

Crying the Neck

Liskeard Old Cornwall Society

Crying the Neck at Bolitho Farm in the evening of Saturday 1st September 2018



President Brian Oldham, Mayor of Liskeard Christina Whitty, Farmer James Moon and County Councillor Jane Pascoe

The 30 supporters of the ancient custom were all in good voice for a Harvest sing song to round off the event.

Looe Old Cornwall Society

We were delighted that our Recorder, Roger Bennett, could perform the ceremony for the last time before his move to Carnon Downs, and surprised as well as delighted to welcome back our Past President, John Enever, despite his recent stay in hospital.

John's son-in-law, Andrew, is in the background with scythe.

An enjoyable evening, although the blustery weather meant that the banner and flag had to be tied to the farm gate.

Norma



Madron Old Cornwall Society

The ceremony was held at Boswarthen Farm, Madron, by kind permission of the Nicholls family, and afterwards at Madron Wesleyan Chapel.

Mr Roy Matthews as President led the event with Rev Tim Hawkins, vicar of Madron saying the prayer in Cornish and Mr Phil Williams leading the prayer in English. Penzance Silver Band led the singing of harvest hymns before the cutting of the neck. (I don't actually know who cut the corn I'm afraid). The remains of the crop on this patch of field which surrounds the listed menhir at Boswarthen is traditionally left for the birds and animals to enjoy over the Winter months.

Afterwards, as is custom, the spectators were invited to the Methodist Chapel in Madron to sing some more hymns and enjoy musical entertainment by Penzance Brass band then enjoy pasties and tea served by members of the Chapel Committee. Next year the Church will host the event.

(Val Thomas of St Ives Old Cornwall)





Redruth Old Cornwall Society







St Columb Old Cornwall Society

On Monday 10th September, St Columb Old Cornwall Society held their Annual Harvest Celebration of 'Crying the Neck'. The ceremony dates back to Ancient Times when it was believed that the last sheaf or neck of corn held the Spirit of the Corn. This was then kept until the following year in the hope that it would enable a good harvest. Variations of the ceremony occur in many Countries.

The warm Summer this year in Cornwall meant much of the corn had been cut earlier than usual but fortunately a local farmer provided a few sheaves of corn which were placed on the Village Green in St Mawgan, kind permission of the Parish Council. So instead of a field, the ceremony started on the Village Green in St Mawgan. Phil Ellery welcomed everyone and spoke about the Ancient Tradition.

Prayers were said in Kernewek (Cornish) by Barbara Wyper and in English by Reverend Tess Lowe, Assistant Curate, Lann Pydar Benefice. Dave Crewes was banner bearer. Derek Lindsey cut the neck calling three times, "I 'ave'n !" and the crowd responded with "what 'av'ee?" Then Derek said "A neck!" This was followed by the Kernewek. Then the neck was taken to the Church where a Service of Thanksgiving for the Harvest was held. Rev Helen Baber, Rector of Lann Pydar Benefice, led the Service and Nancy Barker kindly played the organ. Following the Service, everyone made their way to the Village Hall for pasties, saffron cake, splits with jam and cream, ably prepared by Lyn May and committee members. John Bennallick was Master of Ceremonies and as usual was extremely entertaining. He introduced Neil Plummer soloist who encouraged us to join in the choruses and Barbara Grigg and Mike O'Connor. Mike played fiddle and concertina and Barbara the harp. Between them, they provided us all with some wonderful music and storytelling.

Everyone stood for the final song which was of course 'Trelawney'. It was truly a magical evening for over 90 people.



(Photo: Mrs Lindsey)