same high level of EU funding under new names (Convergence and Transitional programmes) with funding cycles agreed before Brexit and continuing through to 2020.

When the EU funding stopped, the then Conservative government stepped in to help with the annual Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), with Cornwall receiving around half the amount it had previously.

However, the Labour government has not renewed SPF, with the current tranche of funding coming to an end at the end of March, leaving Cornwall largely reliant on itself to boost its economy.

The new £30 million Kernow Industrial Growth Fund, which was announced in the last Budget, will

be a boost for Cornwall but it will only be invested in areas such as critical minerals, renewable energy and marine innovation over the next two financial years to 2028.

The current Liberal Democrat / Independent cabinet at Cornwall Council is working to establish an Evergreen Fund of repayable grants, with £35m earmarked over the next three years, in a bid to plug some of the gap left for community funding in light of the loss of SPF.

<https://www.falmouthpacket.co.uk/news/25801496.cornwall-receive-close-zero-government-funding/>

### **Is Gorette the worst storm to hit the South West?**

David Braine Senior Broadcast Meteorologist states:

I have been studying the weather since 1982 and as you can imagine have seen a fair amount of bad conditions from snow to torrential rain and of course more recently our named storms.

With widespread damage caused by Storm Gorette on 8 January, how does it compare to others I have covered in the South West and Channel Islands, and those before my time?

The most memorable perhaps is the 'Great Storm of 1987', this was before storms were named which started in the winter season of 2015/2016.

On the night of the 15th October 1987 and into the following morning the winds across the South West peaked at 98mph at Jersey Airport.

It has been referred to as the worst storm since the Great Storm of 1703 and described as a once in 200 year event.

In 1703 there were not that many actual wind speed reports, rather the records illustrating the damage caused, including the weakening of a brand new lighthouse on the Eddystone rock south of Plymouth, which was swept away two weeks later with a loss of all hands in another storm.

Another storm on 25th and 26th October 1859 had sustained winds over 73mph, or hurricane strength. There are not precise records as to how strong the gusts of wind were but they were estimated to be close to 100mph.

A total of 133 ships were sunk during the storm and

another 90 badly damaged according to the Board of Trade records, and this led to the first gale warning service in the recently established Met Office.

In 1979, an 118mph gust hit Gwennap Head in Cornwall believed to be the strongest gust of wind since 1703.

Of course there have been many notable storms since 1987; the Burns Day storm of 25th January 1990 had gusts of wind of 107mph (93kts) at Gwennap Head, and 102mph (89kts) at RNAS Culdrose, with Plymouth at 96mph.

Ex hurricane 'Lily' gave a gust of wind of 90mph on 28th October 1996 in the Channel Islands.

More recently in early February 2014, a series of storms battered the South West, the fourth of which was on 4th and 5th February where there was widespread damage.

Both the Isles of Scilly and south Devon had gusts of wind in excess of 90mph and it had a huge impact with the railway line at Dawlish washed away and devastating floods across the Somerset Levels.

Storm Eunice on the 18th February 2022 had one of the strongest gusts of wind ever recorded in the UK at 122mph (106Kts) at Needles Old Battery (Isle of Wight) and 90mph (78Kts) at Isle of Portland in Dorset.

More recently Storm Ciaran on 1st and 2nd November 2023 with the devastation caused by 93mph gusts of wind in the Channel Islands, and the local Met Service issuing a red weather warning, schools and shops being closed and a major incident being declared.

In northern France, a reported 1.2 million people were without electricity.

On 6th and 7th December 2024, Storm Darragh brought a huge amount of disruption with gusts to 83Kt (96mph) at Berry Head, Devon.

Back to Storm Gorette and with peak winds of 99mph for the South West of England and the Channel Islands, it was not the worst storm ever.

In fact the description as to how bad a storm is must not just be about wind speed, but must include flooding, disruption, sadly the loss of life, and the impact to our daily lives.

If you base the assessment purely on wind gusts

then it's not as windy as the Burns Day storm of 1990, but Goretti had winds actually stronger than the Great Storm of 1987 and that of storms Eunice and Ciaran in the South West of England.

So in my opinion based just on wind gusts, Storm Goretti is in the top five of the most powerful storms in the South West on record with 1703, 1859, 1979, and the Burns Day storm of 1990 being stronger.

Perhaps the most sobering fact about our recent storms is that what was once a one in 200 year event is now far more frequent with some of our strongest storms on record being in the last 20 years.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/czejy201rleo>

Storm Chandra is the third major storm to hit the UK in January, arriving shortly after Ingrid and Goretti - the latter of which was described by the Met Office as among the most impactful to hit Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly in 30-35 years. People have been rescued, homes have been flooded and schools have been closed as Storm Chandra brought more heavy rain to Devon and Cornwall.

Flooding had been reported on train tracks between Exeter and Taunton, Taunton and Castle Cary and Newquay and Par, while services travelling through Dawlish were reduced due to the damage to the sea wall there. It partially collapsed and train services were suspended between Exeter St Davids and Plymouth during Storm Ingrid which also caused part of Teignmouth's historic pier to wash away.

### **Exciting new bee discovery on the North Cornwall coast**

Surveys undertaken by Buglife and the National Trust at Godrevy Farm, near Gwithian have led to the exciting discovery of the nationally scarce Red Bartsia Bee at the site.

Previously this bee had only been known from one other site in Cornwall where the first Cornish record for the bee in 20 years was made back in 2022.

The Red Bartsia Bee (*Melitta tricincta*) was found at Godrevy by local entomologist Paddy Saunders and Nick Holden from the National Trust.

This discovery is likely the direct result of conservation work undertaken by Buglife's North Cornwall B-Lines project in 2022 where the Red Bartsia plant was introduced to the site from seed harvested from a nearby farm.

Buglife's current project Kernow Wyls: People for Pollinators is made possible with the National

Lottery Heritage Fund. Thanks to National Lottery players, Buglife has been able to continue the collaboration with the National Trust at Godrevy and also work with other landowners across Cornwall; helping to further support pollinators. <https://www.buglife.org.uk/news/exciting-new-bee-discovery-on-the-north-cornwall-coast/>

### **National Highways finishing work on new A30 green bridge**

Final landscaping is taking place on a green bridge along the new A30 dual carriageway between Chiverton and Carland Cross.

Built by contractors Costain, the Marazanvose bridge was top soiled last summer.

The bridge is 49.3m long and 12.5m wide, spanning four lanes of new dual carriageway and two lanes of the old A30, now the B3288.

Planting took place just before Christmas to create a lush, wildlife-friendly crossing.

Two native hedgerows have been planted with species including hazel, hawthorn, holly, dog rose, elder, and wych elm - wildflower and grass seeding have also been included.

Further planting will take place this spring.

<https://www.falmouthpacket.co.uk/news/25764329.national-highways-finishing-work-new-a30-green-bridge/>

### **New Isles of Scilly freight ship begins sea trials**

A new freight vessel for the Isles of Scilly has started a series of tests as it prepares to come into service.

The Isles of Scilly Steamship Group (ISSG) said the *Menawethan* had entered the sea trials phase in Vietnam, where it would be tested in the South China Sea off the coast at Vung Tau.

The 45m (148ft) long ship has been built to replace the *Gry Maritha* and is due to start sailing to the islands later this year.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cn82q5d6vq6o>

Another Footy 9s photo shows Marcus Curnow with Kevin Sheedy (former Australian Rules footballer and coach)

