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Newsletter of the Cornish Association of New South Wales



46th Annual General Meeting

Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club, West Ryde

Beforehand - Informal lunch

Meet in club bistro first - 11.30 for 12

Noon The menu for you to choose from on the day can be reviewed here:

<https://www.releagues.com.au/37>

AGM

Start 1.30pm Saturday 5th March

followed by

St Piran's Day Get Together

2:15- 4pm

Celebrate St Piran and our 47th year! We hope you can come/stay for some fun: eg. Door prize, Talk/s and/or Quiz, sales table, time for some chat, renewal of memberships etc.

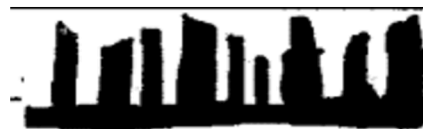


FESTIVALS 2022

29th Australian Celtic Festival

Glen Innes, NSW

– The Year of Cornwall, Brittany & Wales



**Thursday 28th
April – Sunday
1st May, 2022**

Yes, the Cornish will be there for our year! What Cornish content can we include? But how many can we gather? Will you? Contact Joy if you hope to be.

*The 24th Cornish stone ceremony is on Sunday
This is also the 30th year since the inauguration of the
Standing Stones in February, 1992*

For more information:

<http://www.australiancelticfestival.com/>

PROVISIONAL PROGRAM



Online ZOOM Sessions

18 December – 'Christmas Cake & Carols'

April '22 – Autumn 'Cakey Tea & Chat'



SYDNEY & REGION OUTINGS / EVENTS

RIVERBOAT POSTMAN OUTING

on Hawkesbury River

**10am Friday 14 January
2022**



<https://riverboatpostman.com.au>

Join a few of us on this lovely river journey upstream and downstream, where mail and supplies are dropped along the way. It leaves the Brooklyn Wharf sharp at 10am, and returns around 1pm. Morning tea and light lunch is served as part of the price. This is school holidays so bring a youngster or two. Contact Joy on 0428 617 830 or email joy.dunkerley@gmail.com please if you are interested.

An unpaid for reservation has been made in the name "CORNISH" on that day. If you wish to join us you will need to contact them, mention the reservation, tell them any dietary restrictions, and pay. Parking space is at a premium, but the Hawkesbury River railway station is right alongside, with lift access. Trains coming south ex Gosford at 8:15am (arrives Hawkesbury River 8:40) or the one that stops at Hornsby going north at 8:23am (arrives 8:48).

Booking number 0400 600 111. Details, prices (eg. seniors \$49) at: www.riverboatpostman.com.au

Committee News:

Bank account balance at 30/11/2021: **\$6,981.59**

Your 2021/22 Committee met for a 2nd time, this time via Zoom, on Sunday 24 October. Business included commemoration of our sadly recently deceased members, President's report on activities, Treasurer's Year to Date report received and adopted, and approved payments. Secretary's report (including that our newsletters are now also lodged with NED (National *edeposit* service) and past ones are being added, as well as they have been for some 20 years with National Library and NSW State Library. Future activities were discussed. Confirmed AGM and get together on 5th March.

"I wish everyone a very merry Christmas and happy new year! See some of you at the AGM" Joy Dunkerley, President

Reminder: 17 members are still un-financial. A further reminder will be sent soon.

MEMBERS MILESTONES

Our best wishes to a number of members who have had reported non virus health problems, or have been having ongoing medical procedures.

Congratulations to all those with birthdays or anniversaries during November and December.

Please still let us know of your good news, special events, or of those who are ill.

VALE Roger John Thomas aged 80 (b.6/5/41 - d. 27/9/2021)



Tribute: Roger Thomas passed away on the 27th September, in his care home care in Taree, after 10 days in hospital.

Roger was born in the NSW mining city of Broken Hill, in 1941, son of a miner whose Thomas ancestors arrived from the Cornish mining districts of Illogan, Redruth and Camborne. He was always proud of his Cornish and Broken Hill heritage.

During and after a career in the NSW public service he pursued his interest in his Celtic Cornish ancestry and Celtic interests generally. He read and researched extensively and was a speaker at conferences and festivals.



Roger was a foundation member of the Cornish Association of NSW in 1975, a past President, on the Committee for decades; instrumental in introducing family interests, the Bicentennial funded Byng Chapel project, and very active for most of its life until his health deteriorated in recent years. He and wife Sue were regulars at functions despite living in Barrington near Gloucester for many of his later years; regulars too at the Kernewek Lowender Cornish festival in SA.

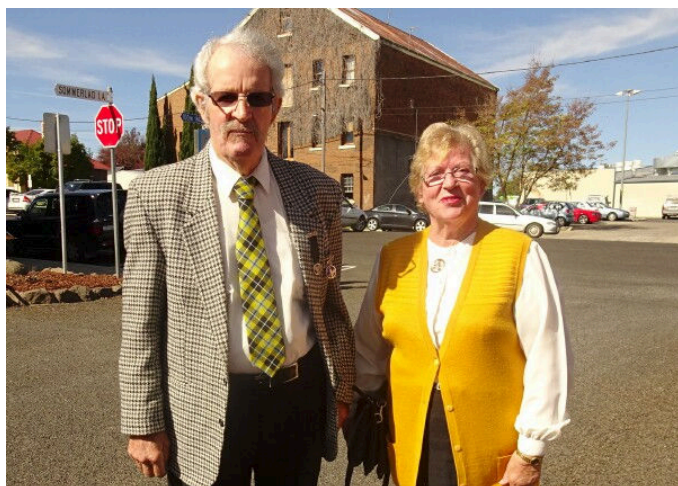
Barded into the circle of the Cornish Gorsedh in 1992 at Perran Round, Perranzabuloe,

Cornwall, he took the name Palores an Dyghow (Chough of the South), for his central work among those Cornish born and of descent in NSW.

Roger also a foundation member of the Celtic Council of Australia (CCA), as the Cornish Deputy Convenor, Senior Deputy Convenor, and the 2nd Convenor who supported and followed on from founder Peter Alexander until 2004, providing five 5 years of consolidation of its structures, progress on the academic Celtic Journal, and festival involvement growth.

He was awarded Celtic honours, and at his death he held the honour Tus Enorys Ewn (T En E) (From Cornish - "Truly Honoured Person") the second highest honour, be awarded for most distinguished service to the Celtic community.

He was and remained until his death an Inaugural Life Guardian of the Australian Standing Stones Celtic monument at Glen Innes, and the Australian Celtic Festival awarded him the Triquetra Award in 2012 for services to the Festival and Standing Stones. Below Roger and Sue Thomas in Glen Innes



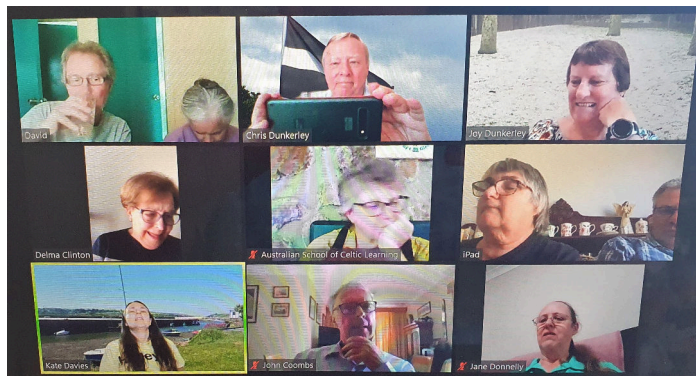
He had a quiet grave side funeral in Gloucester Lawn Cemetery on 1st October during a period of Covid lockdown.

Condolences from the Committee and members of the CCA to his wife Sue; and his children Stephen, Sharon and Mark, and grandchildren. Missed by his many friends and colleagues.

Nadelik Lowen - Merry Christmas
Bledhen Nowyth Da - Happy New Year

PAST CANSW EVENTS

Our Zoom 'Cornish Quiz and Show & Tell' get together of 24 October has less attending (11) but was a lively challenge of everyone's knowledge, and some fascinating reveals in the show and tell.



End of Year Lunch – Thursday 4 December Del Clinton reports that those members and friends attending had a lovely time at the end of year lunch at West Ryde. Thanks to Del again for organizing it. See the photo below.



QUOTE

"There are many misconceptions about Cornwall's legal identity and status. One is that Cornwall is part of England. Another is that the Duchy of Cornwall has nothing except the name in common with the land of Cornwall. Yet another is that the only people with a distinctly Cornish legal identity are the Tinnars. Many people believe that the rights of the Tinnars derive from Charters given by Kings and Queens of England. All these beliefs, and many others, are false. Some of these fallacies are the fruit of misunderstanding. Others have been propagated deliberately by people who know better."

His Honour Judge Paul Laity and Tim Saunders with Dr. Alan M. Kent – 'The Reason Why; Cornwall's Status in Constitutional and International Law' 2001, page 10: 'Our Legal Heritage'

SOME CORNISH SURNAMES – a series

Venton – From Cornish word *Fenten*, a spring/well/fountain. Placename Venton in Nth Tamerton, Menheniot, and St Germans. Found in mid Cornwall.

Verran / Verrin – Probably from *Ver*, short; hence a short man. Placenames Buscaverran, Crowan parish; Posaverran, Constantine. [SA Premier Sir John Verran, from Moonta]

Vian / Viant – Possibly a form of vaughan or derived from (b)vyghan (small).

Vickery – When Cornish, possibly from *vycarjy*, vicarage servant.

Vigus / Vigars – Possibly from *var-cos*, top of the wood. Placename Busvargus, St Just in Penwith (Bosvargoes 1302).

Vingoe – Possibly a breakaway from placename Trevingey, St Ives. Obscure.

Vinson – Possibly also from *fenten*. Placename Trevenson, Illogan (Trefensin 1340).

Visick – Possibly from placename Trevisick – *trev-ysak* (homestead with corn). Placenames Trevisick, Poundstock; Blisland, St Agnes, St Austell – all Trevisick 1274 and Trevysack 1327. Found in mid and SE Cornwall.

Vivian / Vyvyan – Personal name documented over 7 centuries in Cornwall, now wider. Placename Trevivian, Davidstowe.

Vosper – From *fos-por*, pasture by a ditch. Placename Trevosper, South Petherwin (Trevospor 1210). Found in SE and Nth Cornwall.

Vos / Voss/ Vose – From *fos*, ditch or rampart. Placename Vose, St Ewe.

To be continued [A reminder that these names come from 'A handbook of Cornish Surnames', by George Pawley White, 2nd ed. 1981.]

Notable Cornish / people of Cornwall and the diaspora

Joseph Bolitho Johns – Cornishman, Miner, Convict, Celebrated Bushranger 'Moondyne Joe'

Joseph Bolitho Johns better known in Australia as 'Moondyne Joe', was a convict and Western Australia's best-known bushranger. Born into poor and relatively difficult circumstances, he became something of a petty criminal robber with a strong sense of self-determination. He is remembered as a person who had escaped multiple times from prison.

Born in Cornwall, around 1826 and raised as a Roman Catholic, he was the third of six children of blacksmith Thomas Johns (1795–1833) and his wife Mary Bolitho (1804–1860).



Joe was a tall man with black hair and hazel-coloured eyes, and it is likely that he contracted smallpox in his youth as, later, records describe him as "pockmarked".

His father died some time in 1833, and Johns and his three brothers took work in copper mines. In 1841 the family was living at Illogan, Cornwall, but by 1848 Johns had migrated to Wales, taking work as an iron ore miner, probably at the Clydach Iron Works. On 15th November 1848, Johns and an associate using the name William Cross, the pseudonym for the to be convict John Williams, were arrested near Chepstow for "stealing from the house of Richard Price, three loaves of bread, one piece of bacon, several cheeses, and other goods".

Arraigned at the Brecon Assizes on charges of burglary and stealing, the pair pleaded not guilty. On 23rd March, they were tried at the Lent Assizes

before Sir William Erle. Newspaper reports of the trial suggest that the pair gave an unexpectedly spirited defence, but Johns was abrasive and "contravened the conventions of court procedure". The men were convicted and sentenced to ten years' penal servitude. W. J. Edgar (1990) observes that in several other cases brought before the same judge that day, guilty pleas to very similar charges resulted in sentences ranging from three weeks to three months. Johns and Williams were to spend the next seven months working on a government work party in the local area, before being transferred to Millbank Prison. On 1st January 1850, they were transferred to Pentonville Prison to serve their mandatory six months of solitary confinement.

The pair were transferred to Dartmoor Prison on 21st October 1851, but shortly afterwards Johns was transferred to the Woolwich prison hulk 'Justitia', probably for disciplinary reasons. When the 'Justitia' was destroyed by fire, he was transferred to the 'Defence'. About a year later, he boarded the prison ship 'Pyrenees' for transportation to what was then the British penal colony of Western Australia to serve out the remainder of his sentence. The 'Pyrenees' arrived in Fremantle on 30th April.

In reward for good behaviour, Johns was issued with a ticket of leave on arrival, and later on 10th March 1855 he received a conditional pardon. He then settled in the Avon Valley, one of the most rugged and inaccessible places in the Darling Range. The Aboriginal name for the area was Moondyne. Johns made a living by partly fencing the springs in the area, and trapping escaped stock and horses. Often a reward was offered for the return of such animals.

In August 1861, Johns caught an unbranded stallion, and branded it with his own mark. This was effectively horse-stealing, and when the police heard of this, they arrested him at their first opportunity. The horse was taken as evidence, and Johns was placed in the Toodyay lockup.

Sometime during the night, Johns broke out of his cell, and stole the horse once more, taking also the local magistrate's brand new saddle and bridle. He was caught the next day, but while on the run he had killed the horse and cut his brand out of the hide, thus destroying the evidence. Consequently, he received only a three year sentence for jail-

breaking, whereas a typical sentence for horse stealing was more than ten years. While Johns was serving his sentence, there were a rash of convict escapes and attempted escapes, but Johns remained well behaved. His good behaviour earned him a remission on his sentence, and he was released on a ticket of leave in February 1864.

He then found work on a farm in Kelmscott, but in January 1865 a neighbour's steer was killed and eaten, and Johns was accused of having done the deed. Johns was to protest his innocence of this crime for the rest of his life, but was nonetheless found guilty and sentenced to ten years' penal servitude. Johns was determined not to serve what he felt was an unjust sentence, and in early November he and another prisoner absconded from a work party. They were on the run for nearly a month, during which time they committed a number of small robberies. It was during this time that Johns first adopted the nickname Moondyne Joe. They were finally caught 37 kilometres east of York by a party of policemen that included the Aboriginal tracker Tommy Windich.

For absconding and for being in possession of a firearm, Moondyne Joe was sentenced to twelve months in irons. In April 1865, Joe sent a petition to the Chief Justice, and received four years off his sentence. This was apparently unsatisfactory to him, for later that month he received a further six months in irons for trying to cut the lock out of his door. Early in August, he succeeded in escaping again. After cutting off his irons, he met up with three other escapees, and together they roamed the bush around Perth, committing a number of robberies and narrowly escaping capture on a number of occasions. Near the end of the month, one of the gang was captured by police. Realising that the gang could not elude the police forever, Moondyne Joe formulated a plan to escape the colony by travelling overland to the colony of South Australia. This would be a long and arduous journey through extremely arid land, and would have to be very well equipped if it were to stand any chance of success.

On 5th September Moondyne Joe equipped his company by committing the biggest robbery of his career, stealing supplies and equipment from the Toodyay store of an old enemy, James Everett. The gang then started travelling east along the explorer Charles Hunt's established route. Their tracks were

discovered by police on 26th September, about 160 kilometres east of York. A team of police then set out after them, and they were captured on 29th September near the present-day site of the town of Westonia, about 300 kilometres north east of Perth. As punishment for escaping and for the robberies committed while on the run, Moondyne Joe received five years hard labour on top of his remaining sentence. Extraordinary measures were taken to ensure that Johns did not escape again.

He was transferred to Fremantle Prison where a special "escape-proof" cell was made for him built from stone, lined with Jarrah sleepers and over 1,000 nails. He was set to work breaking stone, but rather than permit him to leave the prison, the stone was brought in and dumped in a corner of the prison yard, where Johns worked under the constant supervision of a warder. Governor John Hampton was so confident of the arrangements, he was heard to say to Johns: "If you get out again, I'll forgive you". However, the rock broken by Joe was not removed regularly, and eventually a pile grew up until it obscured the guard's view of Joe below the waist. Partially hidden behind the pile of rocks, he occasionally swung his sledgehammer at the limestone wall of the prison.

On 7th March 1867, Moondyne Joe escaped through a hole he had made in the prison wall. Despite an extensive manhunt, no sign of him was found, and he would not be recaptured for nearly two years. He did not return to any of his old haunts, and he committed no crimes, so the authorities received very little information about him. Also, many convicts were encouraged by Moondyne Joe's audacious escape, and a number of escapes were attempted in the following months, so that he was quickly forgotten. A few days before the second anniversary of his escape, Moondyne Joe tried to steal some wine from the cellars at Houghton Winery in the Swan Valley. By chance, the owner had been helping with a police search, and afterwards invited a group of police back to the vineyard for refreshments. When the owner entered the cellar, Joe assumed that he was discovered, and made a dash for the door into the arms of the police.

He was returned to prison, and on 22nd March 1869 was sentenced to an additional four years in irons. He made at least one more attempt to escape, but was unsuccessful. Eventually, Governor Weld heard

of his predecessor Hampton's promise, and decided that further punishment would be unfair. Moondyne Joe was given a ticket of leave in April 1871. The remainder of John's life consisted of periods of good behaviour punctuated by occasional minor misdemeanours and brief jail terms. In January 1879, he married a widow named Louisa Hearn, and they spent some time prospecting for gold near Southern Cross. In 1881, while exploring the countryside around Karridale, he discovered Moondyne Cave.

In his later years, he began acting strangely, and was eventually found to be mentally ill. He died of senile dementia in the Fremantle Lunatic Asylum on 13th August 1900, and was buried in Fremantle Cemetery. While Moondyne Joe was bush ranging in 1869, an Irish political prisoner named John Boyle O'Reilly was serving time in Fremantle Prison. Although it is very unlikely that O'Reilly knew Moondyne Joe, he must have heard many stories of Joe's exploits. In September 1869, O'Reilly escaped and was rescued by an American ship. After his arrival in the United States, he wrote a novel about convict life called 'Moondyne: An Australian Tale', whose central character was called Moondyne Joe. The book is presented as fiction, and neither the character nor the plot bears much resemblance to the life of Joseph Johns. In 1913, O'Reilly's novel was made into a movie entitled 'Moondyne'. Moondyne has featured in a range of children's and other fictional books, and songs over the years. On the first Sunday of May, the town of Toodyay celebrates the life and times of Moondyne Joe by holding the Moondyne Festival in May each year.

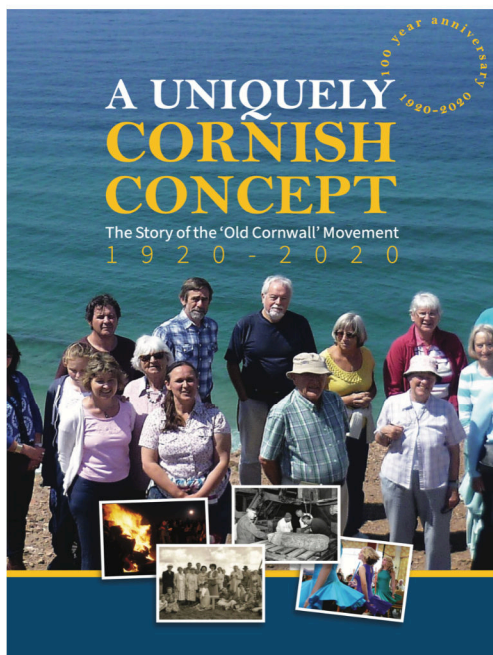
The fascinating photo of Joseph Bolitho Johns was taken by Alfred Chopin, date not known. It was first published in The Sunday Times on 27th May 1924 – and used on the cover of the book by Ian Elliott, 'Moondyne Joe: The Man and the Myth' in 1998. This information has been curated by #KMTU Kernow Matters to us – thanks. [Note: No relation to the Editor's Cornish Johns family]

NEWS

As the Association will be entering our **50th year** on the 17 April 2024 we will be starting to

work on recording our history. As part of this, original and long time members may be sent a questionnaire in the future. Input from others will also be sought.

New Book:



Authors:

Peter Thomas, Andrew Langdon, & Merv Davey. Over the last 100 years, the 'Old Cornwall' Movement has played a pivotal role in the resurgence of Cornwall's heritage and culture. Its structure of individual Societies throughout Cornwall, with the Federation of 'Old Cornwall' Societies as coordinator and facilitator, has enabled the work of committed members to preserve, maintain and promote Cornish culture in all its aspects, notably in the areas of practical work in the field, folk traditions, publishing and Cornish language and dialect. The Federation journal Old Cornwall / Kernow Goth, and more recently its website - <https://kernowgoth.org/> - are repositories of invaluable information on all aspects of Cornwall and the Cornish, information which in many cases could so easily have been lost. 'Old Cornwall' has not only cooperated with other like-minded organisations but has been instrumental in the foundation of some of the most important, such as the Cornish Gorsedh and the Cornish Language Board. This book tells the story of the first 100 years of the Movement – this 'uniquely Cornish concept' – and looks forward to the continuation of its crucial work in the challenging years to come.

Publisher: Federation of Old Cornwall Societies
Pages: 168 ISBN:978-0-902660-52-6 £12.00 Inclusive of tax, plus post and packaging <https://kernowgoth.org/>

Demonstrations continue in Cornwall over housing and development policy, especially numbers of second homes and homelessness of local Cornish people.



FEATURE STORIES



A **Cornish Christmas Bush** or Kissing Bunch is a creation from far distant pagan times, carried through over the centuries in some Cornish homes. They were made with two circles of withy, one inserted through the center of the other to create a three dimensional circle. They were decorated with holly and ivy, apples, candles—and mistletoe. Originally hung on the evening of December 20th and meant to welcome the Lord of Light, they were also associated with mistletoe kisses, dancing and festing romping. Sprigs of mistletoe for kissing under likely evolved from these.

Christmas Carol Church Services

It is said that the Christmas carol service was invented in Truro, Cornwall in 1880 by a fascinating English clergyman called Edward White Benson, with a fascinating family. He was Bishop at the start of building Truro Cathedral and later Archbishop of Canterbury. The story goes that on Christmas Eve everybody in Truro would get disgustingly drunk, and that the Bishop of Truro (Benson) was so disgusted that he decided to lure everybody out of the pub and into church with his new service.

One of the most popular types of Carols services are **Carols by Candlelight** services. At this service, the church or outdoor place is only lit by candlelight and it feels very Christmassy! Forms of Carols by Candlelight services are held in countries all over the world, but the Australian style evolved in the 1930s that sung by Cornish miners in Moonta SA in the late 1800s with candles on their mining helmets.

Around the Associations

In future editions we will be looking at what is happening in Cornish Associations around the world. Many Cornish Associations have closed in recent years but there are still many that are active, and have found ways to continue in these Covid times. EG. The Cornish Association of SA is now 121 years old, London Cornish is also of century status, whilst NZ is well past its 50 years. The Victorian Association **CAV** has coped well with Covid, using Zoom online meetings to good effect. They have made the excellent talks given available on their web site: <http://www.cornishvic.org.au/latenews.html>

PLAS AN TAVES

This is Plas an Tavas = Language Place - Introducing you to some daily Kernewek, the ancient Celtic language of Cornwall today, to practice.

Pronunciation? Cornish is mainly phonetic!

More: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/the-cornish-language/cornish-language/>

In this issue you will learn about:

A FEW FESTIVE WORDS IN CORNISH

Nadelik Lowen - *Merry Christmas*
 Bledhen Nowyth Da - *Happy New Year*
 Gorhemynadow a'n Seson - *Season's Greetings*
 Chons da - *Good luck*
 Gwedhen Nadelik - *Christmas tree*
 Royow Nadelik - *Christmas presents*
 Tas Nadelik - *Father Christmas*
 Karolyow Nadelik - *Christmas Carols*
 Podin Nadelik - *Christmas pudding*
 Pastigow brewgig - *mince pies*
 Tesen Nadelik - *Christmas cake*
 Kelyn - *Holly* Ydhyow - *Ivy*
 Uhelvar - *Mistletoe* El - *Angel*
 Tri Myghtern - *Three Kings*
 Rudolf an Karow Ergh Tron-Rudh - *Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer*

Silly Sayings - Unintended Church notices

*"Church office will be closed Monday.
 Halleluia! Halleluia!"*



CANSW Public & Members Web Pages:

Please have a look through all the pages on our web site; especially the NSW 'Sites' pages developed by our own (late) Dr John Symonds. Tell your friends! Suggested updates or new content are welcome.

www.celticcouncil.org.au/cornish/nsw.htm

Dates coming up ... Feast day of St Budoc
 8th Dec., Tom Bawcock's Eve 23 Dec, Yuletide.

Editorial note: The content of this newsletter does not necessarily reflect official views of the CANSW, but rather contributors and sources! If someone is sick let me know (get-well message), or other news please!

The next Newsletter: No 395 for the months of January / February 2021 has a copy deadline - by 18 January.

Contributions may be held for future use but more (electronic – emailed preferred) are welcome!

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