



[www.torontocornishassociation.org](http://www.torontocornishassociation.org) and <https://www.facebook.com/TorontoCornishAssociation>



**Happy 2023 !** Let's compare our winter scenes: top photo is **Rock, Cornwall** (pic: Cornwall Live)  
The lower photo is the **Toronto Cornish Association's outpost** on the banks of Lake Erie, Canada  
near the well defended Fort Erie on the Niagara River in the town of Fort Erie, Ontario. (pic Jim Dagg)  
Cornwall's winter comes and goes. So does ours; often warmer than Cornwall-Kernow, UK, and a tad south.  
Latitude: Toronto 43.6°N, Fort Erie 43°N, Marseille, France 43.3°N and Truro, Kernow 50.3°N (1 deg =69miles)

# Toronto Cornish Association

## WELCOME TO OUR JANUARY 21, 2023 MEETING



Toronto in winter



St. Mawes in Winter



Note: attendees may appear, or not, or twice, but names and identities are blurry for security.

### Today's programme:

Welcome, Land Acknowledgement

Toronto Cornish Association: The Middle Years 1904 – 1961 by Barbara Gardner-Bray

Break (5 mins)

TCA Programme by John Webb: What to expect during the next few months

Wrap Up

Marion Stephens raised the curtain on our zoom stage, where we appeared in our wee windows, and she welcomed our attendees and guests. Marion read the acknowledgement that we are thankful for being allowed to share the land of the indigenous people who were here long before European and other cultures were impressed on this part of the world.



Marion welcomed all Kernowyon and Kernow-connected people who had braved weather, time and distance, travelling many leagues via Zoom to visit us in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Attendance: Marion Stephens, John Webb, Barbara Gardner-Bray, Jim & Jill Dagg, Bob & Liz Radcliffe, Shirley Symons (Cornwall), Wesley Johnston (California), Diane Buckell, Peter & Nancy Dale, Rachel Hawes, Geoff & Moyra Pyne, Sue Cox, John & Joanna White, David Collins, Gary & Catherine Vivian, Daphne Blunden, Roger Farrow (Durham Region), Deborah Powell-Wells, Michael Gichard, Ann Radcliffe (Italy), Karen Machmer, Maxine McKenzie, Kathie Oakden, Sher Leetooze, Colin Bray, Erla Jose, Frank Pellow, Marion Howard (Wisconsin), Deborah Northwood-Tink (Durham Region), Bert Biscoe (Cornwall), Liz Broeckman (LCA), Carol Goodwin (LCA), Carolyn Haines (CAHS), John Trelawny (President, London Cornish Association [LCA] ),

Marion had a chat with John Trelawny.

All the way from London, UK, and President of the London Cornish Association, John is also a descendant (twelve times removed) of **the** Bishop Trelawny, immortalized in *The Song of the Westernmen*, R. Hawker's 1826 poem. Set to music in 1861, it became an anthem of Cornwall known as *Trelawny*.

John was able, at the Gorsdh Kernow in Hayle in September, 2022, to bestow on Marion Stephens and John Webb, awards for gallant service in promoting and preserving the culture and spirit of Cornwall; the **Paul Smales Award** to Marion, and the **London Cornish Association Shield** to John Webb.



## UPCOMING 2023 MEETINGS

### February

Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2.00pm.

"Cornwall and the Cornish,  
a personal perspective",  
by Nigel Pengelly of Penzance .



Nigel

### March

Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 10.30am.

It's (almost) St Piran's Day  
We will raise the flag at City Hall  
and march to the Duke of Cornwall  
for refreshments



Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2.00pm

Our first in-person meeting  
of 2023, and maybe on-line.  
We will meet and mingle and share  
tall tales of our Cornish connections





# The Toronto Cornish Association Trilogy

## The Middle Years 1904 - 1961

by Barbara Gardner-Bray



Marion Stephens introduced Barbara Gardner-Bray, Past President and Membership Secretary of the current Toronto Cornish Association, who regaled us at our January 21<sup>st</sup> meeting with tales of what the previous TCA (1904-1961) got up to over a period of 57 years. She has also served as Facebook page manager, represented the TCA at many Cornish gatherings and Ontario Genealogy forums, and helped organize other events such as our annual picnic and raising the flag of Cornwall at Toronto City Hall on March 5<sup>th</sup>. All this stretches back to 1994 when she helped to regenerate the current Cornish Association based in Toronto.

It was only when Barbara Gardner-Bray joined the current TCA at its inception in 1994, that she discovered to her delight that her Grandfather, Arthur Henry Gardner, had been the previous TCA's President from 1915-16, something she would never have known had she not joined in 1994.



The **1904-61 TCA** was formed by ex-pats of Cornwall who missed their homeland and wanted to retain their customs and culture in their new country.

They met regularly on a Tuesday evening, not unlike our own TCA meetings (pre-Covid) at someone's home, had a speaker, a formal meeting, sang Trelawny, had a break for tea and saffron buns and so on. (One venue was the Oddfellows' Hall, 229 College St, still there.)

They were a benevolent group, always raising funds for many charities in Toronto and also overseas during the two wars.

Regular meetings adjourned for the summer, but the group was still active holding outdoor events with their annual picnic being a highlight. It was not unusual to have 400 Cornish men, women and children at these events, held in and around Toronto, and sometimes as far afield as Niagara-on-the-Lake, Oshawa, Toronto Islands, Barrie, Ontario and so on. There were races and games for all ages. A wonderful event indeed. (Below: 1921 TCA picnic in St Catharines, Ontario.)



One of the prizes awarded at annual TCA picnics was the John A. Tory Trophy (great grandfather of Toronto's current mayor, John Tory). Horace Roberts won this award 3 years running (1929-31) for the 220 yard dash. It turns out Horace is the father of "Friend-of-the-TCA" David Roberts







The TCA members were active in the East Toronto Cornish Association Choral Society which made its debut in 1935.

A.H. Gardner, the Conductor (Barbara's grandfather) is seated on a chair in the centre of the 2<sup>nd</sup> row from the bottom.

The moustached gentleman standing far left in the second to top row, was Barbara's Great Uncle, Jack Barnes, who married Arthur's sister Sarah. Barbara had never seen a photo of her Great Uncle before this.

Back Row:

A. Weller, A. Ham, G.H. Thompson, F. Rundle

Next Row down - Standing: J.J. Barnes, P. Hockridge, C. Thomas, W.G. Henwood (Accompanist), A.E. Keverne, A.E. Coad, A.t. Wearne

Seated on Chairs: P. Dower (Sec.), F. Henwood (Pres. Cornish Assoc.), A.H. Gardner (Conductor), S.A. Tucker (Vice Pre. Cornish Assoc.), C. Neale

Seated on floor: F. Evans, A.E.C. Ham, C.A. Cooch, V.S. Train

Like most groups, interest in the TCA waned as the years rolled by. Television was big in the 1950's, people had aged, but the TCA still met socially for games of euchre in each other's homes until 1961 when they officially disbanded.

Barbara met and interviewed a Mr. Harold Hosking in the early years of the current TCA. Harold, originally from St Buryan, Cornwall, had been a member of the previous TCA (1949-1955) and was a font of information about the group in those years.

Back row(l-r): M. Gichard, A. Crichton-Harris,

J. Tyacke (founder of the current TCA), B. Waters

Front (l-r):

Grace Hosking, Harold Hosking, B. Gardner-Bray



Barbara had a question. Where are the descendants of the old TCA group and how can they be found? Difficult? It took 33 years from 1961 until John Tyacke was able to collect a few and resurrect the TCA.

### Another glimpse of the past:

Our presentation this month took us back to the early years of the last century in Toronto. And different they were. One example can be found in this article from the Globe newspaper of 1907, when the temperance movement was very active.

#### SOCIETIES AT CHURCH:

#### GOOD TEMPLARS, ENGLISHMEN AND ORANGEMEN AT SERVICE

Parades Were Well Attended - Appropriate Sermons Preached

Dr. Pidgeon Advises Revival of Moral Suasion in Temperance Reform.

About a thousand members of the Sons of England and kindred organizations assembled in their annual service at All Saints' Church. The Governor-General's

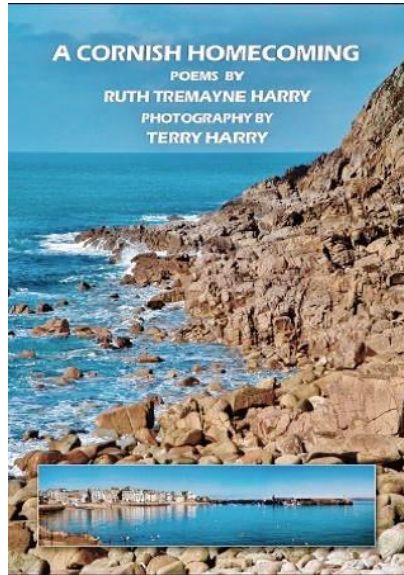
Bodyguard Band headed the Parade, which in close order stretched about five blocks. Besides the Sons of England, there were present representatives of the auxiliary organizations, including Daughters and Maids of England, St. George's

Society, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Bristol, **Cornish**, Devonian and Nottingham Societies.

Prohibition of alcohol became law in 1916, but it took until 1997 for the ban to be fully lifted in west Toronto. Finally, we could raise a glass of Sleeman Cream Ale at our TCA meetings.

BOOKS - NEW for YOU:

**A NEW 2022 BOOK BY CORNISH  
HUSBAND & WIFE  
RUTH TREMAYNE & TERRY HARRY  
FULL OF POEMS AND PHOTOS OF  
CORNWALL & THE ISLES OF SCILLY  
PLUS 4 PAGES ON A VISIT TO  
ANOTHER CELTIC NATION, SCOTLAND**



**A beautiful book  
full of wonderful poems and photos.**

It is printed on high gloss paper in Cornwall by Booths of Penryn, keeping it Cornish.

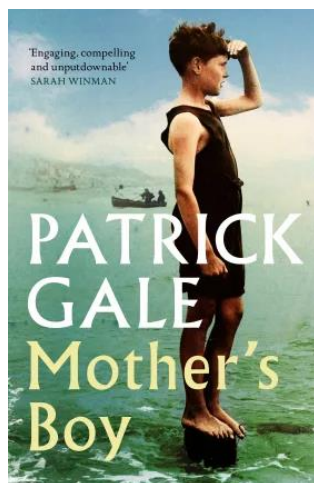
Ruth and Terry are both Cornish born and bred and have travelled recently to Scotland. They reunited in 2020, more than 50 years after they worked together in Truro.

The book is perfectly bound, full colour, 60 pages with a 4 page board cover.

It is 235mm x 165mm size, and costs £7.95 sterling plus postage to Canada & USA

**A CORNISH HOMECOMING**

AVAILABLE VIA JOHN OR MARY WEBB  
(Ruth's sister & brother-in-law)



**“Mother’s Boy”** by Patrick Gale has just arrived in the Toronto library. This is a wonderful tale of growing up in Launceston between the wars. It will spin a familiar yarn for many of our readers, from the Sunday School outings by charabanc to Polzeath, to the changes in ‘Lanson’ as the evacuees and the Americans arrived at the start of the War. Some of those wartime stories were also included in the presentation made at a TCA meeting, “Mutiny in the Duchy”, now available on our website.

The author acknowledges that this is a loose retelling of the early life of the Cornish poet Charles Causley and his mother, Laura, who raised him singlehandedly.

You can read more about Charles Causley on his website:

<https://causleytrust.org/centenary/>

There are **BOOKS GALORE** (as illustrated by this display)  
at the **Kelly Library in St Michaels College,  
University of Toronto.**

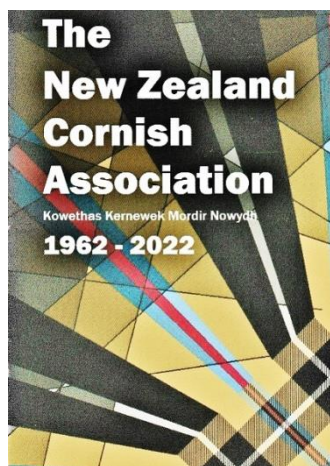
John Webb is very pleased to report that access to the  
**John Tyacke book collection** located in the **Kelly Library**  
is now available after two years of lockdown.

Details of that collection can be found from our TCA website as  
well as directly from this link: <https://tinyurl.com/yc3ss6kb>





## THE NEW ZEALAND CORNISH ASSOCIATION



It is with pleasure that we send our congratulations to the New Zealand Cornish Association as they celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their current incarnation. A copy of their very informative booklet has been gratefully received, and is packed with fascinating history of the activities of Cornish groups in New Zealand since the early 1900s. Their history follows a very similar track to our own, particularly the role played by the respective founders to revive the Associations. Their founder, Cliff Trevelyan and Mary (Tremayne) Webb were co-workers at Truro County Hall, before both moved on to explore the world. A “small world” indeed.

## TRAVEL TALES AND CORNISH CONNECTIONS.

Another example of how a Cornish connection will turn up wherever you travel.



This occurred during a family visit to Rochester, Kent last year and in their museum was a silver plate, with the label explaining that it belonged to Sir Cloudesley Shovell, MP for Rochester. He was also a fighting Admiral in the Navy, and this led to the Cornish connection.



The plate had been recovered from the wreck site Admiral Shovell's ship, HMS Association, which was lost in 1707 during a storm when the British fleet was returning from the siege of Toulon. A total of four warships and over 2,000 men were lost when the fleet smashed into Outer Gilstone Rock, now the location of the Bishop Rock lighthouse. Only 25 mariners survived, and the tragedy was known as the Scilly Naval Disaster.

The disaster has been attributed to a combination of factors. Although Admiral Shovell and his fleet captains had agreed that they had reached the French island of Ushant, off Brittany. In fact, they only knew where they were, north and south (Latitude), but not where they were, east and west (Longitude).

The disaster provided the trigger for the Government's quest to determine longitude at sea. It was not until 1759, that the problem was solved. (pic at right)

Two legends associated with the disaster continue to circulate through the Isles of Scilly.

An important contributor to Cook's success was **John Harrison**, 1693-1776 who solved the 'longitude problem'. Seen here with H4.



The first legend related to the Admiral's ring. His body was found the next morning by a local woman, who saw upon his hand an ornate gold ring set with a large emerald which she took. However due to the ring's unique nature she never sold it, instead keeping it until the end of her life when she confessed her crime to a local clergyman and gave him the ring.

However, no records exist of the ring ever being returned, so perhaps it is not true after all. Unlike the almost certainly apocryphal tale of the Scillonian man in the crew, who claimed to have kept his own reckoning of the ships' positions during the foggy passage. He placed the fleet correctly near the Isles of Scilly. But private subversive navigation of this kind by inferior ranks was forbidden in the navy, and Admiral Shovell had hanged the unfortunate sailor on the spot for mutiny.

Ed note:

Several coins recovered from the wreck of *HMS Association*, which was commanded by Sir Cloudesley Shovell, are part of a collection of coins from wrecks dating from 1686 to 1806 to be auctioned in February by East Midlands-based Gildings Auctioneers. The ship along with others was wrecked on the Isles of Scilly's Western Rocks on October 22nd, 1707 during the return voyage to England.

Will Gildings, of the auction house, was interviewed by BBC Radio Cornwall's Julie Skentelbery on 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2023:

Google: **BBC Radio Cornwall**, select **Schedule** and click on **Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> January**, scroll down to **10:00 Julie Skentelbery** and slide the bar along to 1:39:15 to hear the interview (about 8 minutes).

The auction was also reported by Cornwall Live magazine's Olivier Vergnault on 28<sup>th</sup> Jan 2023



(Gildings photo)

**MEMORIES:** Let's hear a cheer once more for:

**Fisherman's Friends – the Musical.**



The Toronto Star reporter, Joshua Chong in his November 30<sup>th</sup> 2022 article, wrote of the Fisherman's Friends "their journey is probably one of the unlikeliest origin stories of any musical group."



Six members of the "buoy band" were in Toronto to appear at the premiere of the musical by Mirvish Productions at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, Toronto.

A personal note to Jim Dagg from one of the members: "They had a grand time in Toronto and were so well behaved they will be able to return for another visit some day."

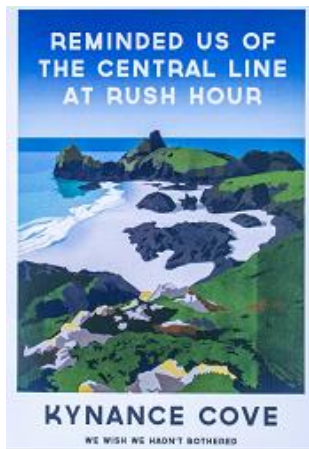
Below: the quiet fishing village in North Cornwall where it all began all those years ago.



The Platt, where Fisherman's Friends sing.



**A Headline in the Falmouth Packet:** “*Terrible Cornwall Trip Advisor reviews turned into artwork*”



Sally Mitchell discovered not everyone had nice words to say about her fishing village, Mevagissey. Reviewers had complained about seagulls being noisy, hills that are too steep or roads that are too narrow.

For those of us that love our County, it's a different picture, and Sally decided to turn the negatives into positives by creating art out of them. Here are some examples of her work, shown with permission, and taken from her website at <https://www.jettystreetpress.co.uk>.

(So much for grumbling emmets! JD)

**ON TWO HAPPIER NOTES:**

Stephen Morris of the Guardian writes: 'Interest is off the scale' Mark Jenkin's unsettling *Enys Men*, follow-up to his cult movie *Bait*, is playing to packed-out houses during an opening tour of the southwest of England before the nationwide launch.

In the film, Jenkin's partner, Mary Woodvine, plays a wildlife volunteer whose daily observations of a flower on a Cornish clifftop takes a dark turn into the strange and metaphysical. She drops stones down a scary old mineshaft; an eerie standing stone stands sentinel over the action.

Jenkin said his inspiration had been the Pipers standing stones in west Cornwall, where he grew up. "I was really haunted by the Pipers. I'd look through the gateway and I'd think they'd moved slightly. I like the idea of a sentient stone."

Kingsley Marshall, the head of film and television at Falmouth University, said: "We often see Cornwall misrepresented in film. There's a connection to real working environments in this, to Cornwall's post-industrial landscape. And there's a lot going on that resonates with us all – we've all felt isolated or grief or confused by our memories or haunted by our past."

**From my Window on Christmas Morning**

(by Bert Biscoe)



It may be rain. And Yes! They are  
True clouds, thick with gifts  
Of irrigation and perhaps,  
White drifts of forgiven sins  
Poured to fill our grateful laps  
Filling the morning's shepherd head  
Above the tin roof of yon lowly shed –

And it may not be possible  
To wave across the valley  
To youth on its gliding sled,  
And that may be danger  
Or a Robin's song sweet-sung  
Filling the morning's shepherd head  
Upon the tin roof of yon lowly shed –

Are these not the best of days to first  
Clap eyes upon the Earth, for all  
But one of those to come shall be bright,  
And taste of breast, of love expressed  
In virgin jets of starlit birth –  
Filling the morning's shepherd head  
Below the tin roof of yon lowly shed –

## WHEAL COATES RE-VISITED

When a slide of a St Agnes engine house was shown at our meeting recently, there were a number of nods of recognition. Wheal Coates, they murmured and by coincidence, this mine site has been the topic of several recent webinars.

In October, the Cornwall Archaeological Society presentation was entitled: “Investigating West Cornwall’s Mining Legacy”, <https://youtu.be/EhzGL14oQS0>. The speaker, Ben Sumpter, is an historian with an interest in exploring the thousands of abandoned mines; that is, Cornwall’s hidden underground landscape. Along the way, he travelled to the St Agnes Mining District, with St Agnes described as “a mining parish that has shaped our identity”.

Part of his presentation discussed the difficulty of underground photography, and he showed the different techniques available then and now. Here he compared photographs with a 100-year span. The 1893 photograph is taken from the book “*Mongst Mines and Miners, Underground Scenes by Flashlight*”, by J. C. Burrow, and is captioned “The 70 Tram-Road, East Pool Mine, Redruth”.

A copy of the book is available from the TCA Archives.

And if you have doubt of the bravery of those Cornish miners, just take a look at the video of Ben Sumpter’s company, Cornish Underground Adventures. <https://cornwallunderground.co.uk/>

Then, in December, Ken Peak included a story of Wheal Coates during the December meeting of the CAV. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQla\\_cQk2OQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQla_cQk2OQ)

### Underground Photography in Cornish Mines

A comparison: the same techniques 129yrs apart, 1893-2022



### Exploring Wheal Coates



The video, [takes the viewer underground at Wheal Coates](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQla_cQk2OQ), going along a stope from a massive cave area to a waterfall deep under the Cornish cliffs.

The cave used to access the mine is known as Vugga Cave, originally dug by miners, but the sea has widened it over time.

As a side note, Robyn Coates, a member of the CAV, confirmed that they don’t have a direct link to Wheal Coates – it is just a family joke!!

CORNISH  
ARCHAEOLOGY  
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HENDHYSCANS  
KERNOW

Interested in ancient times and early history? Have a look at the Cornish Archaeology Society:



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Website and e-newsletter: [web@cornisharchaeology.org.uk](mailto:web@cornisharchaeology.org.uk)



## A FAMILY HISTORY NOTE FROM SUE COX:

### Thomas Wilbie 1621- 1691 & Margaret Nichols 1628 - 1678

It's a wonderful thing when you find some scandal involving an ancestor, and even more wonderful when there's good documentation. That was the case with Thomas Wilbie, born in Colchester Essex but with many Cornish descendants, including one of my ancestors. Here's the story:

In 1962, in *Devon Notes and Queries*, J. L. Willoughby wrote:

"The story started with a youthful indiscretion alleged to have been committed by Thomas Wilbie of Colchester in 1646. With his father John, husbandman, he was bound over to appear early in 1647 before the Colchester Quarter Sessions to answer the allegations of one Susan Parker concerning a base child. Whether or not he duly appeared is not known. The next that is known is that Thomas Wilbie of Colchester Co. Essex, Yeoman, married Margaret Nicholas, daughter of John Nicholas of Sithney, deceased, at St. Breage, Cornwall, on 21<sup>st</sup> July, 1647. Having regard to the time element and the then unsettled state of the country, the probability would seem to be that Thomas caught a ship in Colchester harbour and landed in Cornwall."

Another researcher pointed out:

"He was supposed to pay 1/6d weekly till it be 8. A 25 pound bond was fixed. If she was a good mother, her punishment was suspended. Otherwise, she would be fined 12d a week and sent to the House of Corrections for one whole year."

So, I am comfortable confirming that Thomas's father was John, and that Thomas was something of a rat. But Thomas the Rat was the progenitor of the future Cornish Willoughbys. Gradually the spelling of the name was standardized. By 1851 there were 118 descendants in Illogan and many more in Redruth and Camborne (although for a long time in Camborne they spelled it Willyabe).

Thomas and Margaret lived and reproduced in several places - Breage, Helston and St. Martin-in-Meneage. They had three sons we know of, and possibly other children we don't know about - although they are not mentioned in his will. I assume that a "Thomas Willy" shown in the hearth tax rolls was our man - taxed on one hearth in St. Martin-in-Meneage, which is where they also died.

At the time of his death, old Thomas was worth £90/7/6 - a tidy sum to pass on to his children and grandchildren. He was, of course, a yeoman, and was buried in St Martin-in-Meneage, Cornwall, on 4th June 1691. I can't help wondering why he needed to move so often.

**Margaret Nicholas** was apparently the daughter of John and Dorras Nicholas. Her marriage record confirms this, and is unusually long and informative:

*Thomas Wilbie of Colchester in the county of Essex and Margaret Nicholas the daughter of John Nicholas of Sithney deceased husband of Dorcas Nicholas were married on the 21st day of July.*

The record is hard to read and I may have a few words wrong, but I wish they were all so informative. I have to assume from this that Margaret was born in Sithney. The problem is that Sithney records don't go back that far. Margaret was buried in St. Martin-in-Meneage on 4th June 1691<sup>1</sup>.

There are only records of three children born to Margaret and Thomas Wilbie:

- John, baptized 16th April 1648 in Helston. He married and had two children, both born in Constantine, one named Dorcas after John's grandmother.
- Thomas (Willabay), baptized 21st July 1649 in Breage. He married a woman named Jane, and their children were all born in Illogan. They are my ancestors.
- Peter, baptized 4th March 1651/2, was born in St. Martin-in-Meneage, married Francis Gwavas there, had his children there, and died there.



<sup>1</sup> The parish church in Sithney is dedicated to St Sidinius or Sithney, the patron saint of mad dogs. Maybe they ate the records.

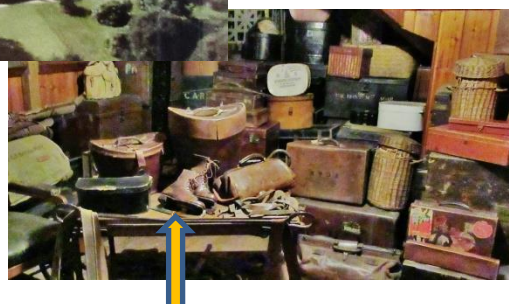
## TCA MONTHLY PROGRAMME SCHEDULE 2023

*All dates Saturday @ 2.00pm, unless otherwise noted*

Date	Title	Zoom or In-Person	Presenter
January 21 <sup>st</sup>	"TCA – The Middle Years – 1904-1961".	Zoom	Barbara
February 18 <sup>th</sup>	Cornwall and the Cornish: A Personal Journey	Zoom	Nigel Pengelly
March 3 <sup>rd</sup> <b>Friday 10.30am</b>	St Piran Flag raising with warm up in local cafe or pub	In-Person, in and around City Hall	None
March 18 <sup>th</sup>	Spring Get together Show and Tell	In-person at Swansea Town Hall	All



Visiting Lanhydrock House, nr Bodmin, Cornwall, I looked into one of the box rooms in the uppermost floor. The skates on the table in a good winter could have found themselves on cheerful feet and gliding over well frozen ponds and streams. (JD)



TORONTO CORNISH ASSOCIATION REVIEW

*Aiming to preserve Cornish heritage,*

*and stimulate interest in Cornish traditions, local history, genealogy, and culture.*

Contributing editor: John Webb, Editor: Barbara Gardner-Bray, Publishing editor: James Dagg