

CORNISH IN BENDIGO – Report on Cornish Festival Weekend - (Dahlia & Arts)

What a wonderful weekend it was and despite very threatening weather on the Saturday for the street parade and the Bardic ceremony, thankfully we did not get drowned while they were occurring. It did start to pour down with rain, and thunder and lightning while we were having our afternoon tea, and returning to our cars to travel home meant jumping a few puddles – but the events themselves were dry thank goodness.

Our guests, visitors from out of town and interstate and distinguished guest Maureen Fuller, Grand Bard of Gorsedh Kernow started arriving on Thursday night – 13th March. An informal meal together that evening was a nice way to start the proceedings, and set the scene for a great weekend together.

The hall was set up on Thursday afternoon with some great display materials and there were plenty of people who came through to see us all.

Friday came around and Rob Lloyd was ready for the local bus tour – Cornish People and Places. With a 53 seater coach they set off for an informative and fun visit to places of Cornish significance in Bendigo, with a few Cornish jokes thrown in along the way. The second half of the tour was a virtual cemetery tour which was put together by local historian Bev Hanson. She provided a great deal of information and cemetery locations for so many of our Cornish folk who lived and died here in Bendigo, again with her ability to incorporate humour and even some scandal into the storytelling.

Friday night was Meet the Cornish and what a great event this was. The ever helpful Noel Carthew once again provided the musical accompaniment, sang for his supper and even read a poem for us. Is there nothing this man cannot do? The President of the CAV, Robert Gribben provided wonderful insight into the building of the Royal Albert Railway Bridge, over the Tamar. Another event which will linger long in our memory is the singing of “Goin’ up Camborne Hill” by the language group. Trust me – you had to be there! All in good fun though and the Cornish certainly know how to have fun when we get together.

Saturday’s main events were the street parade and the Bardic ceremony. While the weather was threatening, as previously mentioned, the rain did hold off for us for which we were very grateful. We were thrilled to have the Grand Bard lead the ceremony for us and it made the event even more special. The street parade was very well received and with the bards in their robes marching behind the Grand Bard who led us all, it created quite a deal of interest and publicity of course for the Bardic Ceremony which was to follow. With loud cries of “Oggie, Oggie, Oggie” coming from behind us, we certainly made our presence felt and known.

Saturday night was the chance for us all to get dressed up for the St Piran’s Dinner. A lovely meal and speech by the Grand Bard which focused on St Piran and his life. Again, extremely well received and yet another opportunity to catch up with friends from near and far.

Sunday morning saw us at the Eaglehawk Uniting Church where we raised the roof with our ‘songs of praise.’ The Cornish language was once again heard by the people present with Maureen Fuller providing her greetings in both Cornish and English and Robert Lloyd presenting his bible reading in English with 6 of the verses translated into Cornish as well.

Sunday night saw the end of the Festival weekend with an informal dinner which was held at the Manchester Hotel – a great Cornish owned hotel in the early days of Bendigo. It was another chance to meet up and to celebrate a weekend of fun, fellowship and great company. We look forward to doing it all again in another two years, somewhere in Victoria. In the meantime some of us will be travelling to Glenn Innes in May for the “Year of the Cornish” as part of their annual Celtic Festival there and of course Kernewek Lowender will see us travel back to the Copper Triangle in South Australia in May 2015. Kernow Bys Vykken

We would like to share a collection of photographs which were taken by Robyn and Arthur Coates. They are always happy to not only take the responsibility for doing this throughout the festival but are happy for them to be shared with others. We thank them for doing this and allowing us to have permanent records of these very special events and more importantly allowing us to share these photos with others.



Bardic Group with Banner Bearers – Eaglehawk 2014



Beryl Curnow (Vice President CAV) , Robert Gribben (President of the CAV) & Bill Phillips (Past President and Patron of the CAV).



Grand Bard Maureen Fuller with new Bard – June Whiffin



*A memorable rendition of "Goin' Up Camborne Hill" in Cornish
Grand Bard Maureen Fuller , Terry Johnson from South Australia &
Robert Lloyd from Bendigo*



Street Parade (1)



Street Parade (2)



Grand Bard Maureen Fuller leading the Bards in the Street Parade