

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Cornish Association of Victoria AGM President's Report



This year started a little slowly, about one month slow: as you may recall last year's AGM was in August, so this report covers the past eleven months.

We have continued "meeting" monthly, either in person, via zoom, or like today, a combination of both.

At our August AGM, our own Brian Rollason presented a talk on "The Fox Family of Falmouth", and why they became one of the famous families in the area.

In September, our former Kiwi import, Judy Wright presented her talk on, "Hayle, The Town that Changed the World", with emphasis on the wrought iron industry, its rise and subsequent decline.

In October, we undertook a visit to the Geelong Branch. This was an active meeting with visits to Point Henry, the Town Hall and Art Gallery, Old Customs House and the local Wesley Church. Thanks to Neil Thomas and the Geelong Branch for hosting this event.

November was also an active gathering, with a visit to St Erth in Blackwood.

These gardens in a central location hosted members from Melbourne, Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong.

Unfortunately, I found myself unable to attend, spending that and my birthday the next day in hospital, but other members were able to wander around the plant nursery and later plant themselves in the café.

December saw Christmas functions in Melbourne and Ballarat. Geelong, being a group that meets on odd months, had its party in November.

Melbourne was here at Darebin.

As usual there was a pictorial quiz on Cornwall, as per usual I failed miserably.

January was holiday time, and for me that meant a trip to Patagonia and Antarctica, whilst others were basking in the Victorian summer holiday season.

As February arrived, I was still meeting up with penguins, seals and whales, whilst CAV members were meeting up with each other presenting another round of "Cornish Villages".

Sancreed was represented by Penny McGuire-White, Warleggan by Robyn Coates, Sennen by Marjorie Barrett and St Teath by David Reid.



CORNISH ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA, INC.

NEWSLETTER No. 157

August 2026

Corporation Reg. No. A0008264A

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Membership Fees

Single: \$40.00
Family: \$60.00
Life Single: \$400.00
Life Family: \$600.00

Fee renewal notices will be
distributed shortly.



Saturday 15th August

Our speaker will be Beverley
Blennerhassett and she will speak
about a modern day shipwreck.

Meeting will be an in person (and
zoom meeting) at Darebin North
West Uniting Church at
1.30 pm – 399A Murray Road,
West Preston.

You are welcome to BYO Lunch at
12 noon and a plate of afternoon
tea to share.

Zoom details:

Join Zoom Meeting:
[https://us06web.zoom.us/
j/83413977869?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83413977869?pwd=s0eTePkZk9EWqD5hoduJfUB0VAALb7.1)
[pwd=s0eTePkZk9EWqD5hoduJfUB
0VAALb7.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83413977869?pwd=s0eTePkZk9EWqD5hoduJfUB0VAALb7.1)

Meeting ID: 834 1397 7869
Passcode: 651736

A route 11 tram, runs along Gilbert
Road from Collins Street and it is
just a short walk, a block and a half,
from tram stop 43, on the corner of
Gilbert and Murray Roads. (cross
over the tram lines and walk east).
A Mernda Line train stops at
Preston, (from platform 1 at
Flinders Street and platform 9 at
Southern Cross) and it is about a
five-seven minute walk west along
Murray Road to the church, past
Preston West Primary School.

Saturday 19th September - this
will be an outing to the Immigration
Museum, 400 Flinders Street,
Melbourne. Tickets - Adult \$15,
Senior \$12; Concession Free
Children 16 years and under Free
Museum Member Free.

We will be meeting at 11.00 am at
the front of the Museum.
Trams 35, 70 and 75 run along
Flinders Street and stop at Market
Street which is very close to the
Museum.

Saturday 17th October will be
an online meeting only - speaker
and time to be confirmed.

ADVANCE NOTICES

Ballarat Christmas Luncheon
will be held on **Saturday 5th
December** at 12 noon at The
Grand in Dana Street, Ballarat -
more details to come.

The CAV Christmas Meeting will
be held on **Saturday 12th
December** at Darebin North
West Uniting Church - 399A
Murray Road, West Preston.

We will be asking people to bring
either a salad or a dessert with
meats and soft drinks provided.
There will be a small charge to
cover costs.

CAV Newsletter

The CAV Newsletter is
distributed via email and in some
cases by mail.
Deadline for contributions for the
next issue: **Saturday 17th
October**
Articles for inclusion are
welcome at any time but **must
be received by the deadline
date.**
Please include pictures or tables
as a separate file.
The email address for the CAV
Newsletter -
robyncoates@hotmail.com

Cornish Tid Bits may be
sourced from the Cornwall
Council, BBC Cornwall, Pirate
FM News, Falmouth Packet,
CornwallLive, Kresen Kernow,
Wikipedia

Pastoral Care

If you know of someone who is
unwell, celebrating a special
birthday or just needs a cheery
greeting, please let Evelyn Jones
know the details so she can be in
touch. Ph: 0417 160 658
ejo65074@bigpond.net.au

March, as you would be well aware is our *Holy Month*, with St Piran's Day celebrations.

Whilst St Piran's Day is the 5th March, Ballarat was a little slow, celebrating on 8th March, however Melbourne was even slower, celebrating at St Peter's Church in Murrumbena on 15th March.

Again, this was followed by a pasty lunch and another one of those, for me, impossible pictorial quizzes.

This one was exactly the same as the previous year and I still failed.

Thanks to Brian Rollason for organizing this event.

In April, Clive Maynard gave his presentation on "Redruth and Porthtowan".

A bit of an eyeopener, if you didn't realize that even Cornwall has a surfing culture.

Topics also included Redruth - the Town, Gwennap Pit, Carn Brea, Murdoch House and Boxing Day Rugby.

The May meeting was a show and tell at Darebin, with a variety of presentations and interesting artifacts, treasures and stories.

June saw an evening Zoom with a speaker in the UK. Simon Davies spoke about the people and place software, WeAre.xyz, showing actual examples of user created stories of families and places. An insight into what can be done to preserve local history. (<https://www.weare.xyz/>)

And here we are today, with our AGM. This year on time.

Other activities away from the meetings include the formation of the CAV Family History Group. This is an interest group open to anyone in the CAV with the slightest interest in family trees, and/or research in general.

Already nine members, strong and growing, it is being coordinated by Helen Morgan and includes Moira Drew, an expert on our library in Castlemaine and some members with extensive experience in creating and maintaining family history.

It also includes novices who want to be able to tap into this wealth of experience and knowledge hiding in the CAV.

Hit a roadblock with your family tree, don't know where to get that record, don't know where to start even? Now you have help at hand within the CAV.

Things appear to have settled down a little in Castlemaine, where our library is housed. The library is open on Tuesdays 10am to 3pm, and a

complete listing of available material is on our website.

On the topic of websites, Arthur Coates has been working hard giving our site a bit of a workover. This is an ever-ongoing task and we thank Arthur for his time and efforts.

Geelong branch has been busy with a project of its own - namely a plaque for a great local Cornishman. Rev. Francis Tuckfield.

Having visited Geelong this week, I can see a bit of passion in this project, and I congratulate them on their efforts to promote the CAV, their branch and Cornwall in general.

Following my Geelong visit this week, my next aim is a visit to Ballarat soon.

I thank both Branches for keeping the St Piran's flag flying in these cities.

Finally, I would like to thank our committee for their efforts this year.

Secretary Brian Rollason, who also stepped in whilst I was trekking the southern continents.

Treasurer Max Procter, who didn't allow us to misappropriate a single cent.

Evelyn Jones who was responsible for Welfare and sent out numerous cards and well wishes on our behalf.

John Tungove and his Cornish Tid-bits and general input.

Robyn Coates our Zoom master (with Arthur behind the scenes), Newsletter editor and Ballarat representative.

David Reid our new kid on the block dragging our thinking into the 21st century and Geelong representative Neil Thomas.

It was a pleasure representing the CAV in 2025/26 and I thank all members for their support.

Ronald Hawken

Committee for 2026-2027

President - Ron Hawken

Vice-President - David Reid

Treasurer - Max Procter

Members - Robyn Coates

Evelyn Jones

Clive Maynard

Neil Thomas (Geelong Rep.)

John Trungove

Annual Report of the Geelong Branch of the CAV. 2025 – 2026.

It is with pleasure that once again I present this annual report as Chairman of the Geelong Branch of the CAV.

Our small group continues to enjoy each other's company with our meetings having a happy and friendly atmosphere.

Once again this year our branch participated in the National Celtic Festival held at Portarlington over the King's Birthday long weekend in June. We had a good number of branch volunteers assisting.

We owe a special thank you to Ron Hawken who filled in for us on Saturday afternoon as for various reasons we ran out of volunteers.

A pleasant time of fellowship was enjoyed by our members. We operated our stall from a marquee decorated with colorful Cornish tea towels along with other Cornish memorabilia.

As always, interesting conversations were entered into.

We are again appreciative of Nola Thomas for the use of her garage to store the equipment and Bill Martin for the use of his van to carry our display equipment to and from the venue.

A major event for us occurred on October 11th when we hosted 23 guests from Melbourne and Ballarat for lunch and refreshments along with a visit to various sites with a Cornish connection.

A short talk given at each location.

We visited Point Henry, the Customs House, the Art Gallery, the Town Hall then the Yarra Street Wesley Church.

Everyone agreed that a very interesting and pleasant day was had.

The branch was presented with a Cornish tea towel in appreciation of our hospitality.

A group of our members car pooled for a CAV visit to St Erth near Blackwood.

St Erth was established by a Cornishman in the gold rush era and is now a tourist attraction with a cafe and extensive gardens.

For the November meeting twelve of our members attended a luncheon at the Clifton Springs Golf Club. A very pleasant day of fellowship was had.

For our branch to operate in a successful manner I would like to express my appreciation of all members and especially Ruth Taylor for her work as

Secretary and Nola Thomas for her assistance as Meeting Hostess.

Neil Thomas.

Geelong Branch Chairman.



St Erth Visit

Ballarat Branch Report 2025-2026

The year in review.

Good things were the meetings, outings and presenters and especially the company of members Visits to Geelong and St Erth; our Christmas gathering; tour of the Ballarat Old Cemetery; St Piran's Day Service and Luncheon; our members speaking on *Who benefitted from the Gold Rush?* and *Service personnel with a Cornish connection*; - all provided an interesting, yearly programme.

Highlights

*For me, the best of all was our visit to Geelong.

Very interesting tour and with great hospitality from our Geelong friends.

*The contributions of our members, especially from the committee is greatly appreciated.

Sadness

*The passing of Lorice Jenkin. She attended whenever her health permitted and gave years of service as our secretary.

*The ravages of time and the limitations that age impose on us.

Yet. We are here and I am glad to be here with you. I count it a privilege to occupy the chair, but if anyone would care to take the chair, I would be more than happy to welcome a change.

God Bless you all

Keith

Last House - Land's End

At the most Western point of mainland England, the headland called Land's End and, in the village and parish of Sennen, there was a small two roomed cottage which was addressed as the 'Last House Land's End'.

This was a typical house built with stone walls around 1840, that miners lived in. Eventually, it was referred to as the 'First and Last House Land's End' depending on whether a person was arriving or leaving the tip of the land.



Later, it became and was also sometimes referred to as the 'Old Refreshment House'.

The House has had additions to it and still stands as a souvenir and snack shop carrying the same name, 'First and Last House Land's End'.



As a 4th generation Cornish immigrant living in Malvern, Victoria, Australia, I inherited the family Bible ("...to the oldest son who has a son"), many records, letters and photos.

According to some of my Casley family records, the 'First and Last House Land's End', was built by my great great grandfather, John Casley (1806-1897) for one of his sons.

John Casley was a mine captain and engineer. He and his wife Ann (sometimes Nancy) (nee Thomas) Casley, were quite comfortable.

The Casleys had seven homes in Land's End, each on 100-year leases.

John Casley and his wife Ann/Nancy, (nee Thomas), lived in St Just, Penwith, all of their lives. John Casley died 1897 and Ann/Nancy Casley (nee Thomas) died 1894.

Most of the men in Cornwall emigrated to all parts of the world but many to Australia when the tin and copper mines closed from 1856. Many worked in the copper mines opening at the same time at Moonta, South Australia and later, the goldfields at Ballarat and Bendigo.

All of John's surviving children left for a better life elsewhere.

Three sons and a daughter went to Australia and two sons to USA.

One son, my great grandfather, Henry Casley (1849-1902), emigrated to Moonta, SA in the 1860s and later married Eliza Pickering in Bendigo, Victoria, 28/2/1878.

Henry never returned to England.

There is nothing mentioned about the house on the internet, before it was taken over by Mrs. Grace Thomas.

Wikipedia and other internet sources about the house, only refer to "a lady named Grace Thomas, who was the first person to use the building as a refreshment house in the 1860s".

Grace Thomas was the wife of an agricultural laborer.

Grace Thomas would carry in what she needed each day to provide meals for travelers passing through.

Grace's son William Thomas took it over after she died, aged 80.

The cottage has had additions to it and now sells some souvenirs, ice-cream and snacks.

It is presumed that Grace Thomas was a relative of John Casley's wife Ann/Nancy (nee Thomas) Casley (1808-1894).

Furthermore, John and Nancy/Ann's son, Henry Casley (my great grandfather), spent a lot of time mining in Australia with his first cousin, a Mr. Thomas.

There is a story about the two men striking a rich vein of gold.

Mr. Thomas feigned illness to be brought to the

surface and bought up as many shares in the mine that he could and became very rich.

He is buried in an Adelaide Cemetery.
I would love to be able to substantiate this claim further.

Any information about and linking Grace Thomas and my great, great grandmother Ann/Nancy Thomas (b. 1808 Cornwall d. 1894 Cornwall), would be much appreciated.

On WikiTree, Ann/Nancy is Thomas -35729 and Husband John is Casley -55

David Casley, 0414 437 361,
dcasley@prosearch.net.au



Cornwall Historic Church's Trust

Max Procter, our Treasurer, received the following email from a member of this Trust.

The CAV committee considered this proposal and decided that if individuals wanted to contribute that the information would be provided in the newsletter.

<https://www.chct.info/get-involved/>

Dear Max

Forgive me for writing out of the blue, but yours was the only email address I could find on your website.

I am a committee member of the Cornwall historic Church's trust.

As a charity, it is our mission to assist in funding repairs and maintenance of historic churches in Cornwall of any denomination.

We are currently on a fundraising drive to boost our funds.

I understand your Members have historic and nostalgic connections with Cornwall as many of their ancestors will have emigrated to Australia over the last two centuries.

We are aware of American Emigrants whose descendants have provided funds for restoration and repair of Parish churches where their ancestors lived before emigration.

I was wondering if it would be possible to have a fundraising attempt amongst your Members.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Charles Hulbert-Powell

2026 National Celtic Festival - at Portarlington - King's Birthday Weekend.

The weather was fairly kind and I think it was the best crowd I have seen at the Portarlington festival.

Quite a few people visited our marquee and many interesting conversations were entered into. One woman commented "what are you lot doing here, aren't you part of England"? She was given a good education on Cornish history.

Another woman told us how she was a descendant of the Rashleighs of Mentabilly.

The Rashleighs were a prominent political and entrepreneurial family in Cornwall.

Charlestown was named after a Charles Rashleigh. It was Mentabilly that inspired Daphne du Maurier's novel Rebecca.

One ancestor, Jonathan, was the Sheriff of Cornwall in the 1600s.

Another chap of Cornish descent was educated at the Camborne School of Mines.

He told us that he now works in a gold mine 600 metres below the City of Ballarat.

A number of application forms were handed out, one woman joined our Geelong Branch and several books were sold.

Neil Thomas
Geelong Branch Chairman.

Neil Thomas pictured with Geelong member Bruce Mills



Cornish Language Notes

Stephen Morey

Notennow Kernewek

Our Cornish language is present everyday in Cornwall, in proper names and personal names.

Consider two names of places quite close together, which have same origin in Cornish but are now pronounced differently because of different history: Marazion and Market Jew (the main street of Penzance).

Both names are related to the Cornish marghas Yow 'Thursday market'.

Here's a first difference between Cornish and English.

In English, the 'head word' or main idea, the market, appears at the end of the phrase.

In Cornish, it's the other way round, and as, with a very few exceptions, nouns are followed by adjectives.

Cornish, Breton and Welsh are languages that share a common ancestor, and we can see this in the words for market: marghas in Cornish, marc'had in Breton and marchnad in Welsh.

But, sometime in the early Middle Ages, final -d sound in Cornish changed to -s, with the word for 'market' documented as marcas as early as around 1100.

I haven't been able to find any mediaeval references to Market Jew Street, but it seems that at some point in history the word marghas (where the 'gh' is pronounced like the 'ch' in the Scottish word loch) was translated into the similar English word market that has the same meaning.

The Cornish word for Thursday, Yow, was transformed into the nearest English word that sounded similar, namely Jew.

This name doesn't refer to Jewish people living in Penzance.

The name Marazion has a really interesting history. Oliver Padel reports that there were two towns very near to each other, with a reference from 1265 that certain fairs, "formerly held at Marghasbigan, now to be held at Marchadyow."

The first of these places in modern Cornish would be marghas vyghan 'small market' and the second

would be marghas Yow, but notice that the final -d is still there.

It seems that these two places merged and by 1601 were described as "Marhasion alias Marghasiewe'.

In very late Cornish, the -gh sound is dropped out altogether and the word for market became maras and the word for 'little' becomes bian.

It seems that the old word for 'little', without its first letter, combined with the word for market without the -gh to get maras ion, and then the similarity with 'Zion' gives the modern spelling.

All this goes to show that things aren't always what they seem – Jew and Zion both sound rather Biblical but are related to the words for 'Thursday', Yow, and in the case of Marazion a merger with the word for 'little', byghan.



Gorsedh Kernow names 21 new Bards for 2026

Twenty-one new bards will be welcomed into the College of Bards of Gorsedh Kernow at Bodmin on 5th September 2026 by the Grand Bard of Cornwall, Jenefer Lowe, Gwythvosen, in recognition of their outstanding work in serving Cornwall.

Gorsedh Kernow was established with the aim of celebrating and promoting Cornwall's distinctive Celtic culture and many of this year's new bards are honoured for working in their community to nurture and promote Cornish culture.

The new bards for 2026 are:

1. Jim Christophers, Trencreek, Newquay
For the promotion of Kernow through Music.

2. Bridget Collinge, Tavistock
By examination in the Cornish language and continuing work for Kernow.

3. Jane Cunio, Montacute, Somerset
By examination in the Cornish language and continuing work for Kernow.

4. Elizabeth Dale, Perranworthal
For preserving local heritage and our cultural history.

5. Emma Gibson, Paul
For promoting the Cornish language, culture and identity in the community.

6. Paul Haas, Grass Valley, California, U.S.A.
For promoting Cornish Identity in the U.S.A.

7. Rosalyn Hayward, Luxulyan
For promoting Cornish cultural life, encouraging community participation in Cornish customs, history and identity.

8. Fin Irwin, Bodmin
For working on projects that strengthen the distinct Cornish Identity in Bodmin and its environs.

9. Will Keating, Falmouth
For the promotion of Kernow through Music.

10. Judith Lawrence, Penzance
For promoting Kernewek in her community.

**11. Phil Lokan, South Australia
For promoting Cornish Identity in Australia.**

12. Robin McCarthy, Grampound Road
By examination in the Cornish language and continuing work for Kernow.

13. Mark Mitchley, Gorran Haven
By examination in the Cornish language and continuing work for Kernow.

14. Susan Opie, Newlyn
By examination in the Cornish language and continuing work for Kernow.

15. Stephen Polglase, Ashton, Helston
For promoting Kernow by sharing his knowledge of Cornish history, mining and heritage.

16. Ann Preston-Jones, Truro
By promoting Cornish culture through care, conservation and management of archaeology

17. Catherine Quayle, Diamond Springs, California U.S.A.
For promoting Cornish Identity in the U.S.A.

18. Tamara Rosenwyn
For the promotion of Kernow through drama and arts in the Lizard community.

19. Francesco Trejo, Hidalgo, Mexico
For promoting Cornish Identity in Mexico.

20. Cathy Woolcock, Redruth
For her dedication to Kernow and its heritage.

21. Francesca Churchill-Zerilli
For working on projects that strengthen the distinct Cornish identity in Bude and its environs.

Congratulations to our friend Phil Lokan -
such a willing worker for the Cornish Association of SA.



KERNOW TO THE COLONY

Exploring the Cornish Lives that Shaped Victoria
By David Reid (of Treleven stock maternally)

Welcome to *Kernow to the Colony*, a special recurring series dedicated to uncovering the extraordinary, indelible footprint left by Cornish families across Victoria.

The connections between the rugged cliffs of Cornwall and the vibrant history of our southern home run incredibly deep.

To capture the full scale of this shared heritage - from the deep-shaft miners of the goldfields to the trailblazing sporting icons, political giants, and pastoral pioneers—we will be featuring two distinct Cornish-Victorian profiles every single month.

Join us each issue as we trace the journeys of the resilient men and women who brought the timeless grit, faith, and spirit of *Kernow* across the oceans to shape the very foundations of Victoria.

We begin our journey where the land meets the sea, following the trail of a West Penwith boy who quite literally helped put early Victoria on the map.

Part 1: Captain Edward Primrose Tregurtha

Captain Edward Primrose Tregurtha
Credit: <http://tregurtha.com>

For those of us who know the salty air of Mount's Bay, the name Tregurtha sounds like home.



But if you travel twelve thousand miles to the shores of Victoria, Australia, you will find that very same Cornish name etched permanently into the geography of the southern hemisphere.

As family historians, we often track our ancestors through quiet parish registers, but the trail left by Captain Edward Primrose Tregurtha is written in the logs of great ocean brigs and early colonial sea charts.

A Newlyn Boy at Sea

Edward's story began right in the parish of Paul, where he was baptized at St Pol de Léon's Church on April 11, 1803.

The son of a Royal Navy Captain, young Edward had the Atlantic in his blood.

After surviving a turbulent youth in the Navy and navigating for the East India Company, he spent the early 1830s captaining the whaler *Caroline* through the wild, uncharted expanses of the South Pacific.

But it was his return home to Cornwall in late 1833 that sparked a massive shift for our community. Sitting by the fire in Newlyn, Edward spun vivid tales of the vast, untouched pastures of early Australia to his sister, Emma.

His eyewitness accounts lit a spark. Emma's husband, Alexander Dennis, and the neighbouring Wettenhall family began to look at their small Cornish fields with an eye toward the horizon.

Edward didn't just migrate; his stories became the direct catalyst for a whole wave of Cornish emigration.

Before leaving his home waters for good, Edward secured his local ties, marrying Elizabeth Bussell in Paul on January 10, 1835.

THE TREGURTHA TRAIL

[Paul Parish, Cornwall - Baptized here, 1803; Married here, 1835] ———▶

[Bass Strait, Australia - Ferried 55,000 sheep & 2,000 pioneers] ———▶

[Point Henry, Victoria Charted & named by Tregurtha in 1836]

Charting the Destiny of Victoria

By May 1836, Captain Tregurtha was back at the helm in southern waters, partnering with Captain Edwin Whiting aboard the 140-ton brig *Henry*.

They became a literal lifeline for the infant colony of Victoria (then the Port Phillip District), braving the treacherous gales of the Bass Strait to ferry thousands of sheep, vital provisions, and hopeful

pioneers from Tasmania to the mainland.

Later that same year, while navigating the broad, uncharted waters of Corio Bay, Edward conducted a careful maritime survey of the harbour. Dropping anchor off a sweeping, prominent headland, he logged the coordinates and named the site Point Henry in honour of his sturdy brig.

Point Henry was originally known as Maloppio to the Wathaurong people.

Today, Point Henry remains a major geographic landmark in Geelong, Victoria—a permanent monument to a Cornish captain's skill.



'View of Geelong' (1856) by Eugene von Guérard
Credit: <https://www.geelonggallery.org.au/collection/explore-the-collection/eugene-von-guerard>

Edward's sister Emma and Alexander Dennis eventually followed his advice to the letter. They emigrated and established *Tarndwarncoort* in Victoria's Western District - a historic pastoral estate that became famous for breeding the Polwarth sheep and remained in Cornish-descended hands for generations.

The Final Anchorage

In his later years, Edward retired from active voyaging to become the respected Shipping Master for the Port of Launceston, Tasmania, keeping watch over the very shipping lanes he had helped pioneer.

Civil records show the old Captain closed his eyes for the last time on August 6, 1880, at his home on Victoria Terrace in Launceston, aged 77.

He was laid to rest three days later in the Cypress Street Cemetery.

While the Cypress Street Cemetery was transformed into a public park in the 1950s an historical memorial wall constructed from surviving headstones at the original gate site stands as a memory to those early settlers.

KERNOW TO THE COLONY

By David Reid (of Treleven stock maternally)

Exploring the Cornish Lives that Shaped Victoria
Welcome back to Kernow to the Colony, our recurring feature dedicated to uncovering the extraordinary stories of Cornish families who traded the familiar landscapes of Cornwall for the vast frontiers of Victoria.

As announced, we are tracking our shared heritage through two distinct profiles every single month. This month, we trade the ship's wheel for the football field, looking at how the legendary grit of the Cornish mining migration evolved into one of the most resilient, iconic names in Victorian sporting and political history - a figure for whom archival and action photographs are easily found in Geelong's historical collections.

Part 2: Neil "Nipper" Trezise - The Cornish Heart of Kardinia Park

Credit: VFL AFL 20th Century History Photos Videos Memories



Credit: <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/members/neil-trezise/>

When the historic tin and copper mines of Cornwall began to hit hardships in the 19th century, thousands of families packed their bags for the newly discovered goldfields of Victoria.

They brought their Methodism, their distinct trade unionist convictions, and their classic regional names. One of the most prominent names to emerge from this migration wave was Trezise - a surname fiercely rooted in Cornish history.

While those pioneering generations spent their lives working deep shafts in places like Ballarat, their legendary physical endurance and relentless work ethic didn't vanish when the mines closed. Instead, it found a brand-new arena: the roaring stadiums of Australian Rules football.

Nowhere is this enduring Cornish grit more visible than in the storied life of one of Greater Geelong's most beloved sporting and civic legends: Neil "Nipper" Trezise AM.

THE DIASPORA TO THE VFL

[Cornwall, UK]

19th Century: The Trezise mining families emigrate to the Victorian goldfields.



[Ballarat / Geelong, Victoria]

→ 1949: Neil "Nipper" Trezise debuts for the Geelong Cats.

→ 1951 & 1952: VFL Premiership Player.

→ 1964–1992: Serves as Member of Parliament for Geelong.

From Ballarat Gold to Geelong Glory

Though born in the historic goldfields city of Ballarat, Neil Trezise was a man made entirely in Geelong. His paternal lineage traced back to the primary wave of Cornish mining families who arrived during the gold rush.

Inheriting the classic blend of community devotion and physical resilience characteristic of his ancestors, "Nipper" stepped out onto the VFL stage for the Geelong Football Club in 1949.

Playing as a diminutive but fiercely determined rover, Trezise quickly became the spiritual heartbeat of the team.

He went on to play 185 senior games across an illustrious decade-long career, cementing his name in football history by playing in Geelong's legendary 1951 and 1952 back-to-back premiership sides.

In his final year on the field in 1959, his natural leadership was recognized when he was named club captain.

A Legacy of Civic Service

True to the Cornish Methodist values of community service and fair representation, Neil's contribution to Victoria didn't end when he hung up his boots. In 1964, he entered politics as the Labor Member of Parliament for Geelong West (later Geelong North).

He served as a dedicated Labor Member of the Victorian Parliament for 28 consecutive years (1964–1992), representing the electorates of Geelong West and later Geelong North.

His major political legacy was established during his decade-long tenure as Victoria's Minister for Sport and Recreation (1982–1992) under the Cain and Kirner governments, where he successfully modernized state sports' infrastructure and

expanded funding for grassroots regional communities.

His dedication earned him an AM (Member of the Order of Australia), and his legacy was carried forward by his son, Ian Trezise, who later served as a Geelong city councillor and local MP.



THE TROON FAMILY

(on a suggestion from June Whiffin)

The surname Troon is very well known in Ballarat as a firm of builders responsible for many construction projects around Ballarat, its district and the eastern states of Australia.

The company began when Henry Troon, a blacksmith, started manufacturing stoves and mining implements for the mining population in 1870.

Henry (1846-1929) was the eighth of ten children of **William Troon** (1804-1854) and his wife **Elizabeth Cordelia Hammill** (1808-1897) who had married in July 1829 in the Parish of Ludgvan. Elizabeth was the daughter of Philip Hammill and Catherine Bell and William the son of William Troon and Jenifer (Geniver) Blight. Both the Troon and Hammill families came from Ludgvan, a small village located about four kilometres northeast of Penzance.

Children of William and Elizabeth were:

William (1831-1906), John (1833-1833); John (1834-1854); Philip Hammill (1837-1859); James (1839-1910); Henry (1840-1844); Elizabeth (1844-1933); Henry (1846-1929); Mary (1848-1878) and Jane (1851-1931).

In both the 1841 and 1851 census the family is located at Camborne and William is listed as a carpenter/mine carpenter.

William Troon Junior, arrived in South Australia, aboard *Sultana* in October 1852, and is listed as a miner from Cornwall.

He seems to have spent many years in Ballarat, and married Mary Beckwith Hill (m/s Forster) in Ballarat in 1893.

Mary was the daughter of William Forster and Ann Beckwith. She had married Francis William Hill in 1869. After Francis died in 1891, she married William Troon.

William died in 1906 and was living at 9 Dawson Street South, Ballarat and is buried in the Ballarat Old Cemetery.

Mary died in 1940 aged 91 years and is buried in Creswick cemetery with her first husband Francis. According to William's obituary in the *Ballarat Star*, he was a Methodist Local Preacher and a member of the Loyal Pioneer Lodge, M.U.I.O.O.F. His will indicates he was a carpenter.

The 1851 census records, when the family was living at Camborne, suggest he was a mine carpenter like his father.

William Troon senior and his son John,

embarked for Australia aboard *RMS Tayleur* which left Liverpool on 19th January 1854, on her maiden voyage, for Melbourne, with a complement of 652 passengers and crew.

Transport to and from Australia was in high demand due to the lucrative trade in gold mining and many companies were eager to capture some of the spoils through emigration and the return voyages with gold and other cargo.

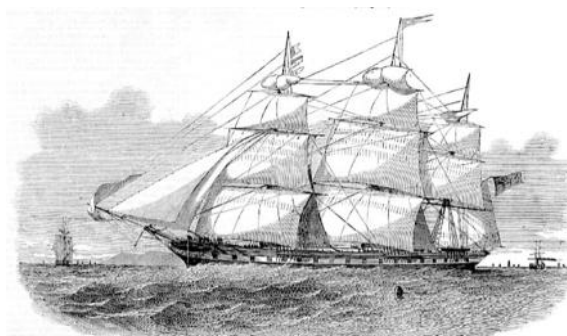


Image:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/~cmi/books/emigrant/tayleur.html>

On 21st January 1854, within 48 hours of sailing, *RMS Tayleur* found herself in a fog and a storm, heading straight for the island of Lambay.

The rudder was undersized for her tonnage, so that she was unable to tack around the island.

The rigging was also faulty; the ropes had not been properly stretched, so that they became slack, making it nearly impossible to control the sails. Despite dropping both anchors as soon as rocks were sighted, *RMS Tayleur* ran aground on the east coast of Lambay Island, about five miles from Dublin Bay.

RMS Tayleur was a full-rigged, iron clipper ship chartered by the White Star Line. (The same company as the *Titanic*)

Trials had shown she was large, fast and technically advanced. However, she ran aground and sank with only 280 survivors.

Two of those who drowned were **William and John Troon**.

Reading through the list of names of those unfortunates who drowned, there were several other people with Cornish surnames, though the majority of people were said to be emigrants from Ireland.

The only listing I could find of passengers and crew was found in the NLA *Trove*.

During an inquiry into the accident, it was determined that her crew of twenty-five had only twelve trained seamen amongst them, of which eight could not speak English.

It was reported in newspaper accounts that many of the crew were seeking a free passage to Australia. Most of the crew were able to survive *RMS Tayleur's* sinking.

An enquiry showed that her compasses didn't work properly because of the iron hull.

The crew believed that they were sailing south through the Irish Sea but were actually travelling west towards Ireland.

Very sadly for the Troon family, Elizabeth was left a widow with five dependent children.

A full list of passengers – survivors and those who died can be found at:

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/4806910>

These lists are often a chance to find missing ancestors who just seem to disappear.

Philip Hammill Troon, fourth born son of William and Elizabeth, arrived in Victoria aboard *Constance* in December 1854 but very sadly he was killed in a mine work accident on 25th November 1859 in Ballarat as reported in the *Ballarat Star*.

Nowadays we are spared some of the explicitness of the injuries he received.

Star (Ballarat, Vic. : 1855 - 1864), Saturday 26 November 1859, page 2

A frightful accident happened at Little Bendigo (now Nerrina) yesterday, by which a man named Troon met with instantaneous death.

It appears that he was in the act of entering one of the engine houses there by means of a short cut instead of going round to the proper entrance, the engine being at work, when he passed too close to the fly-wheel, with which he became entangled and he was smashed in pieces between the wheel and the frame.

Dr Glendinning was shortly in attendance, but the unfortunate man had ceased to exist.

The inquest will take place this day.

Star (Ballarat, Vic. : 1855 - 1864), Monday 28 November 1859, page 3 - INQUESTS.

The inquest on the remains of Philip Troon, whose death was reported in our issue of Saturday, was held by the district Coroner at the Prince of Wales Hotel on the same day.

The evidence of two miners named Morrow and Bell, was to the effect that the deceased was an engine driver in the Stock Yard Mining Company, at Little Bendigo.

The engine works two puddling machines and winding gear, for the latter of which there is a small door made, in close proximity to which is the fly-wheel.

This opening was constantly and most improperly used by the whole party, generally as a short way of entrance into the engine house; and on Friday the deceased on going in put one foot on the threshold and the other on the frame-work on which the fly-wheel works; his foot slipped off the threshold and he fell forward on to the wheel.

Before the steam could be turned off, the engine had stopped by reason of the body of deceased being jammed between the wheel and the frame.

He was quite dead when got out, and bleeding on the head and mouth.

The jury returned a verdict of accidental death, and further, that great negligence and rashness were attributable to the company for not guarding against such an occurrence.

Elizabeth Cordelia Troon, aged 49 years, a widow and with the remainder of her family of fatherless children, arrived as assisted passengers in Melbourne aboard the *Parsee* on 14th May 1858 - James (18), Elizabeth (13), Henry (12), Jane (9) and Mary (5).

It is recorded on the ship's log, that she "is going to Ballarat to be with her son" - not sure if this is William or Philip or whether they were both living together.

Elizabeth died in September 1897, aged 88 years and is buried in the Ballarat Old Cemetery.

At the time of her death, she was living in Forrest Street, Ballarat.

Buried in the same grave/adjoining graves are:

Mary Richards; Elizabeth Maud Richards, Thomas Richards, Elizabeth Troon, Priscilla Richards, Henry Troon, George Troon, Henry Charles Troon, Mary

Ann Troon, Frederick James Richards

James married Catharine Dawson in 1882 in Launceston and died in 1910 in Launceston – he was a miner – Catharine died in New Norfolk in 1903 - children born in Launceston were:
1883 – John James 1885 – Jane Elizabeth, 1887 - Benjamin Alexander, 1889 - Henry William 1895 - Phillip

Elizabeth Junior married John Thomas Richards in 1869 in Victoria – her obituary found in many Queensland papers in July 1933, states she was in her 90th year, had been in Australia for 75 years (having been born in Cornwall) and arriving in Ballarat when she was fourteen.

Following her marriage to John Richards and the birth of eight children, (five daughters and three sons) they settled in Mount Morgan, Queensland, where he was an engineer at the Mount Morgan Gold Mine.
He predeceased her by twenty years.

At the time of her death, one son and four daughters were living and Elizabeth was living with a daughter in Mackay.

John Thomas Richards was baptised in 1841 in Gwennap (Thomas/Priscilla) and died in Mt Morgan in 1913.

His parents are buried in the Troon family grave in Ballarat.

Henry, the seventh son of William and Elizabeth married Mary Wasley in 1876 and they had eleven children, three dying under the age of four.
Henry George (1877-1877); Amelia Hammell (1878 - 1980); Philip James (1879 - 1960); Henry Charles (1881-1885); George (1882-1882); William Herbert (1884- 1967); George Watkin (1886-1960) ; Henry (1888- 1915); Mary (1890 - 1980); Ronald (1894-1970); Harold (1896-1951).

Quoting from Cornish Pioneers of Ballarat by Lillian Dell and Joy Menhennet:

Henry Troon set up as a Blacksmith and Colonial Oven Manufacturer in 1870 in Ballarat In 1886 he purchased premises at 29 Armstrong St. South, across the road from his original premises.

The building cost 720 pounds.

He continued as a general and mining blacksmith, making the picks and shovels and other implements used to wrest the gold from Ballarat's clay. He supplied all kinds of builders' ironwork of the best quality.

Amongst the articles he manufactured were specialties of

earth scoops, pig, cattle and sheep troughs, water barrels and tanks.

Henry Troon manufactured English and Colonial Ovens and undertook the repairs of all kinds of ranges.

He was a maker of cattle and sheep brands, and his large trade was the result of industry and consideration for the wants of a large number of customers.

Henry Troon died on 23rd April 1929 and he was buried in the Ballarat Old Cemetery.

He was 83 years of age. Mary Ann Troon died on 6th September 1931, aged 75 years.

Further details of the Troon family business can be found at <https://www.htroon.com.au/history>

Jane married Richard Greenwood in 1875 in Ballarat.

Richard was born in Truro in 1850 and died in 1921. Jane died in 1931.

From electoral rolls Richard was a tailor and they lived their lives in Thornbury/Northcote area.

He and Jane had nine children _ Vivian 1877-1877, Richard Hudson 1879 – 1931, George Stanley 1882-1919, Elizabeth Marion 1885-1912, Olive Mary 1887-1903, Henry Charles 1889-1974, James Royal 1891-1910, Edward Norman 1893- 1981 and Jennie Richardson 1895-1992.

Mary married George Richards in 1873 in Victoria, probably Ballarat as that is where they were living when their two children were born and where she and the children are buried.

Mary died in 1878 and given the death of an unnamed daughter at the same time, one assumes it was during or after childbirth.

Children – Elizabeth Maud b 1877 - 1879 aged 17 months; unnamed female child born 1878 who lived one day.

There are too many George Richards, to ascertain whether he re-married and where he died.

He is not buried in the family burial plot at the Ballarat Old Cemetery.

This is the story of one Cornish family who set out to live their lives in Australia with mixed fortunes and much sadness.

Unfortunately, this was experienced by many Cornish families and other emigrants, often seeking a better life than the one they had left behind.

Financial statements as presented at the AGM

CORNISH ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC REGISTERED CORPORATION NUMBER -
A0008264A

Financial Statement -Year ending 30th April 2026

Balance-	Westpac Operating Account 1st May 2025	\$	8,581.05
	Westpac Term Deposit 1st May 2025	\$	13,654.25
	Total bank deposits	\$	22,235.30
Receipts	New member(s)	\$	100.00
	Member Renewals	\$	3,028.00
	Donations	\$	65.02
	Meeting Collections	\$	168.90
	Catering revenue	\$	-
	Book Sales - Agan Kernow	\$	-
	Recipe Book donations	\$	-
	Interest on Term Deposit	\$	325.91
Total Income		\$	3,687.83
Total Funds available		\$	3,687.83
Payments		\$	25,923.13
	Newsletters	\$	511.59
	Internet technology including Licences	\$	246.29
	Payment due for book sales or book donations	\$	-
	Registration With Consumer Affairs	\$	49.00
	Donations by C.A.V. (For use of resources)	\$	-
	Promotion literature etc.	\$	-
	Welfare administration	\$	565.94
	Branches share of subscriptions	\$	396.00
	Administration /Office costs	\$	-
	Taxation Return	\$	660.00
	Catering Expenses	\$	110.00
	Gifts/payments to Speakers	\$	55.99
Total Payments		\$	2,594.81
Balance		\$	2,594.81
		\$	23,328.32
	Bank balances 30-04-2026 =		
	Westpac Community Solutions One BSB:033-065 Account number: 176278	\$	9,348.16
	Westpac Term deposit Account 033-065 180891	\$	13,980.16
	Total bank balances	\$	23,328.32
	Term Deposit with Westpac Bank 033-065 18-0891 , \$13980.16. includes interest of \$325.91 added on reinvestment.		
	Matures 22 September 2026 @ 3.25% p.a.		
	Max Procter Treasurer CAV 18 th July 2026		

CORNISH ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC. Reg. No. A0008264A

Consolidated Financial Statement for Year ended 30 April 2026

	CAV Melbourne	CAV Ballarat Branch	CAV Geelong Branch	Total CAV
Balance-1 May 2025	\$ 22,236	\$ 5389	\$ 3916	\$ 31,541
Bank accounts				
Receipts				
Subscriptions - members	3128	396	420	3,944
Meetings Collections	169	76	79	324
Interest on term deposit	326			326
Donations	65	10		75
Book Sales		40		40
Book (pamphlet) sales			5	5
Newsletter subscriptions				0
Catering Revenue				0
Total Receipts	3688	522	504	4,714
Total Funds Available	25,924	5911	4420	
Payments				
Use of premises rental or donation		120	160	280
Newsletter - printing and Postage	512			512
Catering	110		830	940
Payments/gifts for speakers	56			56
Internet Technology including licences	246			246
RHSV Membership and Insurance (paid in next Year)	0			0
Registration With Consumer Affairs	49			49
Agun Kernow underwriter reimbursement				0
Other promotion literature etc.		149		149
Welfare administration	95			95
Branches share of subscriptions paid to Melbourne	396			396
CAV HQ Share of subscriptions received			168	168
Memorial flowers etc.	471	50		521

Subscription to organisations				25	
taxation Return expense	660				
Total Payments	2595	344	1158	4,097	
Rounding correction	-1				
Closing Balance 30 April 2025	\$ 23,328 \$	5,567	\$ 3,261	\$ 32,156	
Surplus for year	\$ 1,093 \$	178 -\$	654 \$	617	
Bank accounts					
Westpac Bank / CBA/Bendigo Account balances	\$ 9,348 \$	5,567	\$ 3,261	\$ 18,176	
Term Deposit with Westpac Bank 033-065 18-0891 ,	\$ 13,980			\$ 13,980	
Total Melbourne B ank Balances	\$ 23,328				
Total bank balances	\$ 23,328 \$	5,567	\$ 3,261	\$ 32,156	



Max Procter, Treasurer CAV 12 May 2026