



NEWSLETTER

August 2020

Our Place on the Internet

www.calh.co.uk

Email us at

calhnewsletter@gmail.com

Letter from the Chair

I have just re-read the February newsletter and it has really brought home to me just how much the world has changed in the last six months. In February we were looking forward to our weekend conference (fortunately held three weeks before our lives changed so drastically) and the newsletter also contained news of the outings to be held through the summer months. By the beginning of April it was clear there would be no summer outings this year and we, along with other societies in Cornwall and beyond, had to notify our members of this fact. We have continued to hope it would be safe to hold the Autumn conference but I am sorry to say that I and the committee have now decided to cancel this event as well. Although 'Lockdown' is being eased we felt, with the average age of those who regularly attend this event being in what is now referred to as the 'High Risk Category', few would be prepared to book until the very last moment, and by then the society would have entered into serious expense and commitment costs. Along with worries about who, if any, might attend, the hotel itself might not have been able to accommodate us under the present 'Social Distancing' rules, so rather than leave things hanging in the air we sadly came to the decision to cancel (or possibly postpone until next Autumn) this year's event. Marilyn is still going ahead with her plans for the weekend conference next March and we will give you more details in the November

Newsletter. However, we don't plan to send out booking forms until next January's Newsletter just in case we have to cancel the event.

These present movement restrictions have made me realise how incredibly lucky I am. Firstly I live in a most beautiful part of the world. I could easily spend hours gazing out of my office window at the distant view of Caradon Hill and Dartmoor, or into my garden at this year's hatching of wild ducks (now at the 'Thuglet' stage of life).



Secondly I am surrounded (at a safe distance) by good friends and relations. Number six Godchild's mother gets all the food shopping I need and the daughter of my farm tenant is a whiz at getting things on the internet. I may never go shopping again!!! Thirdly I am still physically (just) able to work in my garden and fourthly I have a shed full of paperback books that had been destined for the Church Coffee Morning here in July. Historical novels, modern romances, even 'Who Done Its', (fortunately none too violent). With few
continued overleaf

people on TV speaking clearly enough for me to hear what they are saying, I have, for the first time in my life, spent the evenings immersed in popular novels as a form of escapism. As for working on my own historical research projects, that seems to have lapsed for the present. I don't know about you, but I find it really hard to concentrate on things at the moment and haven't done any history related work on my computer since lockdown began all this uninterrupted free time, I am not sorting out projects in my office.

However, I am having some good thoughts and ideas as I pull up bindweed and brambles in the garden. In my working life I would do my best thinking whilst mucking out the stables, and I have found gardening is much the same. The only trouble is I can't always remember what those good ideas were when I go indoors to make a coffee and write them down.

As many of you will know, I have for many years been running half a mile every day in my pool. When lockdown began I started doing two one hour sessions a day (it takes me 55 minutes to run one mile) and have now clocked up well over 200 miles. I think I might try running as far as London (however many miles that may be) but it will all grind to a halt if the boiler (very old and waiting to be replaced) packs up, as I refuse to go into the water unless it is at least 34 degrees!!!

I have certainly not been bored during lockdown but what I do miss is meeting up with friends like you for a nice day out. I am sure the day will come when we can meet again in safety and without social distancing but until then do stay safe and keep busy.

Your chairperson,
Carole Vivian Tel: (01503)

Obituary: Colin Edwards

As was briefly reported in this year's Journal, our past chairman Colin Edwards has died. Colin was born in North Wales in 1945 and came to the Cornwall Record Office in 1968. He remained there until his retirement in 2006, shortly after which he married his former 'Boss' Christine North. They spent a happy and busy married life in Veryan, and could often be found back at the old CRO in Truro, doing research for their various history projects.

In December 2017 Colin was diagnosed with Rapid Onset Vascular Dementia and within 6 months Chris had to face the awful fact that she could no longer look after Colin at home. He moved into a Care Home in St Austell, where he died on Sunday 26th April 2020. Before the movement restrictions Chris visited him regularly, taking a little treat in the shape of some chopped up fruit or cake which he always enjoyed.

I last visited Colin in January, when I was greeted by a lovely smile and welcome, although I'm not sure he knew who I was by then. I am sure, like me, many of you will miss Colin's lovely smile and gentle voice, as well as his vast knowledge of historical documents and especially his great love of 'The Acts of Parliament'.

Carole Vivian.



2021 Annual Spring Conference & AGM

The Kilbirnie Hotel is currently open for business and a provisional booking has been made for a date in March, but due to the Covid pandemic, this could change.

Theme: the legacy of Veronica Cheshier.

It is hoped to interpret this theme as widely as possible to provide an interesting, informative and entertaining conference.

More details of the Conference will be available for the November Newsletter, with a booking form available in January.

Marilyn & Ian Thompson
Spring Conference Secretaries

Correction to: February 2020 Newsletter

In her *Letter from the Chair* in February, Carole paid tribute to Veronica Cheshier. A computer gremlin must have changed her name to 'Cheshire'!

My apologies for not catching the rascal: the Editor

'The Mermaid's Kiss

Written by long time CALH member, **Tony Wood.**

A colourful and entertaining story about what might happen if you kiss a mermaid that could make a birthday or Christmas gift for a youngster in your family.



A copy can be purchased directly from Austin Macauley, CGC-33-01, 25 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5LQ. Paper Back 9781528922593 @ £8.99 or E Book 9781528963831 @£3.50 Postage is £3.00. Also available at most bookstores in the U.K.

Due to the suspension of the usual CALH outings and activities owing to the Covid -19 pandemic there was space in this newsletter for some personal stories. The following stories recall childhood memories.

We Have Power!

By John Dirring

I have lived in east Devon for most of my life; and the farm where I grew up did not get mains electricity until 1965, even though the houses just up the road had had it for years, and there was a high-voltage transmission line crossing our fields. This was because a new line and transformer were needed to serve us and the two neighbouring farms; all three of us needed to be connected at the same time to make it worthwhile. Our neighbours had only recently installed new generating sets, so they were not interested for a long time (until they started having breakdowns). In 1960, after four pioneering years at the place without electric power, we were able to afford a second hand generator, allowing electrification of the milking; and some rudimentary house wiring. There wasn't much spare power available for domestic appliances. This served us fairly well, apart from breakdowns; when we reverted to Aladdin's wonderful paraffin lamp (which I still have), and the old Lister to drive the milking machines - we continued to keep as a standby. The last generator failure, which was total, was a week before we were connected to the mains. Once we were on, it was great to enjoy the electric power with constant voltage, and television at any time; not

just when the generator was running (which was only during milking and the hours of darkness until we went to bed - 'lights out' meant just that). Whereas our neighbours' plants would start up automatically whenever any light switch was pressed, my father had to crank our old engine by hand. A neighbouring cottage was also connected to the mains at the same time; at first, they didn't know what to make of it, and only turned the light on until their oil lamps were lit.

How many people today, of any age almost, can imagine a world without electricity?



John's Aladdin's lamp is still in working order. The glass chimney is Pyrex. The shape makes it easy and safe to carry around when lit. Spares are available online! Everyone should have an Aladdin's Lamp in case of power outages.

Wartime Memories

By Tony Wood

I was born in 1936 so I was only 3 when war broke out. We lived in Harpenden, about 20 miles north of London, in a house in Bowers Way. We stayed there until 1940 when we moved north to Thornton, near Bradford in Yorkshire and there we shared a cottage with my mother's aunt Beth, a retired author. In 1941 we moved to Bedford about 50 miles north of London and shared a flat for a few months before my parents bought a large house in Park Avenue and we lived there until 1951.

I have many wartime memories. Here are just two. The first is concerning the food shortages.

Rationing was hard for us, only 4 ounces of sweets each per week. Instead of sweets we bought tins of sweetened condensed milk which wasn't rationed. We ate them secretly at night and hid them, the tin-opener and the spoons under the floor boards in our bedroom. I think the last one may still be there; I'm sure the spoon is. But milk, meat, bread butter and many other basic foods were rationed.

There was always just enough to eat but never any surplus. We were not allowed to be choosy. Everything on your plate, whether you liked it or not, had to be eaten. The Care parcels from America were very welcome and helped us out.

My brother, Ralph, was three years older than me and much more adventurous.

During the war ammunition was stacked under open-ended shelters along the roadside in the country. Ralph and a friend decided that it

was easy to help themselves to hand-grenades, dismantle them and make their own fireworks. NOT a good idea! A loud bang in the attic gave the game away and Ralph emerged with singed hair and eyebrows. My father was VERY displeased! However in 1945 he redeemed himself making a prize winning model of the D Day landings out of plasticine. It was very good indeed.

News From Cornish Cousins Overseas

The Cornish American Heritage Society (Michigan) is planning a gathering of Cornish cousins for July 2021 in Butte, Montana, USA. The keynote speaker will be the historian Gage McKinney (author of many books on USA and Cornwall mining and migration) also a Bard of Cornwall.

To avoid spreading the Covid virus and to be in compliance with government bylaws, the **Toronto Cornish Association** has been meeting regularly on Zoom. Members, who because of distance or limited mobility, are rarely able to join us in person have been able to connect with us this way. Our August meeting is traditionally a picnic and barbecue. This year we are planning a "virtual picnic." Everyone can enjoy a favourite picnic food at home and share stories and photos of memorable Cornish picnics from the past.

Marion Stephens-Cockroft,
TCA President, CALH Newsletter Editor

A Call for Snippets

Despite the Covid-19 lockdown, many of us have hopefully not only taken the opportunity to catch up with those tasks we have been putting off, but also to continue our research into Cornish history, despite not having access to our usual sources such as Kresen Kernow.

Whilst our travels around Cornwall were also restricted, have you been looking back to happier times when you could enjoy living in Cornwall, perhaps your childhood memories for us older members of CALH.

The committee therefore invites you to share your experiences with other members through the medium of our Newsletter by penning a few words on:

- Some interesting facts you have identified from research carried out during lockdown – Why not tell us some interesting snippets from your research, or perhaps the alternative sources you have identified to replace your usual currently inaccessible sources.
- Your childhood memories of Cornwall – Local history did not stop after we were born. It might no longer be possible for others to experience some activities and events you enjoyed during your childhood. Why not tell us about them.

Regretfully we must limit the number of words that may be submitted and ask you to restrict your article to 300 words. You're also invited to include a maximum of two JPG photographs with a brief description of what they show. Contributions will be included in our November Newsletter.

The easiest way to send your submission to us is by emailing it to Marion in Canada on calhnewsletter@gmail.com. Your article can either be included in the body of the email or attached as a Word document; please do not send it as a PDF.

Alternatively, for those who do not use email, you may post them to Hugh Hedderly who has kindly agreed to type them and forward them on to Marion. Hugh's address is October Hill, 2b Lambley Road, Lowdham, Notts, NG14 7AY.

Hugh says his eyes are not what they used to be so asks you type your article if at all possible, or ensure that your writing is in a nice round hand style on which your school teacher would have complimented you. Photographs are a little trickier as he can scan them but please note he cannot return them to you.



Working at home offers an opportunity for a new start.