

## Meeting our Cornish Cousins

Whenever possible, members of the TCA connect with our Cornish cousins; the descendants of those courageous Cornish emigrants who took the risky steps of leaving their homeland to seek brighter pastures for themselves and their families in the New World.

At each meeting, we share our love of Cornwall and make new friends and sometimes meet long lost relatives! These meetings have, and will, take place in Australia, North America and Cornwall itself.

### The Kernewek Lowender



Kernewek Lowender (or *Cornish Happiness*) is a weeklong event organized by the Cornish Association of South Australia and usually takes place every two years in the Yorke Peninsula also known as “Australia’s Little Cornwall”. It was here that many Cornish miners and their families settled in the 1850’s where they laboured to tame the hot, desolate land and build a new life.

The first such Kernewek Lowender gathering attended

was in May 2013. From the tours we took and the talks we attended, we learnt of the hardships and the joys experienced by those brave Cornish pioneers. One of the most moving events was the “Dressing of the Graves” at Moonta Cemetery. Local school children dressed in smocks for the girls and cap and vest for the boys, clothing that would have been worn by children in the 1800’s, scattered rose petals over the unmarked graves of children who died from the drinking the water contaminated by mining. There were so many deaths that it was impossible to mark them all.



PHOTOS: Left - Right *Cornish Language Quilt, Marion Stephens-Cockroft at the local pasty shop, Joy Dunkerley, President, N.S.W. Cornish Association & husband Chris, Newsletter Editor with Rachel Hawes T.C.A member.*



A few years later in 2017, TCA members attended the Kernewek Lowender, and brought back these memories:

*Gathering of the Bards.*



*The Maypole Dance.*



*The Furry Dance*



## **The Gathering of Cornish Cousins**

The Cornish American Heritage Society (CAHS) sponsor the biennial “Gathering of Cornish Cousins”, which take place every two years near a place of Cornish settlement somewhere in North America. Talented speakers and performers from Cornwall and throughout North America bring their own expertise to share with the 300+ in attendance.

From a first weekend “Gathering” in 1982, the Gatherings now consist of four or five days of workshops, talks, music, singing, dance, a pasty picnic, Cornish church service, banquet, tours and various other activities. Gatherings since have been held in the USA at places as far apart as Calumet Michigan, in Pennsylvania, Grass Valley California, and also at Vancouver and Toronto. These have become international gatherings with visitors from Cornwall, Australia, NZ and anywhere around the ‘Cornish World’.

In August 2014, TCA members travelled south of the border to Milwaukee, Wisconsin to participate in the 17<sup>th</sup> Gathering “A Cornish Gathering on the

Waters". We were taken to Palmyra and Old-World Wisconsin. We were regaled with old favourite Cornish musical pieces performed by the Milwaukee Festival Brass Ensemble and we attended excellent lectures related to Cornish history and culture.

The next Gathering will be in Butte, Montana in July 2021.

## Homecoming (Dehwelans) in Cornwall

The festival of Cornish Heritage, Dehwelans, which taken literally, is a Cornish word for **Homecoming**, included everything from walks, theatre and choral concerts, with even a surfing competition over the six days of the festival.

As stated by the organizers, "*The Dehwelans Festival is an opportunity to encourage the descendants of Cornish miners, as well as the considerable UK Cornish community to retrace their family roots and sample a piece of Cornish culture and hospitality.*"

The festival has been held in 2002, 2004 and 2008. Three members attended the 2004 event in Newquay and brought back these memories. Hopefully the event will be planned again for a future year.

*Heather Dale.*



*Helston Hal an Tow.*



*Padstow Obby Oss.*

