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Dear Members

What a strange Spring we have had this year weatherwise! At least here in Christchurch there were no strong winds to blow the blossom off our late flowering Cherry Tree and it's been particularly pretty this year.

In response to Elaine Bolitho's request in the last Newsletter, I have received the following email from Brisbane member Don Jamieson: "A follow-up to your very interesting newsletter just received. I too have wondered how my ancestors emigrating from Cornwall to New Zealand got to London, or, in their case, to the ship's departure point of Gravesend. John Jameson (as then spelt) was a seaman from the Shetland Islands, working on coastal shipping between Portreath and presumably Bristol, meeting his wife Jane née Lean in Portreath. They married in 1857. Jane's mother was a Tangye and her father Thomas Lean or Layne was apparently from Bristol, also meeting his wife Mary Tangye in Portreath. When they were to emigrate in 1865, with their three children (seven more were to be born in New Zealand) in the ship *Tudor* to Lyttelton, how would they have gone to their point of departure? Did the emigration authorities provide them with transport? They could, of course, have gone by rail, but there are no family stories about this, so we can only conjecture. I would certainly be very interested in any further information on this." Don's email address is jamieson@australiaonline.net.au

From the *Cornishman*: "Europe flies in with £24.3m for development at airport. Newquay Airport has received the second largest grant of any European airport, following a £24.3m cash injection. The money was approved by European Commission (EC) chiefs and will allow bosses to push ahead with the airport's massive expansion programme. The EC's approval saw money from convergence funding and the Objective One scheme matched with cash from Cornwall Council and the Regional Development Agency. Known as 'state aid approval', the EC said it gave the grant the green light after realising the long-term beneficial effects the airport has on the local economy. Chris Cain, project director at Newquay Airport, said: 'It demonstrates that they have the confidence in our team to be able to deliver on our goals and targets for the airport.'

However, Mr Cain said the money did not give them approval for mass building projects included in the airport master plan. 'This doesn't give us the green light to go out and build hotels and other new facilities,' he said. 'That is all separate and has to be worked through closely with individual business plans and through the normal planning process. What the money does allow us to do is to claim back some of that already spent on some aspects and then allow us to sit down and assess where we go forward from here. The funding process is somewhat bureaucratic but you can't do an awful lot without it.'

The cash does mean Newquay Airport has now secured £68m in total from various agencies for its development. And one immediate result of that cash boost could be the creation of more jobs. Mr Cain explained: 'We have inherited about 300,000 sq ft of buildings from the Ministry of Defence and we are now working to get these renovated and rented out to aviation businesses with the aim of creating more jobs.' The airport's master plan – released in December last year – outlined a host of potential developments. Included is a new terminal on the south side of the airport, an aviation training centre and a business park.

News of the funding approval has been welcomed by tourism and political leaders in Cornwall. Steve Gilbert, prospective parliamentary candidate for Newquay and St Austell, said: 'Newquay airport is a huge success story for Cornwall and a vital transport link for local people, businesses and visitors. It's great news that the future development of the airport now looks secure and this investment comes at the right time to be a real boost to the local economy.' And Malcolm Bell, chairman of South West Tourism, added: 'Developing the airport is about raising the profile of Cornwall. Even if people don't use the airport, they expect a major tourism destination to have a decent airport. We also need to open up the county to overseas visitors if we want to boost the local tourism economy.'

There has been much debate about including 'Cornish' as a tick-box for Country of Origin on the British Census Form. The Letters column of the *Cornishman* has been running hot with opinions for and against. James Cook from Cornwall writes: 'I just cannot understand it. There'll be Berkshire and Shropshire on there next. Cornwall, like Devon, is just a county. Get over it!!'

And the following week from GL of Marazion: 'Cornwall translates as something that is unique. I don't know, he discovers Australia and thinks he knows it all! Cornwall is a county – correct James, but, unlike Devon and every other county in England, it used to be a country with its own language, so perhaps that is why the Cornish never quite 'get over it'. As a former country, Cornwall is accorded the honour of having its name translated into other languages; Cornouaille (French), Cornualles (Spanish), Cornualha (Portuguese), Cornovaglia (Italian), Corn na Breataine (Irish). As for Berkshire, Shropshire and even Devon...well, other countries don't think they are worth the bother of a translation. Tells you something, doesn't it?' Personally, I have always thought that no other county in England describes its people as "ish" as in Scottish, Irish, Welsh and Cornish!! – Jean.

Cornwall Adventure May 2009 by Bill Trewheeler. Part 2.

"We have three pictures of Cornish scenes at home that have always been part of our life. They are Zennor, Porth Bay and St Michael's Mount. As we came to Marazion there suddenly was the 'Mount' towering proudly off the coast. It was low tide and the whole area around the causeway was quite dry. The two workmen, who were plastering between the old cobbles, told us that all the original stones were being re-laid on concrete. After a pleasant walk across we watched a film outlining the Mount's history. The Priory was built by monks in the 11th century and was an important place of medieval pilgrimage. It was under siege during the War of Roses and the Civil War. Since 1659 the St Aubyn family have lived in the ex-priory, which has been having major repairs for the last five years.

Time slipped by as we climbed the hill and explored the castle-like buildings with wonderful views from the battlements. They proudly fly the flag of Cornwall. Semi-tropical plants, natives and veggies flourish. On the sheltered side is a classic Cornish harbour. Once the tide is starting to cover the causeway a motor boat ferries visitors to and fro. I was rather keen to paddle our way across, so we set off with the water just covering our bare feet. We were relieved when we got to the shore as the sea was now up to our knees!

There was a gentle rain falling as we drove back to the quaint harbour town, Porthleven. It was time to explore 'The Lizard.' The A3083 runs the length of the peninsular to Lizard Point. It is very narrow with hedges right to the road edge. You pass through the tiny town and out to the point, to be greeted by a 'pay and display'! A wonderful rugged coast with tiny souvenir shops tucked amongst the cliff tops. Local serpentine rock jewellery was for sale.

Back to historic Helston. It's 800 years since King John granted the town its first royal charter and borough status, one of the first in G. Britain. It was an important 'Stannery' Town [dealing with the mined tin]. By the town was the 'Wheal Vor' tin mine, the world's largest. Two famous sons are Bob Fitzsimmons, world champion boxer in three weight divisions and Henry Trengrouse, breeches buoy inventor [For saving shipwrecked sailors.] In 1302 the Loe Bar sand bank silted up the river and cut Helston's access to the sea forever.

Flora Day dawned cold and overcast but the rain had eased. A brisk walk to the Helston Guild Hall warmed us up. People were gathering, from toddlers in push chairs to the elderly with walkers. It is still only 6.15 am but already there is a buzz of excitement. The time flew by as we chatted with the locals who were thrilled we had come from New Zealand to see their Furry dance. There were now thousands of people lining the streets. At the stroke of 7.0 the brass band dressed in blue and black struck up the floral dance tune and the hundreds of dancers appeared from the Guild Hall. The women in colourful frocks and men in black trousers with white shirt and tie. Cameras clicked, the famous dance had begun. The dance is processional, men on the women's left. The couples twirl, change partners, twirl, back to original partner, twirl and then progress up the street with rhythmic steps. The dancers enter several houses, shops and gardens - in one door and out another. The dance origins are pre-Christian and celebrate legends, people, events and the arrival of spring. People wear Lily of The Valley as the symbolic flower. The houses and shops are decorated with greenery and flowers and the streets are closed to traffic. The second dance, 'The Hal and Tow', started at 8.30 and is very different to the other dances. Pagan in origin they dress in medieval costumes and carry strange effigies on poles. There is a lot of rowdy chanting as they progress through the town, stopping at six locations to sing the song which is probably from Elizabethan times. The band does not participate.

We returned to the B.B. where our hosts had prepared celebratory food and a Lily of The Valley posy for each guest. Back to town and this time we stood at the corner of Meneage St and Trengrouse Way where the dancers turn and retrace their steps. The children's dance [one of the most popular] started at 9.50. Twelve hundred girls and boys from five years old to school leavers all immaculate in white, with tie or sash in one of the four school colours. The gods [and Piskies] were smiling on Helston, for by now the sun was shining brightly. The children were happy and proud as they danced along. The day is never cancelled because of rain and the children also insist on dancing in the rain. The midday dance is very grand with hundreds of dancers. The women wearing long brightly coloured gowns and huge hats, with the men in morning suits and top hats. They danced through the town ably led by the Mayor, with his gold chain flashing in the sun. The dancers paused for lunch, and then continued later. This was our chance to work our way into the busy 15th century 'Blue Anchor' pub [with brewery out the back] to sample their 'Spingo Real Ale' as well as an award winning 'Horse and Jockey' Cornish pasty. Had we died and gone to heaven? Maybe St Michael [Helston's patron saint] was looking after us! The evening dance was at 5.0pm with the dancers dressed as they were for the morning dance. We marvelled at the stamina of the dancers, band members and helpers who made it all so memorable. The happy day was rounded off with a meal at the Chinese restaurant just up from the museum in Wendron St, near where Bob Fitzsimons was born. Linda and her lovely waitresses all young enough to be our granddaughters thoroughly spoilt us."

From Nigel Pengelly, editor of Cornish World: "Anyone watching the Cornish-based ITV comedy drama Doc Martin will have sighted a copy of Cornish World lurking in Doc Martin's waiting room! The Doc has good taste even if there aren't that many local accents in the award-winning programme."

The subject of Cornish Hedges has cropped up several times in my reading recently. From the *Cornishman*: "Jethro observes would-be hedgers. Cornish comedian Jethro has been keeping a watchful eye on a team of apprentice hedgers attempting to revitalise the ancient skill. On Friday afternoon, 14 would-be hedgers were put through a practical examination at Joppa Farm, Joppa, St Just, to demonstrate that the craft is set for a bright future for years to come. For centuries, Cornwall's landscape has been shaped and defined by Cornish hedges. However the craft of building these unique structures has been threatened by modern building tech-niques and, as a result, the Guild of Cornish Hedgers secured Heritage Lottery funding and established an apprentice scheme which

will train 40 apprentices in a bid to ensure the survival of a valuable part of Cornwall's heritage.

Friday's test was for those apprentices who had already completed an intensive 10-day course in order to demonstrate that they could build to the standard set by the guild. Each apprentice was given a section of hedge about one metre long to build and when completed, the hedge was examined by an independent judge. But the day was no laughing matter for Jethro, who is the son of a champion Cornish Hedger. He told the *Cornishman*: 'It has been a good day and the great thing is that some of them build very strong and neat hedges that won't fall down and will last thousands of years. Even though the stone they have used wasn't the best, they have done really well and it has been a joy to be part of it. My father was a great hedger but I am just talking through his eyes and say what he would have said.' Following the day the great comedian was left confident that the ancient skill will not perish. 'With programmes like this it will not disappear – this is the best thing I have seen for years,' he continued, adding that he was proud that the skill his father practiced more than 50 years ago was still copied today.

Each apprentice will now have to undertake an additional 40 days of supported practice before they can claim to be Cornish Hedgers. During this period, they will be regularly assessed by the Guild. Spokesman, Will Tremayne, added: 'It has been a good day. Some of them have been working with hedges for a while, so they are quicker than others, but they are all coming along.'

And the theme is continued in the following week's *Cornishman* in Mike Sagar-Fenton's Country Byways column: "Last week's article showing Jethro judging a hedge-building competition reminded me of one of the most skilled men I've ever met. Eminent as Jethro is in his field, (not to mention the other Rowe brothers) it was their father Hugh Rowe who will live longest in my memory. I met him when I moved to a dilapidated farmhouse and wanted to fit a Rayburn cooker. Sticking out right in the way was a spur of rock which also supported the kitchen wall and I could not think of a way to remove it. Hugh turned up, built rather like a granite boulder himself, round, solid and still strong, although he was already semi-retired. He used his strength with thought and care and even guile, rather than throwing himself at the task with brute force as I might have done. He looked at the offending lump of granite for a long time from many angles before saying 'Yes I think I can cleave that for you.'

The kitchen then rang for hours as he painstakingly drilled a succession of holes, as granite men have done over the ages (you can often see the round markings in lintel-stones, etc). Then the exciting part as he filled them with 'feathers', thin shards of iron, dressed precisely in the required direction, tapped them until they filled the hole tightly and then began to 'play' them in earnest. They sounded like bells, rising up the scale the more tightly they were wedged. The trick was to use the sound in order to check that the stresses were evenly applied. Then suddenly he struck a feather hard and sound was no longer musical, a cracked bell. A running crack had joined the feathered holes and a moment later the granite slab fell away from the wall exactly as planned.

After that I asked Hugh to put up a re-taining hedge for me. I didn't know at that point that he was a bard of hedge-building, probably the foremost Cornish hedger of his time. But I saw the result which stands there still, even and straight, but because it is on a sloping site, it has six courses at one end and only four at the other. I looked at it for years but I never could see exactly where those courses merged."

And from *County Life* by Mark Griffiths: "Some say a 'Cornish hedge' is a free-standing bank of soil whose sides are re-inforced with rocks. Others say it's a double-layered stone

wall whose cavity and fissures are filled with earth. The result looks the same to me either way. The stones involved are usually granite boulders and/or wedges of slate. The soil is that magical mixture of silty clay, sandy loam and moorland peat in which the Duchy abounds. It sounds like a strangely linear and perpendicular rock garden and that's what Cornish hedges soon become. Sometimes they're given a helping hand, with conventional hedges planted atop them. More often than not however, the furnishings are left to Nature – a peculiarly generous and eclectic planter hereabouts. The hedges' crests and slopes are swiftly colonised by native species and garden escapees, in-digenous and exotic cohering in casual plant communities that are among the greatest beauties of the Cornish landscape.....”

Taranaki News: There were 20 members present at the meeting on Saturday 8th August, held at the CAB Lounge. It was noted that the arrival of a new grandson for Ray and Lesley Barkla was not as important as attending a Cornish Meeting. Part way through the proceedings in walked Shirley and Ed James. Ed addressed the meeting on his activities since leaving New Plymouth. The speaker for the afternoon was Graham Cowling who told us of his family's migration from Cornwall to New Zealand and settlement in New Plymouth. He also described the gifting of 7 acres of land to the city and now known as Cowling Park, complete with a grove of Kauri trees. The November meeting will be held as a picnic day at a private garden and all ages have been invited. November 7th had better be fine!

It never rains but it pours except when Taranaki Cornish folk have their November (cum Christmas) meeting. The meeting took place on 7th November in glorious sunshine at the residence of Ted and Judy Barnes. After a short business session, we had free range of a 2½ acre sub-alpine garden, complete with a miniature garden train the wended its way through the whole area, followed by afternoon tea.

Christchurch News: The meeting on Saturday 12th September was held at the Aldersgate Lounge, the 42nd birthday of the formation of the Christchurch Branch. The President opened the meeting with 26 members present. Apologies were received from Dorothy Drew, Ida Hocking, Joy Anderson, Marie Barker, Mac Reynolds, Sue Gilbert, Paddy Welsh, Judy Asalache, Pamela Maw, Ida & Naylor Hillary, Heather Gladstone, Chris & Ian Clarke, Noeline Frazer and Joan Page.

The President announced that two members of the Christchurch Branch had received awards at the Cornish Gorsedd held on 5th September at Saltash. Jean Harry, the National Secretary/Treasurer, has been awarded the Paul Smales Medallion for outstanding service to Cornish folk and interests by a Cornish person living outside of Cornwall. Christchurch Branch Secretary, Les Mitchell, became a Bard of the Cornish Gorsedd for service in the promotion of Cornwall in New Zealand. Les has been Branch Secretary for over 39 years and has taken the Bardic name of “Myghal of Porthysak” or Mitchell of Port Isaac. The President presented Les with a Badge showing his Bardic name and the shield of the NZCA.

President Val gave us our 5th lesson in the Cornish Language and seems to be pleased with our progress. Les had news from Cornwall and later told us a few facts about Cornwall which we might not have known. Alan, Jean, Graham and Val all contributed items to the afternoon's entertainment before Les and Jean cut the Birthday cake and the singing of 'Hail to the Homeland' and 'Trelawny' accompanied by Graham on the piano. During the afternoon tea, the raffle was drawn and among the winners were John Moulton, Pam Barnett, Les Mitcgell, John Macdonald and Dallas Dunham.

The meeting on Saturday 10th October was held at Aldersgate Lounge, commencing at 2pm. The President welcomed 26 members and guest speakers Warwick and Alison

Mottram. Apologies were received from Dorothy Drew, Lynne Squire, Marie Barker, Pamela Maw, Paddy Welsh, Judy Asalache, Frieda Looser, Heather Gladstone, Ida Hocking, Cherry & Colin Hill, Mac Reynolds & Sue Gilbert, Ida & Naylor Hillary, Chris Clarke and Vivienne Good. On behalf of all members, the President offered our congratulations to Rosemary and John Moulton on their upcoming Golden Wedding Anniversary on 31st October. We gave our best wishes to President Val for her hip operation next week. **President Val pointed out to members that the car park at the back of the Church is available for members on the day of the meetings. The notice about 'unauthorised vehicles being towed away' is only operative Monday to Friday and double parking is permitted in appropriate places.** Val gave us our 6th lesson in the Cornish language with questions and answers on the weather. Les gave his report on Cornish happenings over the past month.

Warwick and Alison Mottram took us on a journey to Cornwall that started in Lincolnshire and Staffordshire to catch up with relatives. London was the next stop, going up in the London Eye for views across the city and exploring the walk along the Regents Canal to the park and 'Little Venice'; by rental car to Devon, staying in B&Bs and visiting Totnes for the street market and the historic towns of Dartmouth and Salcombe; into Cornwall to see Polperro and Looe, the biodomes of the Eden Project, with their displays of plants from the tropics and Mediterranean areas; St Michael's Mount, Mousehole, St Ives and a trip down the river Fal, with many large ships laid up because of the recession; the Lost Gardens of Heligan, formerly owned by the Tremayne family and reclaimed from a wilderness by Tim Smit who was the creator of the Eden Project, were also visited. As it was June, the place was very busy with tourists. The Cornish visit ended via a stop at Tintagel, then on to Clovelly en route to Northumberland, a boat trip to Innisfarne to see the wild life, particularly the Puffins and the gardens at Alnwick Castle, where this section of their holiday finished. Warwick and Alison illustrated their talk with some very good photography.

During Afternoon Tea, the raffle was drawn and among the winners were John Macdonald, Jean Piper, Margaret Swanney, Cedric Trounson, David King and Pat Jeffrey. **Our next meeting, our Christmas Party, will be on Saturday 5th December, not the usual second Saturday of the month.**

This is the last Newsletter for the year and so I will finish with this Cornish greeting: Nadelik Lowen Ha Blydhen Nowydh Da.

Regards

Jean