

Liskeard Old Cornwall Society

On Fri 9 Sep 14, courtesy of Mr James Moon, Bolitho Farm, Maudlin, Liskeard, forty two (42) persons, (plus thirty one South Devon inquisitive bullocks), assembled for the ancient ceremony of : 'Crying The Neck', organised by the Liskeard Old Cornwall Society, so capturing the Spirit of the Harvest, for the coming year. Rev Margot Davies, Priest in Charge of Menheniot, officiated and addressed those assembled on our bountiful harvest, and that we must not take it all for granted and must also appreciate the hard work of our farming community. Mr Mike Smith, led each reading in the Cornish Language, and readings in English were presented by Mrs Norma Dobinson, of the Looe OCS.

His Worship the Mayor of Liskeard, Cllr Philip Sheeva, was indisposed and sent his apologies, but the Deputy Mayor of Liskeard, Cllr Jane Pascoe, was in attendance, along with Cllr Roger Holmes, Cllr James Shrubsole, Cllr Lorna Shrubsole, Cllr Rachel Brooks and her son Jago.

The ceremony was conducted by Mr Duncan Paul Matthews, President of the Federation of Old Cornwall Societies and of the Liskeard Old Cornwall Society.

The last 'neck of corn', was cut by Mr James Moon, and held to the North, East and West, by Mr Matthews, with the cry in Cornish, of : 'I hav'n', with the supporting attendances asking : What hav'ee ? answered with 'A Neck'. This was then repeated in English by two ten year young lads, 'Jago Brooks (Liskeard) and 'Jago Hayward' (St Cleer).

Two visitors from Norfolk, were present, Mr and Mrs Eric Franklin, of Norwich.

Prior to the ceremony, PC Helen Pristley, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, gave a most enlightening and appreciative address on the Liskeard and Looe Food Bank, of who might receive such couponed aid and assistance, the collection box sites and suggested items to be included. We were most greatfull to her for her enlightening the group of her work and concerns for those in need and less fortunate than ourselves.

It was a most beautiful evening with most colourful sunset over South East Cornwall.

Redruth Old Cornwall Society

On Friday 22nd of August Redruth O.C.S. held their annual Crying of the Neck ceremony at Devas Farm Posanooth curtesy of Farmer Leonard Roskilly.

Devas Farm set in the verdant valley of Kennal is said to be of 17th. century origin and has been the Roskilly family holding for over fifty years in which time Leonard has increased it considerably in acreage and is a typically Cornish, mixed farm with dairy and other cattle, chicken and arable land. At one point in time there must have been sheep on the land as Devas is the Cornish for sheep.

On a lovely balmy late summer evening a goodly crowd of both committee members, members and other onlookers were gathered together to perform the ancient ceremony, banner bearers Charlie Skinner and Sandy Bennett led farmer Roskilly, Rev. Steve Smith, Rev Brian Coombes, Hon. Pres. Vanessa Moyle, and Hon Treasurer David Bray to the field.

Vanessa gave a very warm welcome in Cornish and English to all present and thanked them for their support.

David Bray read the roll call of societies and found we had widespread support not only from Kernow but also from over the Tamar and our Celtic cousin Brittany.

After a short history of the ceremony, the farm and area by Vanessa proceedings began with a hymn and then the Blessings in Cornish and English read by the Reverends.

Before the "Cutting and Crying" Leonard gave a little explanation of farming history of 60 to 70 years ago, saying that although the field full of corn we were in would have been ripe enough to cut with scythes in those days nowadays with combines it would be another few weeks before it would be ready. After scything several swathes a sheaf was gathered using the hook which belonged to Leonard's Great Great Grandfather! and making his own "thumb bind" Leonard tied the sheaf to make what in his family was known as a "goose neck". This done the Crying commenced and was replied with gusto and great Hurrahs for farmer Roskilly. Before leaving for the church service Leonard and the Rev. Steve Smith were presented with Corn Dollies an ancient symbol of the corn harvest.

The short service conducted in both Cornish and English was held in St. Michael and All Angels church Ponsanooth and the sheaf now bedecked with wildflowers and colourful ribbons was carried by farmer Roskilly and received by Rev. Smith to be given thanks for. The evening was completed by a traditional pasty supper served very ably by committee members Rosy Hawking, Florrie Hoskin and Margaret Bray, in the newly refurbished Community hall in the old Wesley chapel Ponsanooth, there was lots of friendly chatter throughout and a few gallons of tea later a rousing rendition of Trelawney sent people home having enjoyed a typical Cornish summers evening.

A selection of photos from Redruth OCS event taken by Ivor Corkell:





Redruth OCS President Vanessa Moyle







