



Letter from the Chair

I do hope you all enjoyed your quiet and reflective Christmas. If nothing else, it has certainly made me appreciate how lucky I have been with Christmas celebrations in the past. Thank goodness we have the telephone to keep in touch with loved ones, and some, (not me) are probably able to 'Zoom' them as well.

This pandemic has made me reflect on how people managed in past generations, before the invention of so-called modern technology. Imagine living during the great plague of the Middle Ages and being told to stay indoor and not leave your home? With no water 'on tap' in your house, how would you have managed if there was no well in your courtyard. Did the local authorities arrange to leave food and water outside your front door each day or did your neighbours help out? On the basis of '*what goes in must come out*', was the night soil collected from outside contaminated houses or was it deemed to be too dangerous, and left to build up? It is easy to lose sight of how recently the flush toilet and running water have been the norm in our homes. We also lose sight of how easy it is to keep 6 months supply of food in our freezer and deep freeze and in tins in our larder. As for cooking and keeping warm before electricity and gas, how did our C15 forefathers have wood delivered during the plague if they had no outside space to make a large stack? Many old cottages in our towns and villages still don't have any outside space around them on which to store things, and, as the late 19th century Sanitary Inspector's reports reveal, many households still had to keep all the waste water etc. in buckets within

NEWSLETTER

February 2021

Our Place on the Internet

www.calh.co.uk

Email us at

calhnewsletter@gmail.com

CALH AGM AND TALK SATURDAY 6 MARCH 2021

10:30 a.m.-

Due to the Covid Pandemic this year's AGM and talk will be conducted entirely via ZOOM. Read on to learn how to join in.

CALH Zoom AGM 2021 will be followed by a talk presented by *Dr. Todd Gray, Honorary Life Member of the Association.* **"Veronica Chesher, founding member of CALH and enthusiastic advocate for the history of Cornwall"**

The Talk is a celebration of the 40th Anniversary of CALH (1981 – 2021)

In order to take part in these events you will need to ensure our incoming Secretary, Lesley McCartney, has your up-to-date e-mail address. If you did not receive details of a recent ZOOM talk, in January 2021, this would be because Lesley did not have these details. lesleymccartney@btinternet.com - **by 28 February 2021**

A link to Zoom will be sent to your email address a few days in advance.

The AGM will start at 10:30am. You can access the link from 10:15am and go into the waiting room.

The talk will begin at 11:30am. We hope this will give sufficient time for a short break between the formal business and talk.

Marilyn Thompson, Spring Conference Sec.

Letter From the Chair continued

the house until the Scavengers came round with their cart. In Polperro, in 1892, it was reported that the inhabitants preferred to empty their waste into the river that runs through the village, rather than wait for the scavengers. However, in their defence it was stated that this activity was only carried on after dark! If you haven't yet looked at the sanitary reports for your area, put it on your list of things to do when you are able to make use of the Record Office again.



On a brighter note, I was delighted to hear on the news the other week that Taylor's of Loughborough, the last remaining Bell Foundry in the country, has been awarded £3.45 million pounds from the Heritage Lottery Fund to go towards the 7 million pounds worth of restoration and development the company have undertaken. I visited the factory in 2012, and, as you can see, the Health and Safety facilities were fairly basic at that time. Having said that, it is a place that is well worth visiting, although when it reopens to the public, I suspect we will no longer be roaming quite so freely across the working factory floor. In the mid 14th century bells were being cast just 10 miles from this present site, which is in the centre of Leicester. The Taylor family had become bell-founders by 1784 and in 1859 they moved to their present site.

As I have said in past letters, up until now I have found it hard to work on my computer and have spent most of my time in the garden. As we neared Christmas, and the garden got wetter and colder, I began to get ideas of articles I could write for various organisations, first in line naturally being one for CALH. Having pondered on, and selected a subject, I collected what notes I had made and opened a new folder on the computer. I hadn't got very far before I felt that what I was writing all seemed very familiar to me. I had already checked in my folder containing previous CALH articles so was pretty certain I hadn't already written an article on the Herodsfoot Gunpowder works, so pressed on. But the feeling grew stronger so I checked in the CALH Index. At first, I couldn't find any article on that subject by me but to make doubly sure I then

checked through the whole list for anything written by me and there it was!!! An article written in 2000 but indexed under 'Lobb', the name of the manager of the East Cornwall Gunpowder Works and the chap I had written about. Goodness knows why there isn't a copy of the article in my file but it just goes to show you should never ignore a hunch!! I am now about to start work on another article for the May journal so fingers crossed I haven't already written on my new subject which I think I will be called '*A Matter of Opinion*'

I do hope those of you who Zoomed Todd's talk in January enjoyed it. It is very frustrating not being able to join in, and I am really grateful that Lesley Trotter has been chairing the committee meetings for me. I am trying to contact my computer chap to see if he can get me Zooming without having to come into my home to sort the computer out. Fingers crossed I will be Zooming with you by the AGM.

We none of us know how jabs will work out so at present any dates we give you for CALH events will be provisional. The safety of our members is paramount but also, we must take into consideration the safety of people living in the area of one of our outdoor visits. As for the indoor conferences, it is hoped the Autumn one will go ahead but Marilyn and I have agreed not to get in touch with the hotel in Newquay until April, by which time we should have a better idea of what is going on. Details etc. will be put in the May Journal but it is unlikely we will be holding any outdoor meetings before July at the earliest. As I have already said I am happy to organise the next Autumn conference (whenever it is held) but we do need someone to take on the job of organising that day in the future., so please think about it and let the committee know if you could take it on. It's only one event a year and we would all give you ideas for subject and speakers etc. Stay safe and let's hope we can meet up sometime this summer.

Your Chairperson, Carole Vivian
Tel: (01503)272309

CORNWALL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL HISTORIANS

A ZOOM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held at 10.30am on Saturday, 6 March, 2021

A G E N D A

Lesley Trotter, Vice-Chairman, in the Chair and Zoom Controller

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the previous AGM
3. Matters Arising
4. Chairman's General Report, including membership, events and Autumn Conference
5. Hon Treasurer - To receive Financial Report
6. Rates of Subscription –
Annual approval required
£15 for ordinary members
£25 for joint members
£25 for corporate members
7. Other Reports
Spring Conference Secretaries
Vice-Chairman
Website
Editor of the Journal
8. Election of Officers and Committee
These Officers may be elected en bloc:

Chairman	Carole Vivian
Vice-Chairman & Facebook	Lesley Trotter
Hon Treasurer	Hugh Hedderly
Hon Secretary	Lesley McCartney
Membership Secretary	Barbara Brown
Spring Conference Secretaries	Marilyn & Ian Thompson
Autumn Conference Secretary 2022	<u>Vacant</u>
Events Secretary	Lyn May
Editor of the Journal	Jeremy Rowett Johns
Website Manager	Deborah Pate

These Committee Members may be elected en bloc:

Hilary and John Ballard and Deborah Tritton
(for Kresen Kernow)

Committee member

not standing for re-election: Joan Webb

9 Any Other Business

At the conclusion of the Zoom AGM, there will be a short break. Following the break, the meeting will continue at 11.30am with a talk by Dr Todd Gray, entitled: *“Veronica Chesher, founding member of CALH and enthusiastic advocate for the history of Cornwall”*

**Coming to Cornwall
The next G7**

The Tregenna Castle Hotel in Carbis Bay, Cornwall, is to be the venue for the G7 Summit from June 11 to 13. G7 countries are made up of UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the USA as well as an EU representative. Leaders from Australia, India and South Korea have been invited to attend as guest countries. Wow! That will give Cornwall exposure -- if the pandemic will allow!

Joan Webb

**More Cornish Travellers’
Tales & Mass Observation,
1939 – 45**

On 8th January 2021 CALH proffered their first Zoom lecture. All went well and below is a summary.

Dr Todd Gray gave an interesting account of life in Cornwall during the war years. Using the Mass Observations accounts he gave us some insights into everyday life. Bits and pieces detailing actions and private thoughts of Cornish men and women. These were the ordinary lives of ordinary people.

The presentation began with pictures of Tintagel, Morwenstow, St Kew, Bodmin, Falmouth, St Michael’s Mount, Bude, and St Austell. Cornwall has more than its fair share of images, not least owing to the number of working artists, whether they be resident or visitor. In 1809 a traveller observed that the Cornish were ‘better pleased and happier than most’.

At the Post Office in Launceston in 1939 no one had anything tangible to say with the situation being very complicated. A woman shopkeeper wrote that she dashed around doing everything in the shop, then cooked tea, whilst her husband did nothing except visit the barber and do the shopping. It was clear that tourism still featured with many visitors frequenting holiday destinations.
continued overleaf

Tourists caused queues in Falmouth mostly buying up stationery, newspapers

and magazines. Some visitors drove a car to reach Cornwall. Others caught the train to Penzance, changing at St Erth for St Ives. Around Christmas, the Bishop of Truro suggested that the locals invite soldiers into their home to spend a few hours. George and Joe from Malvern enjoyed a dinner and a bath in Truro before catching the lorry back to their nearby camp.

One visitor said he was constantly full due to his continual eating. A Boscastle resident wrote that there was too much food available. In Falmouth there was a glut of mackerel and lobsters but stockings were unavailable. War was not discussed much; people being fed up with the whole thing. As the years wore on, views were changing. Youths were mixing too often with the girls. With the blessing of the Rector, a Youth Club was formed in the village, but the live jazz band's music which encouraged questionable dancing was unacceptable to parents. The Rector noted that there was atheism in all British parishioners. Reincarnation was a topic but the favourite subject was the weather. There was a distinct shortage of men and ultimately fishing suffered as men were called up and did not take out boats. Houses after the war were in short supply and very dear. People wanted to move to Cornwall. Storage units were full of evacuees' furniture but it was felt no one could be trusted to protect belongings from damage or theft.

Did these people realise at the time that they were creating history by going about their everyday lives? They wrote their thoughts and reflections which they probably would not have voiced publicly. Dr Gray told us that Mass Observation is still used today. If this talk got you thinking that you might want to know more, you can find a wealth of information online by searching Mass Observation.

Lesley McCartney, Hon Secretary

The Royal British Legion celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2021

BALH members are proud to be helping with an exciting local history project, *'Telling Our Story'*, to commemorate this major landmark.

Having been a membership-based organisation since its creation, the local branches are the stalwarts of the Legion's history. These branches are filled with members and volunteers who have raised money and supported their local communities since 1921 and continue to do so today.

We want to know how all these wonderful people came to be involved with the Legion, what they do for the organisation, their highlights, their heart-warming stories, and see their photos and memorabilia that showcase their amazing work.

We hope that the BALH members and all other local historians can help the Legion to piece these stories together. The submissions will be compiled into a digital library to celebrate all that these people have done and allow their stories to be known for another 100 years.

Some will be inspirational stories of individuals or momentous occasions but equally we want to hear the everyday stories of work done by members, fundraisers, staff and volunteers for the Legion day in and day out.

This project focuses on what these individuals, branches and teams have contributed to their communities as part of the Legion. We therefore ask you to put your research and story-telling skills to good use to uncover these people's stories and help to put them down into a structured format, or even a video / audio file, so that they may be appreciated and never forgotten. It could be a big story of amazing achievement and long-service, *Continued overleaf*

a short, simple story of good times as a part of the Legion.

For many members, volunteers and fundraisers their stories span years, if not decades, so telling their story may be daunting to them. They may not know where to begin or think that their stories are relevant. We want to make one thing very clear - each submission is relevant.

If you would like to get involved, please email us at tellingourstory@britishlegion.org.uk. Please also use this email address to send your submissions.

Joan Webb



Study Days Update

I am very sorry to say that study days are to be in abeyance to at least the middle of 2021. I am hoping with the vaccinations coming in that there might be a chance of meeting up this year, but as you all understand we are living in a world, that really have no answers for us.

I am very keen to move forward, as I took on the role in 2020 but with the pandemic, no visits have been able to be done. I will be getting in contact when hopefully this change will come about.

Please keep safe as I really looking forward to meeting up with you again.

Regards,

Lyn May, Events Secretary

Contributions from CALH Members

In anticipation that Covid 19 will still be around in the spring and summer months; putting outings and events on hold please keep your articles coming. Consider sharing what you have been doing or reading, or a short story or article of 300 words or less for the August Newsletter.

Please send your items to:

calhnewsletter@gmail.com

by July 1, 2021

Editor: Marion Stephens-Cockroft.

Bankers in Launceston

I was greatly interested in Carol Bunbury's announcement in the last Newsletter of *Profiles of Launceston People*, as there was a flurry of banking activity in the town in the years around 1810 - none of it very long-lasting. It began with Kelly, Eastcott and Lang forming the Tamar Bank in 1806; and venturing a branch in Liskeard the following year. Hill & Co commenced operations in 1808 and Cudlipp & Co in 1809. Cudlipp, Browne, Harvey & Hill then got together in 1810; and shortly after everyone merged as Kelly, Lang, Cooke, Cudlipp, Browne & Hill - but it all broke up in 1811.

George Francis Collins Browne and John Hill then went on to begin a Launceston branch of the North Cornwall Bank (which failed in 1823); while Emanuel Harvey & Son formed a Launceston Bank (which became bankrupt in the great financial crisis of 1825).

A more enduring new Launceston Bank was started by Richard Dingley in 1855, with banking experience; his partners were all solicitors - his son-in-law Edward Pethybridge, with John Dingley and George Graham White. Their enterprise, with several branches, was the last surviving independent Cornish bank in 1922, when it was taken over by the National Provincial.

John Durring



Liskeard Market House

The first Market House was built 1574 and came into Borough ownership through escheat. At a cost of £800 its replacement in 1821/22 was designed by John Foulston, his fee was 15 guineas. On Queen Victoria's coronation 600 men and boys dined on 2 bullocks, 2 hog's heads of

cider and 2 of beer in the Market House. Tea and cakes for 1000 women and children followed. Henry Rice designed the extension, which is now No.25 Fore Street, in 1865. Liskeard watercolourist John K Broad recalled the building as a boy in the late 1800s: "The top floor was crowded with Farmers' wives; butter, eggs, ducks and chicken truly a goodly selection. On the Ground Floor a chattering bevy of Saltash Fishwives with a delectable show of shrimps, mussels and cockles.



A penny entitled one to a tiny dish together with a pin from the stallholder's matronly

bosom. The Centre Floor, here congregated the fruit and confectionary stalls, fancy goods, toys, stationery and literature". Mr. Pickles' Electric Cinema occupied one of the floors from 1915 to 1934; being silent movies he bought an organ from a Pensilva chapel for 30 shillings. The first showing on July 21st 1915 was a Navy recruitment film "The Royal Naval Division at Work and Play". When No.4 Market Street was demolished in the 1950s, Boots the Chemist moved into the Market House where they remained until 1993.



Excess granite steps from further alterations were recycled as a base for the restored Hendra Cross

that had been saved from its previous use as two gate posts on the farm, in 1991.

Brian Oldham

A Member's Memories Peaked

Referring to CALH Newsletter, November 2020 *Profiles of Launceston People* by Carol Bunbury on Page 4, Duncan Paul recalls: "There are still one or two folk in Clifton Terrace, New Road, Liskeard, who remember the 'Ching' family, (Maybe No 6 Clifton Terrace with a self-sufficient garden behind with a stable in Gypsy Land. My Brothers and I remember him well. He taught my Brothers to swear and it would slip off their tongues like music!"

On page 5, Brian Oldham's snippet, Liskeard *Iron Works* known by Duncan as the Williams *Foundry*. This piece reminded Duncan of his own family story. "My Mother was an 'Oatey' and all the street furniture at St Cleer was cast by 'Oatey & Martyn of Wadebridge', but more famed for the casting agricultural equipment and semi-circular sections to build up waterwheels. We can trace the Oatey family back to the 11th century as Stonemasons, around Leedstown and Chacewater, but much, much later when the Cornwall Constabulary was formed, over a dozen of these outdoor men became Policemen."

Duncan Paul

The Wonder of Lighthouses

I was browsing in a book store in London a couple of years ago when my attention was drawn to a book entitled *Seashaken Houses*. The author, Tom Nancollas, happens to be of Cornish descent I discovered! I have a fascination for lighthouses. They convey a feeling of stability and wonder. How do they withstand raging seas in stormy weather? Who built them? Nancollas had similar questions that set him on a journey to visit many of the lighthouses around the British Isles and to learn something of their history. The book reads like a journal with vivid descriptions and old photos. A great read. A fellow member, of the Toronto Cornish Association Tim Douglass, has written a book entitled: *The Lighthouse Engineers: how did they build them?* This is the story of the lighthouses designed by his ancestors and others. Available on Amazon and in many U.K. book stores.

Marion Stephens-Cockroft, Editor