



Volume 8 Number 2

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## St. Piran - Sen piran



Saint Piran is the patron saint of tin-miners. He is also generally regarded as the national saint of Cornwall. Saint Piran's Flag is a white cross on a black background. St Piran's Day is March 5th.



No one can state for sure who St Piran was, we can only sift for clues in documents written many years after his time. In the past many writers have stated with confidence the facts of his ancestry. The Trust will not do this as our reasoning is that you should look at the clues and decide for yourself.

Surely this is the magic of St Piran.

We believe St Piran was born in Ireland. This decision is based on the ties with St Kieran of Saighir. This saint was born and raised on the island of Cape Clear off County Cork, by his father Lughaidh and mother Liedania. After studying scriptures in Rome he returned to Ireland and was made a bishop at his monastic settlement Saighir Kieran in County Os-sary. There is no reference to his death and there is no shrine to his honour yet he is one of the twelve most revered saints in the Irish calendar.

At this time St Piran lands on Perran beach and builds the tiny oratory. There is no written word attributing his pedigree. He and his followers build the oratory in the Irish style with the heads of a man, a

### THE NEXT PNCS MEETING

Our March 4<sup>th</sup> 2006 meeting will be in Puyallup at First Presbyterian Church 412 W. Pioneer, Puyallup, WA. We will be showing a movie made in Cornwall, "Ladies in Lavender" starring Judy Dench and Maggie Smith. The movie includes Cornish songs and Pasties. The movie will run 1 Hr and 40 minutes. We will have a discussion on the movie as part of the program. 12 Noon business meeting, 1:00 pot-luck and movie. We hope to see you all there.

(Continued on page 5)<sup>1</sup>

### **A Message from our President:**

Enclosed you will find a copy of our by-laws which have been reviewed for possible changes. I am asking for all members to review and submit comments regarding these changes.

Please email me at [softwalk2@yahoo.com](mailto:softwalk2@yahoo.com) with your comments. At our March meeting we will discuss these changes and any comments and finalize the changes for a final review. A copy of the proposed changes will be sent to all members in early June and then we will vote on them at the July meeting. Thank you all for your help and support, your President, Alene Reaugh.

### **EMAILS RECEIVED**

#### **Photo's for Sale:**

My name is Adam Nolan, live in Fowey, Cornwall. I'm a professional photographer and have just put my images online. They are from around Cornwall, and I'm going to add to them on a regular basis. I thought perhaps your members would be interested in seeing them :) and feel free to link to the sites: [www.cornishimages.com](http://www.cornishimages.com), [www.surfimage.co.uk](http://www.surfimage.co.uk) Regards, Adam

#### **Possible meeting site:**

You asked for suggestions for a state wide meeting place. The Yakima Indians have a beautiful camp ground and a lovely motel and restaurant outside of Yakima which is about the middle of the state. Keep it in mind as you look and if you want more information let me know. Gracie Cooper

#### **News from Cornwall:**



John Edgar Bolitho  
"Jowan an Cleth"  
1930 - 2005

John was an ex-Grand Bard he was made this in 2000, he was also patron of the Cornish association of Victoria, Canada and the United states, at least that is what it said in today's paper, and I know it to be true. His Bardic name was Jowan an Cleth (John of the north ). He was also the first person to speak Cornish in Strasbourg , he was a member of Mebyon Kernow and sat on the council for them, plus being a committee member for many Cornish societies , he also had a wonderful tenor voice. The chapel over flowed into the hall, his granddaughter sang Amazing Grace, Rod Lyon spoke in Cornish, Bert Bisscoe read a poem he wrote about him, the staff of the Falcon Hotel stood on the steps while the coffin went by, they mentioned Australia and America many times in the service, A sad day for Cornwall, Sue ([maid.kernewek@virgin.net](mailto:maid.kernewek@virgin.net))

#### **News from CCC:**

Hello - I am currently president of the California Cornish Cousins. I am planning our 15th annual gathering to be held in San Diego, California, April 28-30. I would like to have some tables available to vendors of Cornish related items, books, videos, etc, to display marketing materials for their companies. If you are someone, or know someone, whose company might benefit from this opportunity, please email me at [jandavis3@cox.net](mailto:jandavis3@cox.net), Jan Davis

*(Please let me know if any one is interested in attending this meeting in California on behalf of the PNCS and I will see that you get T-shirts, Sweatshirts, bumper stickers etc to sell and our NEW Banner to display. Unfortunately both myself and Dot Huntley will be in Cornwall at the time of this meeting.)*



**A Certificate of Appreciation** and a lifetime membership to PNCS will be awarded to our own Cornish Bard , Yowann Bygman. Yowann has recently moved to Scotland where he is working as a Special Needs Coordinator at the North Cumbria Technology College. Yowann, a former Education Secretary of the Cornish Language Board and a fluent speaker in the Cornish language, was elected as a Bard of the Cornish

Gorsedh in 1978 as a result of his dedication to the revitalization of the Cornish Language. He came to the states in 1990 and became a member to PNCS in 2000 and served as Treasurer and Membership Secretary 2001. Yowann's lessons gave PNCS a better understanding and knowledge in the Cornish language and culture.



**WE WELCOME OUR NEW PNCS MEMBERS**  
Delores and Leslie **RANDALL** of Oak Harbor, Washington.

### **My Grandfathers Home By A. O. Crowle**

It was an old house with the living room floor constructed of slabs of granite on which was sprinkled dry sand to take up the dirt from the men's boots. There was no cooking range or coal. The fireplace was a large opening in the end wall of the room. The floor of the hearth being large slabs of granite on which the fire burned. The fuel was furze and turf which was cut on the downs, this was brought home and built into a rick near the house. Each house would have its " fuzy and tuff " ricks. Built in the wall on one side of the hearth was a cloam oven for the baking of bread and cakes. For boiling meat and vegetables, an iron crock was used which was suspended from a cross-bar and hung over the fire. The baking of pies, pasties and tarts was done by heating a baking iron, this was a large round thick sheet of iron. It was placed on a "brandis" or trivit over the fire and when sufficiently heated was placed flat on the floor of the hearth and the food placed on it. Then an iron bowl called the "baker" was placed over the baking iron in such a way that the food to be cooked was completely covered, then the hot ashes from the furze and turf fire were piled around and over the bowl, this was then left until the food was properly cooked. The following is an old saying, "They that got clain shinin` slabs, ain't got any mait to ait "; in other words if a hearth was clean very little cooking was done. Cream had a delicious flavour when scalded on a furze fire, and often, as a boy, I loved to spend a day or two at this house and enjoy the Meledor "Blackberries and cream ". When the days work was over my grandfather would sit in the high backed settle in front of the fire and read the only book in the house "The Bible".

## **TINNERS, and TINNING - an overview**

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The term Tinner is more 'all encompassing ' than you perhaps think. It is very much a "catch all" description to describe anybody remotely connected to the tin trade. It might mean somebody connected to a tin mine, but there is another, original, form of tin extraction called tin streaming. This was essentially an above the ground operation using the power of water from streams to wash out the tin ore from the sides of streams, overburdens, and the like. This older form of tin production resulted in a finer and more pure form of the ore. Most, if not all of the tin streamers filled in behind their operations, so no lasting monuments to their work exist today.

Your ancestor may well have been somebody who was a farmer in a small way, and supplemented his income by a bit of "tinning". Many men spent part of their year on their small-holdings , and then when things were a bit quiet at home went off "tinning" There were enormous advantages of being able to call yourself a Tinner, even if it were only a part time occupation. Essentially, Tanners were literally a law unto themselves. They were given their own Charter in 1200 and something, granting them the rights to dig up practically anywhere in Cornwall, be exempt from many of the local taxes and fees, and had their own separate legal system known as the Stannary Courts. It was therefore the law that tanners could not be tried in the normal courts, but had to be tried by their peers in the Stannary Courts. To be called a Tinner was therefore to be to a certain extent outside of the law. Quite an advantage.

The Charter only confirmed pre-existing rights and privileges that even in 1305 and again in 1508 were already of ancient date. In 1508 the Stannaries were given the right of veto over the Parliament of Westminster. The last time this veto was used was 1735. This Stannary Law was extended to heirs and successors of tanners as well. The Stannary Court was never legally dissolved or its privileges revoked even though it hasn't sat for a long time. Indeed the designation of Cornwall as an English county in 1889 has been declared not in accordance with constitutional law.

Cornwall gave up a lot of money; they were taxed almost three times the amount that Devon and the rest of England were taxed on the tin production. This on an estimated 872,504 units of tin produced. So the "advantages" were not without a dear price.

The expert on all aspects of "tinning" is Justine Brooke, and I can thoroughly recommend his latest book, "The Tin Streams of Wendron" ISBN 0906294320, 1994 Published by (and available to buy online from) Twelveheads Press, Truro. This inexpensive book is packed with explanations and diagrams of all the aspects of tinning and streaming. It has chapters on the general aspects of Streaming, Stamping Mills, Smelting, Bounds and Bounders, Dues and Leases, and explains all the trades of such things as dressing , buddling, stamping etc etc. many of which were trades carried out whether the ore was from a mine or a stream, and would all be trades calling themselves Tinner. Whether the ore was obtained from a stream or a hole in the ground, all the ancillary processes would have been carried out by water power and are covered in Brooke's book. The largest of the County Rolls is the Tanners Roll, [PRO Ref:C/213/34] Copies can be obtained of the various parish listings from these parchment rolls through the County Registration Office in Truro.

woman and a beast around the arched doorway . The priest's house is built inside the graveyard as in the Irish style. It is interesting that the three communities mentioned celebrate March 5th as their Saints day thus making a strong Kieran-Piran connection.

The trail continues with the clues from the old church of St Piran. An inventory taken in 1281 by the canons of Exeter, record a bone of St Brendon and a bone of St Martin both associates of St Kieran. The churches of Exeter and Kilkenny Ireland, who held the monasteries of St Piran and St Kieran respectively, regularly exchanged Deans and Bishops.

One thing is certain, the suggestion that St Piran is St Kieran of Clonmacnoise does not stand as this saint it is recorded to have died at the age of 32 and is buried at his monastery.

Many people have claimed many things but nothing is sure, we can only ponder on who was St Piran, where he came from, how he arrived on our shores. One thing is sure. St Piran lives on in the hearts and minds of the Cornish people here in Cornwall and around the world.

**Legend:** The heathen Irish tied him to a mill-stone, rolled it over the edge of a cliff into a stormy sea, which immediately became calm, and the saint floated safely over the water to land upon the sandy beach of Perranzabuloe in Cornwall, where his first converts to Christianity were animals.

**Legend:** St. Piran lit a fire on his black hearthstone, which was evidently a slab of tin-bearing ore. The heat caused smelting to take place and tin rose to the top in the form of a white cross (thus the image on the flag). <http://www.st-piran.com/main.htm>



### A Snap in Time presents PARISH CHURCHES IN CORNWALL

Do you enjoy Cornish photography? If you do stop by my cousin in-law's, Ryan, site at [www.cornish-churches.co.uk](http://www.cornish-churches.co.uk)

you will not be disappointed. Ryan has been taking pictures and documenting Cornish Churches for many years. He is putting it all



together at his above website. His stained glass pictures are breath taking, a truly talented photographer. He has a DVD of his work for sale and his stained glass pictures make beautiful cards which he sells. Check it out and sign his guest book while you are there.

#### CORNISH QUIPS

**Where ee binto**— could you please explain where you have just come from

**Taint goin zackly**—things are not going quite as planned

**Teasy asn adder**—feeling positively upset—best left alone

**Awmylor**—bless my soul

**Ow ee doing pard**—are you feeling ok dear friend



## ***PNCS Officers***

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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  
Lifetime Membership: a one-time payment equal to fifteen (15) times the current annual dues.  
Annual dues are payable as of 1 July.  
Send dues payable to: Pacific Northwest Cornish Society  
Address: Pacific Northwest Cornish Society, 486 Plat B Road, Sutherlin, OR 97479-9799

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