



Pacific  
Northwest  
**CORNISH**  
Society

Volume 3 Number 1

Winter 2000



John King, PNCS's very own Cornish Bard!

*Jottings from Jean.....*

What a great meeting we had in October at the Presbyterian church in Puyallup, Washington! With good food and good friends plus a great program, all good Cornishmen simply could not lose on this one.

For those who had never see a Bard in robes, John King's entrance into the meeting room in *his* beautiful blue robe was enough to make all those in attendance want to make fast plans to go to the annual Bardic ceremony next September! John's clear and interesting program on Bards, ritual, history and all the rest of it, was terrific and coupled with poetry and music was a PNCS meeting that was clearly our best meeting ever, in my opinion.

And, there is another Bard in the Pacific Northwest, David C. Fowler (retired University of Washington professor). We will hope he will wish to join with us as well.

The October meeting was an important one: we worked on some clarification of our PNCS as to meetings, regional groups, newsletter, and more. **As a Society, we will meet in July for our annual meeting and picnic. We will get together as well for the St Piran's day celebration on the first weekend of March. These last two will be as centrally located as possible to the bulk of the membership. The regional groups, then, will meet at their own times and places at other times.** The newsletter will be scheduled, the deadlines for them published in the newsletter itself and members will need to get material in to the editor.

**I wish each of you and your respective families the happiest of holidays and look forward to seeing you again in the new year!**

Jean Richards Timmermeister

## Call for Region Groups

**Pacific Northwest Cornish Society is for those of us here in "the upper left-hand corner of the country" but in a rather vast geographic area which (because of the size of area) presents some *real* problems when planning and scheduling activities and meetings.**

PNCS members in the Vancouver (Washington) and Portland (Oregon) part of the Pacific Northwest get together, beginning a year or so ago, for lunch. They called themselves the South Branch which then became the South Bunch. Whatever they may be known as, they have a wonderful time together.

But what about those living in Spokane or Southeast Washington? We have had interest from Janice Geffe of Yakima for a central Washington gathering. There are a few members in the Seattle area and it is certainly time to work on membership around the Puget Sound region. Kitsap and Olympic Peninsulas have several PNCS members: who will get a group together for lunch? In time, we would suspect there will be more members and meeting with other Cornishmen will always be the ideal. Please contact the President at LJRT@tenforward.com (or by mail at 1301 S. Third Ave. #21-A, Sequim WA 98382-3964) if you are willing to organize a group or are interested.

## PNCS Again Scheduled at Genealogical Fair March 10<sup>th</sup>

**Crossroads Mall in Bellevue will once again find Pacific Northwest Cornish Society represented at the genealogical fair on Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup>.**

We will have membership applications, maps to clarify the actual location of Cornwall, various Cornish materials, and (hopefully) our new PNCS banner as well as a Cornish flag. Set-up time for the booth is 9:00 am with the opening of the event at 10:00 am.

Several members volunteered to represent PNCS at our booth. Do we have a chairman willing to schedule and plan? Please contact Jean at LJRT@tenforward.com or (360) 681-7059 with offers, suggestions, etc.

Our thanks to John King who has agreed to print and handle mailing of the PNCS Newsletter!

## Celebrate St Piran's Day March 3<sup>rd</sup>; Bring Cornish, Non-Cornish Friends

### Mark your Calendars: PNCS Will Meet in Chehalis

Everyone knows St Patrick is the patron saint of the Irish, some are well aware that the Welsh claim St David ..... both saints are well advertised in March of each year.

**More importantly, the patron saint of the Cornish is St. Piran! PNCS wants area newspapers and their readers to know about our own St Piran. PNCS members will get together on the first Saturday of March to celebrate our St Piran at the Westminster Presbyterian church in Chehalis, Washington. Thanks to Bob Bruce who once again located a meeting place, we will hold the all-PNCS event at the church at 349 N. Market St.**

Mary Sisson, Vice-president and Program Chair, will arrange the program. This meeting is open to the public and we plan to have additional newspaper coverage. Mary will likely be asking you to take part by bringing Cornish materials for display; Gay Treglown Knutson will once again be pushing to find where your Cornish ancestors came to in the US. Let's have a map to see from which Cornish parishes our ancestors came. **In short, this is a special time for the Cornish: let's make it the best ever St Piran's Day of PNCS.**

We'll open our program at 1 pm. (Set-up earlier but be ready at 1 pm.) Please bring snacks to have with coffee and tea, preferably Cornish (finger foods only) as well as bringing display materials.

Directions: Take the Raymond/ Pe Ell exit off Interstate 5; go east on Main Street, left on Market Blvd (almost to the Center of town). Westminster Presbyterian church (349 N. Market, Chehalis) will be on your right.

### Newsletter

Special thanks to Editor Marcia Rothman and Assistant Editor Joan Huston who have done such great work on producing our PNCS Newsletter.

Now it is your turn to truly take part: from the beginning of PNCS, an appeal has gone out for members of PNCS to submit material to the Editor via e-mail or otherwise. We are all adults: we ought not to have to repeat this appeal constantly. Please make note of the deadlines (see elsewhere in this and all issues) as set by the Editor; send her material by deadline.

Here are the deadlines for our four newsletters a year:

**Second week in January**

**Second week in May**

**Second week in August**

**Second week in November**

Send articles, pictures, ads, notices, whatever, to:

**Marci@whidbey.com or jhuston@sincom.com**

**Or mail to: PNCS**

**10116 Stoli Lane NW  
Silverdale, WA 98383**

**Make sure they get to us prior to the above deadlines to be included in the next newsletter.**



### **WILDLY MILD LIFE AT THE LAND'S END** by Thomas Tregarthen Huston

#### *Day One:*

Stepping off the train from London's Paddington Station at three in the afternoon on the first day of September this year, I was struck instantly by a remarkable change of scenery (mitigated not in the least by my having had my nose in a book for the entire ride). Penzance, Cornwall, seemed at least a century behind the bustling metropolis I had left only hours earlier, where the statistics for collisions involving pedestrians and more swiftly moving objects would be downright terrifying if not for the helpful "Look Right," "Look Left" suggestions painted on the streets. To be sure, Penzance had its share of cars, too, but as I discovered within a few minutes of my arrival, their cars were *far* safer for pedestrians—and for a truly mind-blowing reason, at least for an American tourist like myself: the drivers STOP for pedestrians! I'm not kidding. It was perhaps one of the most surprising and unusual experiences of my life, and I tested it a few times to make sure I wasn't hallucinating. Sure enough, each time I stood on the sidewalk, just vaguely looking as though I was considering crossing the street, oncoming vehicles would slow to a dead stop and wait for me to cross (at which point I sort of felt obligated to, whether I really wanted to or not).

So that was the first major indication, apart from the general 19<sup>th</sup>-century fishing village environs, that I had just arrived in a completely alien world.

About a half-hour later, I sat on a bench near the harbor, eating an official Cornish veggie pasty and sipping a chocolate shake. As the overcast sky grew steadily darker, a steady breeze swept up, threatening the vertical stability of my milkshake cup. Promptly finishing the food, I secured the cup and pasty wrapper on the bench behind my backpack. Then, under the contentment of a recently filled stomach, I leaned back and properly took in the scenery for the first time. Across the street to my right, numerous small boats sat moored in a field of mud, awaiting the evening tide; to my left, between some bushes, people walked along the sidewalk, occasionally stopping in some of the food shops, while cars passed by every few seconds. Directly ahead of me, beyond the railing that, further along, helped pedestrians refrain from falling in the mud and breaking someone's boat, the Atlantic Ocean stretched out to the horizon, beautifully dark blue under the now raining sky. A sudden gust of wind blew over me, and I breathed it in with delight, securing my jacket to keep dry, but without the slightest inclination to get up and leave. I closed my eyes and tilted my head back, letting the occasional raindrops pelt my face and glasses, feeling wonderful to be in a situation so much more peaceful than my previous week in London. And then someone said, in either an English or Cornish accent, "Excuse me, sir." I opened my eyes to see a young man, about 25 years old, standing a few feet in front of me. "Could you, by any chance, spare fifty pence?" he asked. Still smiling from my general feeling of blissful contentment, I said "Sure" and stood up to get out my wallet. After handing the man a 50-pence piece, he smiled graciously and said, "Thank you. I hope you have a wonderful day!" Then he turned to walk away, leaving me silently marveling at the unnaturally pleasant manner in which he had just asked for some change. Perhaps it was nothing special, but if every person in America who's ever asked me on the street for some change had asked with that degree of kindness, I suspect I'd have a smaller bank account today.

A few minutes later I was drenched from hair to sock, swiftly walking through town to the Castle Horneck hostel where I planned to spend the night. Sheer torrents of rain thundered down on me until I arrived, obscuring my glasses, soaking the map in my hand, and making me very cold, wet—yet anything but miserable. It was a fun and fascinating challenge, trying to find the hostel through weather like that. Once inside, the water from my hair, face, and jacket nearly rendered the registration form illegible, but they let me stay there anyway.

### *Day Two:*

Treading along the beach under the early afternoon sun, I realized that my shoes weren't quite as waterproof as I'd thought. I moved further up the shore, to where the sand looked slightly drier, then continued the steady march I'd begun thirty minutes earlier. My goal was directly in front of me, but its exact distance was hard to gauge. Fifteen minutes later, I was mildly disappointed to find myself still an appreciable distance from it and also unable to perch my camera atop some large rocks for a photo, due to their being surrounded by two-foot deep water.

Perseverance generally pays off, though, and a few hundred shoe-sloshing steps later I found myself climbing atop a large, kelp-covered rocky peninsula, in a camera-threatening attempt to stay dry and get a good shot of St. Michael's Mount—a picturesque castle atop a green hill, on a small island about five hundred feet offshore—before the tide came in. The wind was horrendous, and walking over mounds of slimy wet kelp is an altogether unusual experience, but I eventually found a dry, secure place to set my jacket and camera as I held the remote control and snapped a nice shot of myself and the object of my afternoon pursuit (and then promptly left the kelp peninsula before it could even contemplate becoming a proper island).

### *Day Three:*

After a relaxing morning bus ride across ten miles of Cornish countryside, I arrived at the small tourist

attraction called Land's End. Immediately I shelled out three pounds for a triple-scoop ice cream cone, and then, ignoring the main tourist attractions (some of which, like a pirate ship exhibition, sounded pretty interesting), I walked along the coastal path, taking occasional photos, saying hello to occasional passerby, and generally enjoying the view of beautiful green cliffs above rocky coastal caves and crashing waves below. Soon panting and sweating under a heavy black jacket and heavier backpack, I followed the path to Sennen Cove, where I witnessed, for the first time outside of California, a group of surfers riding the waves. I stopped to watch this for a little while (as well as catch my breath) and then climbed up a sandy path, walked through a small maze of streets and houses, and ended up where I wanted to be, on a road to St. Just.

The streets in the Cornish countryside, at least in the Land's End region, aren't particularly wide, so on a number of occasions cars heading in one direction would have to stop and pull over to allow cars going the opposite direction to pass, and I found myself somewhat nervously plastered against the bushes along the side of the road whenever this was happening. But if you're going to walk along the street instead of taking a bus, you have to expect certain discomforts. It wasn't all bad, anyway; the majority of bushes alongside the road were rife with ripe blackberries, and the view was absolutely gorgeous, with rolling hills of Cornish farmland stretching toward the horizon in all directions, and at one point some horses came up to the fence lining a portion of the road to be patted on the nose (or, more likely, *fed*, but they just got patted). It was a very enjoyable hike—and it even became rather exhilarating when I realized that I, alone in a foreign land with no humans in sight, was now, beyond a doubt, right smack in the infamous Middle of Nowhere.

This realization was only confirmed when I arrived in the small town of St. Just. After finding the hostel where I intended to spend the night, I set off into town to try to find a book to read. But when the restaurant employees I queried said, "Bookstore? Um, there's a library"—well, I knew

I'd just found one of the smallest towns in the world. And I enjoyed every minute of it.

#### *Day Four:*

Perhaps it was the thrill of taking off from a grassy field and accelerating toward a high cliff overlooking the Atlantic, or maybe it was just the semi-fearful excitement of flying in a small, rickety, eight-passenger plane, but after paying £59 and climbing inside, I had a blast during the 15-minute flight from the Land's End Aeroport to St. Mary's in the Isles of Scilly (28 miles from the mainland). The scenery during the flight was ocean in all directions, with tiny white specks indicating colliding waves, but as soon as the Scillies came into view, everyone on board was sitting on the edge of his or her seat, trying to take in as much of the sheer *beauty* as possible before the plane landed and the view became slightly more mundane (but only slightly).

By early afternoon, after having met some very kind and helpful folk at the Atlantic Hotel, Tregarthen's Hotel, and various small shops in Hugh Town, I was riding with about 20 other passengers on a boat to the isle of Tresco, where I, being a Tregarthen, intended to visit "Tregarthen Hill," the site of a 4,000-year-old Bronze Age burial chamber. As soon as the boat docked at the quay, I stopped in a small gift shop for a drink and a final glance at a map before I set out to explore the northern end of the island.

I must admit I've scarcely had more fun in my life. Aside from two or three people I saw on my way toward the remains of Cromwell's Castle and the earlier King Charles's Castle—two military outposts over 400 years old designed to protect the Scillies from unwelcome ships—the northern portion of the island was completely deserted. I was free to explore the ruins of both Medieval and ancient Bronze Age civilizations alone and uninhibited, enjoying the scent of rolling purple hills of heather, the sound of waves crashing against rocky shores, and the challenge of finding footpaths without angering the ever-present population of native bumblebees. The beauty and serenity of that time

and place will surely remain firmly imbedded in my memory for the rest of my life—as will the Hitchcockian incident that happened on my way down from the northern hills, when I found myself walking down a narrow, heavily shaded path, between dark tangles of trees, and ducking to avoid the near-misses of eerily excitable enormous native birds. . . .

*Day Five:*

I caught the five o'clock train back to Paddington Station after briefly browsing the Penzance gift shops one last time for piskey-related trinkets to bring home to my family. Having spent the morning and early afternoon hiking around the scenic coastal circumference of St. Mary's before catching my return flight to Land's End, I was fairly exhausted and pleased that I'd be able to sleep throughout a nice, six-hour train ride. But before I got too comfortable, I took my digital camera out of its case and scrolled through the pictures displayed in the back window, just to determine what I'd actually managed to record on magnetic tape and what would forever be consigned to the intangible media of my own memory. As I did this, it became apparent that while I had photographed the majority of distinctively scenic sights, these photos served mainly to conjure vivid memories of certain joyous feelings and situations—memories for which a one-frame photographic record could never be more than a shallow reminder. And perhaps, I soon realized, the most meaningful memories of all didn't even have a photographic counterpart—and that made them all the more precious.

I turned the camera off, put it away, and leaned my head against the train window, closing my eyes and silently vowing to return to Cornwall someday, possibly even to live there myself, because even the most exquisite, idyllic places in America would have to be turned down a few notches in pace, and turned up a few notches in peace, to even begin to compare.



*Tresco Island, Scilly Isles, Cornwall, taken from air.*



*Land's End sign showing New York being 3147 miles that way!*



*Cromwell's Castle, Tresco Island, Scilly Isles.*



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**QUERIES and MEMBER'S INTERESTS**

Please send me your queries to put in the next newsletter Marcia Rothman PO 43, Langley, WA, 98260 USA or E-MAIL [roots@whidbey.com](mailto:roots@whidbey.com)



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*The purpose of this society, organized as a non-profit Corporation, shall be educational. It shall be devoted to furthering Cornish heritage genealogical research in the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho.*

**MEMBERSHIP:** Individual Membership: \$10.00  
Dual Membership: \$15.00  
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