

# Cornish Nation

No. 82 May 2020

£1.50

## Coming together to tackle Covid-19

Westminster rejects  
Cornish tick-box

Media Gonis Poblek  
Kernewek

Cornish news and views



## Looking forward ...

In the article on page three of this magazine, we have reviewed the responsible way in which Mebyon Kernow and its members have approached the Coronavirus pandemic.

The crisis has certainly brought people together and boosted community cohesiveness, and there has been much talk of what a post-Covid-19 “new normal” might be like.

But it is inevitable that there will be economic and social difficulties ahead. Official figures show the economy of the United Kingdom shrank by a record amount in April, with the Office of National Statistics reporting that GDP fell by 20.4% because of the pandemic and the subsequent lockdown.

The trans-national Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has predicted that the UK will be hit worse than any other developed country. Other experts have suggested we face the “worst recession in more than three centuries.”

There have also been assessments which demonstrate that Cornwall – already one of the poorest parts of the UK – could suffer especially badly.

We should remember that the financial crash of 2007 did significant societal harm and led to massive cuts to our vital public services. At that time, the banks were provided with a bailout while the general public had to deal with a decade of austerity.

Looking ahead, there will be much uncertainty for individuals, families, businesses and communities, but we must guard against further austerity, which would heap further harm onto the damage already caused by the health emergency.

Recent months have also brought a new focus onto the divergent paths of the devolved administrations and Westminster – with Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales making their own decisions about the response to the crisis.

There has been much discussion about the so-called “four-nation approach,” but it has all been very different for the invisible nature of Cornwall. For us, all the key decisions have still been made in Westminster. There has also been a Local Resilience Forum covering Cornwall and the English county of Devon, while the unelected appointees on the Leadership Board continue to have more say than the majority of elected councillors.

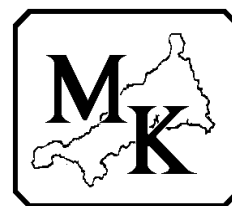
If things are to be done differently in the future, we must also refocus our campaigns to secure meaningful political power so that the people of Cornwall can take more of the decisions that matter.

## 6th May 2020

On 6th May 2020, the National Assembly of Wales was renamed as Senedd Cymru / Welsh Parliament to reflect its law-making and tax-varying powers, which it had gained since it was set up in 1999.

By contrast, on the very same day, the Westminster Parliament refused Cornish people the simple dignity of a tick-box on the 2021 Census.

This demonstrates so clearly the uphill battle that we still face – more so than the other Celtic nations – but that should inspire us to work even harder than ever before.



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### Cornish Nation 82

*Cornish Nation* is a magazine which is distributed free to all members of Mebyon Kernow.

Membership of MK costs only £15.00 a year (£8.00 unwaged or £20.00 for a family).

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# Coming together

*Cornish Nation considers the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on communities in Cornwall and much further afield*

It is difficult to find the words to adequately describe the horror caused by Coronavirus, which has seen more than 400,000 people lose their lives across the world.

Cornwall may have had fewer cases than many other areas but, as *Cornish Nation* goes to print, we can report that almost 200 people to the west of the Tamar have died – each one a terrible tragedy for their family, friends and community.

In response to this, there has certainly been a remarkable series of interventions from central government. It has promoted self-isolation and social distancing, provided funding to support employees through furloughing, backed small businesses and the self-employed with grants, closed offices, schools and restaurants – the scale of which would be simply unimaginable at other times.

Workers in the National Health Service have been in the real “front-line” of this crisis, doing their utmost to save lives. It is awe-inspiring that so many people have been going to work, day after day, in the full knowledge that they are exposing themselves to such a dangerous virus. It is distressing that so many doctors, nurses and hospital porters, have lost their lives as a direct consequence of their dedication.

It is right that we should also pay tribute to other key workers such as members of the emergency services, pharmacists, employees in the care sector, retail and supermarket staff, postal / delivery workers, those keeping public transport going, council workers and teachers, who have also put themselves at greater risk than the majority of the population.

It has been really impressive at how the vast majority of people have respected and followed government guidelines to stay at home and maintain social distancing. The fortitude of so many in respecting the lockdown is having a positive effect in helping us get through this crisis, as is the phenomenal manner in which so many people have been looking out for their families, friends and neighbours.

Over the last three months, MK has acted responsibly and we have not sought to play politics at this difficult time. Mistakes have been made by central government, but our criticism has not been sensationalist. MK publicly backed the more cautious approach to the pandemic being taken by the Northern Ireland Assembly, Scottish and Welsh Parliaments, and our members actively supported the #comebacklater campaign, which sought to discourage people from taking non-essential journeys to come on holiday in Cornwall during the crisis.

Most importantly, we are proud that MK members have been active in their local towns and villages in the fight against Covid-19 – as local councillors and community activists – working as local contacts for Volunteer Cornwall, helping to deliver prescriptions and food to vulnerable families, running community websites, phoning isolated individuals, making representations on behalf of struggling families, and more.

Looking to the months ahead, the impact of the very necessary lockdown on the economy and wider society has yet to be fully appreciated. Many people are likely to lose their jobs and many businesses will undoubtedly struggle, while local councils and charities are facing difficult times ahead. There are already projections that, economically, Cornwall could be amongst those areas that are hardest hit. There will be so much work to do and we must pull together for the greater good and we must do our very best for Cornwall.



# Westminster says no

*The Conservative Government fails to meet obligations to the Cornish and refuses tick-box on the 2021 Census*

For more than twenty years, MK members and others have campaigned for a Cornish nationality tick-box on the Census. In 2014, the UK Government recognised the Cornish as a national minority and promised that they would be treated in the same manner as the UK's other Celtic peoples. There was a legitimate expectation that this recognition would ensure that things such as a tick-box would be delivered without question

Sadly, this has not proved to be the case and shamefully the UK Government has pushed the Order for the 2021 Census (without a Cornish tick-box) through parliament in a less than democratic fashion. The Order was considered in the House of Commons on 6th May and in the House of Lords on 12th May.

Because of the Covid-19 restrictions, only a handful of MPs were present in the chamber for the House of Commons debate. Most of the contributions came from MPs via Zoom video-conferencing, and amendments for a Cornish tick-box were not allowed. Apart from the Government Minister, Chloe Smith, a total of 11 MPs contributed to the session. Three MPs – Steve Double (St Austell & Newquay), Cherilyn Mackrory (Truro & Falmouth) and Hywel Williams on behalf of Plaid Cymru – called for a Cornish tick-box.

The House of Lords debate was fully virtual, with all peers taking part from their homes. In addition to the Government Minister Lord True, a total of 21 peers took part. Six spoke in favour of a Cornish tick-box – Plaid Cymru's Lord Wigley, three Lib Dems (Lord Rennard, Lord Goddard and Lord Wallace) and two Conservatives (Lord Bourne and Baroness Anelay).

Disappointingly, no Labour MPs or peers spoke up for Cornish recognition, while Liberal Democrat peers from Cornwall took no part in the process.

In both "debates," the "vote" at the end was farcical. In terms of the House of Lords, the woman chairing the session from her living room said: "So the question is this motion be agreed to. As many as are of that opinion say content. To the contrary not content. The contents have it." She spoke quickly, there was

no audible response at any point, and yet the Order was ratified.

Speaking on behalf of Mebyon Kernow, Cllr Loveday Jenkin questioned why the debates could not have been delayed until remote voting procedures had been put in place, and the option of a Cornish tick-box properly considered and voted upon.

"It would be a massive understatement to say that campaigners feel very let down by parliamentary process. These recent debates have shown that the UK Government is failing to meet its obligations to the Cornish as a national minority.

"Both Chloe Smith MP and Lord True told parliamentarians that the Census would be the 'most inclusive ever' but then went on to confirm that they would be denying a Cornish nationality tick-box. This is a sad day for the democratic process, but the campaign will continue."

MK members were at the forefront of the campaign against a Devonwall seat that was proposed by the Boundary Commission in 2017/2018, which even led to a demonstration at the Cornish border (see below). Cornish voices were once again ignored by Westminster, though the changes were not taken forward because of other political pressures on the UK Government.

A new Parliamentary Constituencies Bill has been introduced to the UK Parliament. The previous review had been on the basis of 600 MPs, but this new review will seek to agree new boundaries for 650 constituencies. Given the size of Cornwall's electorate, it looks likely that six seats will be retained and a cross-Tamar constituency will not be recommended on this occasion.

However, the proposed legislation does not include a guarantee that Cornwall's territoriality will be protected and, because there will be a fresh boundary review every eight years, we cannot be sure what the future holds.

By contrast, there are four Boundary Commissions (for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales) and there will therefore be no cross-border constituencies between England and Scotland, or England and Wales. The legislation also identifies four protected constituencies – Orkney and Shetland, Na h-Eileanan an Iar, and the Isle of Wight (two seats) – because of what the UK Government describes as "geographical necessity."

MK's leadership team has already confirmed that the Party will be campaigning for amendments to the legislation to ensure Cornwall's electoral boundary is protected permanently and that a separate Boundary Commission for Cornwall is created.





# Media Gonis Poblek Kernewek

*Nyns yw Kernow, gans an wonisogeth hag honanieth a'y fobel, servys yn ta gans media stat*

Yn 2016, y feu dyllys diwettha versyon a'n Chartour Riel BBC. Ynno ambosys yw "skoodhya yethow minortyta ha ranndirel a'n Ruvaneth Unys dre y eskorrans ha gonisow." Mes an BBC a ekskludyas Kernewek yn arbennek dyworth y rol yethow, o styrys avel "Kembrek, Albanek, Iwerdhonek hag Ulster Skots."

Teyr bledhen diwettha, y hwrug gelwel studhyans-skopya Awtorita Uniteth rag hwithra galadow rag Gonis Media Poblek Kernewek hag yma derivas berr a-nowydh dyllys gans Denzil Monk ha Mandy Berry.

Skrif meur dhe les, yma kampil a-dro dhe "status quo klegere" hag yma rann alhwedh dell sew:

Ow provia nowodhow ha radyo "teythek" a-ji framweyth a ranndir SW a Bow Sows, an provians gonis darlesa poblek lemmyn dyworth an BBC a fyll dhe dhelivra representyans leun a styr a Gernewek ha pobel ha hemm yw fest er bynn a'y Dever Kemmyn (14) edhommow diversita.

Kessedhek Kussulya Kosel Europa (skonys) a bes kabli an fowt ow pesya a brovians media rag pobel Gernewek, er bynn erthygel naw a'n Framweyth Akord, ow tasleverel komendyansow rag "gwrians distowgh" dhe "kemeres gwrians krev dhe surhe bos amendyans dhe'n Chartour BBC rag gwellhe hedhas dhe vedia meur rag pobel a vynorita kenedhlek hag ethnek; ynkressya arghansereth ha surhe lies towlen rag yethow mynorita ... ha dalleth skoodhyans a'n par ma rag Kernewek."

**Kernow yw an unsel mynorita kenedhlek ha yeth teythek yn RU heb gonis media y honan.**

Kernow re beu drehevys, dyworth an warves, avel destnans anhedhek. An Gernowyon yw fylls gans provians media lemmyn, gans fowt representyans:

- an yeth Kernewek yw lettyys.
- gwirvosow divers a wonisogeth Kernewek a-lemmyn yw kudhys: an bleynboynt-triga, boghesnogeth, bonniow tek bysyel, hen lowenderyow, diwysogeth spas.

- ha gweladow, Kernewekter yw byghanhes dhe 'goyntys teythek' dhe vos gwelys avel rann an 'romansek-heans skeusennek' kenwerthys, bewedh Kernewek po eksperyans vysytyer, bys skeusen karten bost a dhehen te, balyow skatt romansek ha trevow-pyskessa koynt.

**Mes pyth yw mars yw agan gwel ledanna ages karten bost?**

In 2016, the latest version of the BBC's Royal Charter was published. It promised to "support the regional and minority languages of the United Kingdom through its output and services." But the BBC specifically excluded Cornish from its list of languages, which were defined as "Welsh, Scottish-Gaelic, Irish and Ulster Scots."

Three years later, the unitary authority commissioned a scoping study to investigate potential for a Cornish Public Service Media and a summary report has just been published by Denzil Monk and Mandy Berry.

A hard-hitting document, it refers to a "precipitous status quo" and a key extract from the report is as follows:

Providing "local" news and radio within the framework of a SW region of England, the current public service broadcasting provision from the BBC fails to deliver meaningful, representation of Cornish language and people placing the BBC in direct contravention of its General Duties (14) diversity requirements.

The Council of Europe's (unheeded) Advisory Committee continues to criticise the ongoing lack of media provision for the Cornish, contrary to article nine of the Framework Convention, reiterating its recommendations for "immediate action" to "take resolute action to ensure that the revision of the BBC Charter improves access to mass media for persons belonging to national and ethnic minorities; increase funding and ensure

a variety of programmes for minority languages ... and introduce such support for the Cornish language."

**Cornwall is the only national minority and only indigenous language in the UK without its own media service.**

Cornwall has been constructed, from the outside, as a perpetual destination. The Cornish are failed by current media provision, lacking any proper representation:

- the Cornish language is stifled.
- divergent realities of contemporary Cornish culture are hidden: the housing crisis, poverty, digital tech clusters, ancient festivals, a space industry.
- where visible, Cornishness is diminished to a "local curiosity" to view as part of the commodified "picturesque romanticisation" Cornish lifestyle or visitor experience, a picture postcard world of cream teas, romantic ruined mines and quaint fishing villages.

**But what if our view was wider than a postcard?**



We would like to thank Cllr Michael Bunney, Chris Bowden, Cllr Dick Cole, Gorsedh Kernow, Denzil Monk, Ann Reynolds and Joe Salmon for photographs used in this magazine. Thanks also to Pol Hodge for his assistance in preparing the Cornish language page.

# Looking back

*As Mebyon Kernow approaches its 70th anniversary, Cornish Nation looks back at the earliest days of the Party for Cornwall*

Mebyon Kernow was founded on Saturday 6th January 1951 at the Oates Temperance Hotel in Redruth. There were thirteen people present at the meeting and a further six sent apologies. Helena Charles was elected Chairman, with Lambert Truran as Secretary and George Pawley White as Treasurer. Among the founder members there were four future Grand Bards and Charles Thomas, who went on to become the Director of the Institute of Cornish Studies at the University of Exeter.

The seven original aims of the Party were adopted at the Redruth meeting. These were:

1. To study local conditions and attempt to remedy any that may be prejudicial to the best interests of Cornwall by the creation of public opinion or other means.
2. To foster the Cornish language and literature.
3. To encourage the study of Cornish history from a Cornish point of view.
4. By self knowledge to further the acceptance of the idea of the Celtic character of Cornwall, one of the six Celtic Nations.
5. To publish pamphlets, broadsheets, articles and letters in the press whenever possible, putting forward the foregoing aims.
6. To arrange concerts and entertainments with a Cornish-Celtic flavour through which these aims can be further advanced.
7. To cooperate with all societies concerned with preserving the character of Cornwall.

This formal launch of Mebyon Kernow followed the 1950 International Celtic Congress, which had been held in Truro and brought together many like-minded nationalists. A series of subsequent meetings paved the way for the creation of MK, with Plaid Cymru's Professor Ambrose Bebb playing an influential role in the emergence of the new movement.

As shown in its aims, Mebyon Kernow had an extremely strong focus on Cornish identity and culture, but it was also openly political. By September 1951, the Party had officially committed itself to Cornish self-government. The fourth aim was modified "to further the

acceptance of the Celtic character of Cornwall and its right to self-government in domestic affairs in a Federated United Kingdom."

The challenge of MK was promoted through the "independent" *New Cornwall* magazine, launched in 1952. It was edited by Richard Gendall (under the pseudonym R. Morris) for the first ten issues and then Helena Charles, before Richard and Ann Jenkin took responsibility for the publication.

Helena Charles led the Party for the initial six years. She was also the first person to present the policies of Mebyon Kernow to the electorate, when she stood as an independent and won a by-election for the St Day seat on Redruth-Camborne Urban District Council in 1953. Using the slogan "A Square Deal for the Cornish," her election materials emphasised the need for regional self-government and called on local government to tackle social issues such as unemployment and poor housing conditions.

Major Cecil Beer was persuaded to take on the role of Chairman in 1957, following the resignation of the mercurial Miss Charles. He had been the secretary of Tyr ha Tavas in the 1930s, a cultural pressure group which sought to protect Cornwall's heritage. This had a strong bearing on his period in charge of MK and he proved a steady influence on the fledgling movement.

Trade unionist Robert Dunstone led the Party from 1960 onwards and he was initially backed up by two joint secretaries – Knightley Chetwood-Aitken and founder-member Stephen Fuller, who edited the *Padstow Echo*. It was during this decade that MK grew from a small band of committed enthusiasts into a highly visible movement supported by thousands.

MK's campaigning style under Robert Dunstone may best be described as patient, persistent and polite lobbying, and the list of initiatives taken by the Party in this decade is very long indeed. It included campaigns for a Cornish University, a Cornish Industrial Board or Development Agency, support for traditional Cornish industries, and opposition to railway closures.

Close links were forged with the Chairman of Cornwall County Council, Alderman Kimberley Foster, which allowed MK and the Council to jointly oppose the amalgamation of the Cornwall and Devonshire police forces in 1966.

Numerous reports on important policy areas were produced. These included university education, integrated public transport, economic development, education, fishing, mining, broadcasting and local government reform.

In 1965 Mebyon Kernow also put forward official election candidates for the first time and, over the next five years, made its earliest concerted attempt at fighting elections.

The very active branch at Padstow, which had a connection with the local Fishermen's Association, was the first to decide to enter the electoral fray. Two candidates, Frank Sluman and Len Prior, were nominated for the urban district council elections and duly returned. At Penryn, Cllr Eddie Murray asked his local branch if he could stand for re-election as an official candidate and was elected unopposed. In 1966, five candidates stood in Falmouth, Padstow and Trevone, where Michael Grigg was elected.

The main breakthrough came in April 1967 when Colin Murley won a seat on Cornwall County Council in St Day and Lanner.

*Images on page 7 (left to right from top):*

*The first two pages of the minutes of the first-ever meeting of Mebyon Kernow in 1951.*

*MK's first Chairman Helena Charles.*

*MK's second Chairman Major Cecil Beer.*

*MK's third Chairman Robert Dunstone.*

*A campaign poster dating from the 1960s.*

# Formation of Mebyon Kernow, (Sons of Cornwall).

A meeting was convened at Oates' Hotel in Redruth on Saturday evening January 6th 1951. Those present were:-

- 1 Miss Helen Blake, convenor,
- 2 Miss Ann Tremen
- 3 Mr. Retallack Hooper (Talek)
- 4 Mrs. Hooper,
- 5 Mr. Rowe of Fushing
- 6 Mr. Yelland
- 7 Mr. Davy,
- 8 Mr. Lambert Tremen
- 9 Mr. & C. Thomas
- 10 Mr. R. G. Jenkins
- 11 S. Fuller
- 12
- 13

Others, who had hoped to be

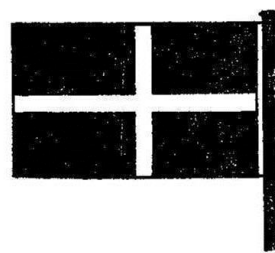
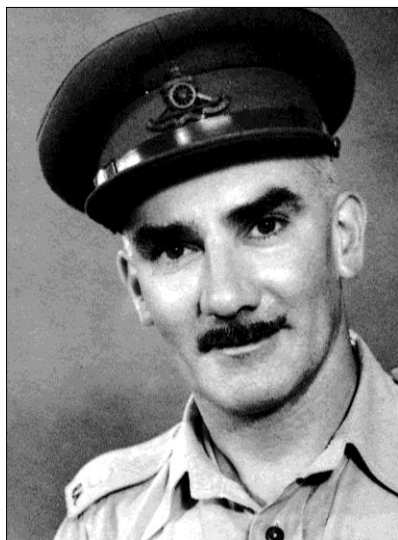
present, but were prevented, were:-

- 1 Mr. Ivor Thomas
- 2 Mr. Palmer of the Cornishman
- 3 Mr. Bargeeg,
- 4 Mr. Byatt Larnar
- 5 Mr. Burke
- 6 Mr. White

The convenor, Miss Blake, was made chairman of the meeting.

It was agreed that the society be formed and that its aims should be those suggested in the invitation, namely:-

1. To study local conditions and attempt to remedy any that may be prejudicial to the best interests of Cornwall by the creation of public opinion, or other appropriate means



# ASSEMBLIES FOR SCOTLAND AND WALES— WHY NOT CORNWALL?

Published by Mebyon Kernow Publications and printed by J. & M. Roberts, Redruth.

# Inequality and a democratic mess

Cornish Nation *reprints two articles from MK Leader Cllr Dick Cole which were recently published in the Cornish Guardian*

In February, the Prime Minister reshuffled his cabinet and the BBC was quick to carry out research into the make-up of his team. In this assessment, there was a strong focus on the educational background of the politicians, which showed that cabinet members were “ten times more likely to have gone to a private school than members of the public.”

The actual figures show that 6.5% of the general population have attended fee-paying schools, but for the cabinet of Eton-educated Boris Johnson, the figure is a massive 69%. I was a little surprised to see that this represents a considerable shift from Theresa May’s first Government, in which less than a third of ministers were educated at private schools.

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**In 21st century Britain, this inequality in opportunity is frankly unjust. Why should someone educated at Fettes College, Harrow or Eton, continue to have such advantages over individuals who have gone to secondary schools in their local areas?**

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I agree with Peter Lampl of the Sutton Trust, a charity which aims to improve social mobility and address educational disadvantage. He is adamant that the structure of Johnson’s cabinet “underlines once again how unevenly spread the opportunities are to enter the elites” and that “Britain is an increasingly divided society ... divided by politics, by class, by geography.”

This is borne out by the figures which show 50% went to university at Oxford or Cambridge. Hardly a new phenomenon, 11 of the United Kingdom’s 15 post-war Prime Ministers went to Oxford. Of the remaining four, Winston Churchill and Gordon Brown went to Sandhurst’s Royal Military College and Edinburgh University respectively, while

James Callaghan and John Major did not attend university.

The Government’s own Social Mobility Commission and the Sutton Trust recently published its *Elitist Britain 2019* report. This states that: “The research finds that power rests with a narrow section of the population – the 7% who attend private schools and the 1% who graduate from Oxford and Cambridge. The report reveals a ‘pipeline’ from fee-paying schools through to Oxbridge and into top jobs.”

The document adds that: “Social mobility, the potential for those to achieve success regardless of their background, remains low ... the most influential people across sport, politics, the media, film and TV, are five times as likely to have attended a fee-paying school.”

Figures from the Sutton Trust found that public bodies dominated by “private school alumni” include the judiciary (65% of senior judges), civil service permanent secretaries (59%) and unelected Lords in the second chamber (57%).

In 21st century Britain, this inequality in opportunity is frankly unjust. Why should someone educated at Fettes College, Harrow or Eton, continue to have such advantages over individuals who have gone to secondary schools in their local areas?

As a campaigner for democratic reform, I have always been opposed to the existence of the House of Lords.

There are about 800 men and women who have the right to sit in this so-called “Upper House,” and I do not agree that unelected individuals, largely appointed through political patronage, should have such real and far-reaching legislative influence.

Not so long ago, in 2015, David Cameron created 45 peers, which comprised a host of retired MPs, MPs who had recently lost their seats, political fixers and donors, plus corporate lobbyists.

Described at the time as the “honours that shame Britain,” it was followed by Cameron’s “resignation honours list,” in which the former

Prime Minister created another 16 new life peers – 13 of which were Conservatives. One was a former treasurer of the Conservative Party, who had personally gifted about £2.5 million to the Tories.

Another 19 peers were created in 2019 as part of another “resignation honours list” and Theresa May’s personal choices were mostly staff members from her administration.

Boris Johnson has already created a couple of new Lords, though newspaper reports suggest there may be more along soon. Nicky Morgan, who stood down as an MP in 2019, and Zac Goldsmith, who actually lost his seat at the last election, were ennobled so that they could continue as government ministers. It is little wonder that such actions are making a mockery of British democracy.

It is my view that the present House of Lords is an out-dated institution that has no place in a modern society. Surely, it must be abolished or at the very least reformed into a fully elected second chamber.

Previous attempts to reform the Lords have been a shambles, but there is again speculation about efforts to replace the second chamber with one comprising elected representatives from the “nations and regions” of the United Kingdom.

While this might be an improvement, I am worried whether there would be any representatives from Cornwall in the new body. The last time there was a detailed proposal for an elected House of Lords, it was suggested that there should be 33 representatives for the “south west,” elected via a list form of proportional representation.

As is so often the case, unlike Wales and Scotland, our territorial integrity was ignored by the political establishment, which had no concerns about Cornish interests being lost in some amorphous constituency stretching as far as Bristol and Tewkesbury. If reform does finally happen, Cornwall must be guaranteed its own voices.



# Cornish news and views

## Fair transport investment

MK has challenged the decision of the Tory Government to give the go-ahead to HS2, the proposed high-speed rail link between London and the Midlands / north of England. About ten years ago, the project was projected to cost £32.2 billion, but by 2015 this had risen to £56 billion. It is presently estimated that it will cost £106 billion.

Party leader Cllr Dick Cole said: "Looking at it all from a Cornish perspective, the present trip between Birmingham and London takes the same time as a journey from Penzance to Liskeard. In terms of the proposed HS2 times, someone would be able to get from the Midlands to London just as quick as someone could get from Penzance to St Austell.

"I am usually a strong supporter of an improved public transport network, but I really do struggle with the whole concept of HS2. I feel central government should instead prioritise the rebuilding and strengthening of the wider rail network decimated by Beeching's cuts in the 1960s."

He added: "There are also growing complaints that too many of the proposed new jobs will be in London and the UK is still in the process of spending £40 billion on its Crossrail project between Heathrow Airport and the Canary Wharf financial district.

"The UK Government is spending so much money on projects such as HS2 and Crossrail, it will mean that less money is spent in places such as Cornwall. That is why I believe there needs to be an ongoing year-on-year audit of capital expenditure across all the parts of the UK, in order to ensure parity of investment." (20th February 2020)

## No Cornish on passport

The UK Government has produced its new blue British passport, but Cornwall has been snubbed once again. The new permit has its own "own symbolic design" with the "floral emblems of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales embossed." The inner page meanwhile includes text in the Welsh, Scots Gaelic and Irish languages – which is obviously to be welcomed – but the Cornish language has been excluded. Once again, the government is ignoring its obligations to Cornish identity and culture. (23rd February 2020)



## St Mewan by-election

MK members were on the campaign trail during February and early March, supporting Michael Bunney in the Cornwall Council by-election in the St Mewan Division. He is pictured above, with his agent Cllr Dick Cole, leafletting in Trewoon.

The election had been caused by the resignation of Cheryl Mackrory, who had been elected as the MP for Truro and Falmouth in December.

The campaign had been going extremely well, with Michael focusing on the prevention of inappropriate developments within the division, the protection of the area's wonderful environment and agricultural land, improvements to the maintenance of the local road network and better social care for the people of the area. He had also pledged that, if elected, he would be a full-time councillor.

The election should have been held on 16th April, but was postponed because of the Coronavirus crisis. Michael has already confirmed that he will be standing again, when the election is re-arranged.

## Top 50

Mebyon Kernow leader Cllr Dick Cole has been featured in the most recent list of the "top 50 most powerful people in Cornwall," which was produced by the Cornwall Live news website. It reflects a degree of respect for his various campaigns for Cornwall and its people. (3rd March 2020)

## Happy Birthday Ann

On 14th April 2020, MK's Honorary President, Ann Trevenen Jenkin, celebrated her 90th birthday. A stalwart of the Cornish movement, she is the last surviving founder member of MK and was the first female Grand Bard of Gorsedh Kernow.



She was recently in hospital for a significant time and we are sure that everyone in Mebyon Kernow is keen to send their best wishes to Ann and her family.

# Remembering more friends

Cornish Nation *marks the lives and achievements of Vanessa Beeman, David Mudd and Terry Salmon*

Long-standing Mebyon Kernow member and former Grand Bard of Cornwall, **Vanessa Beeman** (nee Hocking), passed away in December 2019 at the age of 74.

Vanessa was born in Nairobi, Kenya, and she spent most of her childhood in Tanzania. She nonetheless retained strong links with the Cornish roots of her family and often stayed with her grandfather Sidney Hocking, who had a copy of Henry Jenner's *Handbook of the Cornish Language* among his many books on Cornwall.

She later studied prehistory at universities in Manchester and Liverpool, and obtained a teaching qualification in Wales. Her initial employment was at a school in Truro, though she later secured a post with the Federal Bureau of Antiquities in Nigeria and afterwards taught at the Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria.

In 1986, Vanessa and her husband Robert moved to Cornwall to be with her parents. She worked for seven years at St Mawes Castle, before becoming the company secretary for Robert's engineering business.

She had a great fascination with the Cornish language and began to study it with her father Kaspar. Both passed the Language Board's exams and became bards of Gorsedh Kernow in 1993 at the ceremony at Bude Castle.

Paying tribute to her, the present Grand Bard Elizabeth Carne has written: "Vanessa chose as her bardic name Gwenenen, which appropriately means a bee in Cornish. A bee is known for industry and hard work, so an apt name in more ways than one. She joined the Gorsedh Kernow Council in 1996 and became Competitions Secretary in 1997, a major task, carried out with her usual friendly efficiency.

"She was held in such high esteem by her fellow bards that she was elected Deputy Grand Bard in 2003. She became Grand Bard in 2006 at Redruth and held the role until 2009. During her time as Grand Bard, she visited the descendants of Cornish families in Australia and North America. She inspired and encouraged those bards in the diaspora to promote and maintain Cornish culture in their communities.

"Vanessa taught the Cornish language on and off from 1994 and was more recently part of An Kylgh Kernewek, a group which teaches Cornish in the Falmouth and Redruth areas.

"Her lovely smile and kindness touched all she met. She will always be remembered with great affection in the Cornish World."

**David Mudd**, who was the Conservative MP for the Falmouth and Camborne constituency between 1970 and 1992, died in April 2020 at the age of 86.



He was a member of Mebyon Kernow in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when MK was principally a pressure group, which still allowed dual-membership. This was a prominent fact in many tributes to David with the *Daily Telegraph* describing him as an "independent-minded Cornish Conservative" who "campaigns for Cornish devolution."

He was born in Falmouth to a prominent maritime family – his grandfather Captain Edward Rooney was one of the relief captains of the Cutty Sark, sailing her back from Portugal on her last voyage to Falmouth. David attended Truro Cathedral School before starting a career in journalism with the *Western Morning News* as a junior reporter in Barnstaple.

He did his national service on merchant ships sailing between the United Kingdom and South Africa and, after briefly working as a stage manager in ballrooms all over the UK, he ventured into radio and broadcast journalism.





With the launch of independent television franchises in the early 1960s, David joined the newly formed Westward TV based in Plymouth, as a newsreader and reporter.

He became a bard of Gorsedh Kernow in 1967, taking the name Map Arwenack (son of Arwenack – a historic part of Falmouth). Three years later, he became the member of parliament for his home constituency and he managed to get re-elected on a further five occasions.

Not afraid to vote with his conscience, in the 1970s he broke ranks from his Conservative colleagues to back Scottish home rule in the House of Commons and, in May 1986, he made it clear that the Government could not rely on his support because of its poor record over mine closures. In this same year, he led a rebellion of Cornish MPs because of the demise of the International Tin Council and the associated devastating impact on Cornwall's remaining tin mines, which he blamed on Government Ministers.

In his last term of office, he famously lambasted the Tories for cuts to the NHS which he said were “designed deliberately to ease the burden of those wealthy enough to pay tax, when in Cornwall many people either do not earn enough to pay tax or, sadly, are unemployed.”

Also a prolific author, David wrote 15 historical books as well as one book for children and a single work of fiction. These included a publication about Falmouth Packet Ships and “Cornwall in Uproar,” which told the story of many revolts, rebellions, protests and strikes, ranging from the 1497 rebellion to the 1913 strike in the China Clay Area.

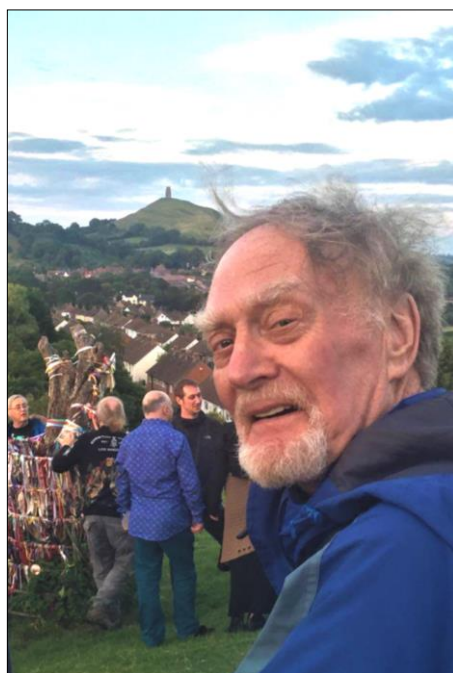
He enjoyed chairing male voice choir concerts and in 1994 held the helm at the six yearly Festival of Cornish Male Voice Choirs at the Royal Albert Hall, which his family has described as “one of the highlights of his life.”

His son Saul said: “My father remained a patriotic Cornishman all his life. He was proud to be a Cornish bard and a Methodist lay preacher.” In his tribute, George Eustice, the present Conservative MP for Camborne and Redruth, added: “David Mudd left a lasting

impression on those he represented ... he was passionate about Cornwall and for a period of time was said to have been a member of Mebyon Kernow while also being a Conservative MP. I am not sure modern politics would be able to accommodate dual membership of this sort, but things were perhaps more laid back in the 70s.”

David's first two marriages ended in divorce. He is survived by this third wife Diana, plus his son, daughter and stepdaughter.

**Terry Salmon**, who was a member of Mebyon Kernow for over twenty years, passed away in December 2019 at the age of 78.



Born in Southampton in 1941, the family remembers that his weight was first taken on rusty scales in an air raid shelter because the sirens were warning of an impending attack. Terry was educated at Middle Road Primary School and Itchen Grammar School, and he attended St Patrick's Church in Woolston. Terry also became the Scout Leader of the 20th Itchen Scout Group, which helped him to meet his future wife Mary Pascoe, who was Cornish. Her mother had been the local cub leader.

Terry had a lifelong interest in trains and when he left school, he worked for British Rail in an administrative role at Eastleigh. In the 1970s, he trained to become a teacher and began his teaching career in his home city of Southampton.

He had a long and happy marriage to Mary and they were blessed with four sons; Joe, Dominic, John and Paul. The family moved to Cornwall – always their spiritual home – in 1986. The family bought a property in Cubert and Terry worked as a teacher at Bishops School in Newquay.

He had a great passion for walking throughout his life. When his sons were young, the family spent a lot of time in the New Forest and they also loved the paths around Cornwall. He walked the entire coast path from Land's End to Dover, and also did numerous sponsored walks for charities and good causes.

As a young man, he had contemplated emigrating to New Zealand, a dream later fulfilled by his son Dominic. A few years ago, Terry and Mary visited New Zealand and Australia and, while there, he fulfilled his desire to travel from Melbourne to Adelaide by train.

Terry had a love of history, particularly Roman and Celtic history and legend, influenced by his Irish ancestry. He could converse in Cornish, Gaelic, Latin and Anglo-Saxon.

He really loved Cornwall and all things Cornish. In 1997, he played an important part in the walk from St Keverne to Blackheath, which commemorated the 500th anniversary of the An Gof rebellion. Terry's sons Joe and Paul did the whole of the march, while he helped out as a support driver for the last two weeks of the enterprise.

A spiritual man, he was active in the Catholic churches in Newquay and Perranporth, training many altar servers.

Terry was a compassionate man, who helped many people throughout his life. He will be remembered as a wonderful husband, father and grandfather, with a warm and beautiful heart.





# Kenedhel Gernewek

