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March
08

cornish language partnership
maga

Newsletter

Taste of Success

On Saturday 1st March MAGA took over Truro Library to run a series of Cornish language taster sessions.



Children making St Piran's Day cards (photo by Colin Ross)

The sessions were run by volunteers brought together through the new Marketing Group of the Cornish Language Partnership, which comprises a representative from each of the main membership organisations: Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek, Cussel an Tavas Kernūak and Agan Tavas.

The day began with a quiz about Cornish saints and place names, and the winner of the quiz was David Trethewey who won a saffron loaf with his impressively high score. Then came activities around food and drink, a talk on Cornish place names and a session on basic Cornish, which was extremely well attended. There were also activities specifically aimed at

children, including an opportunity to make St Piran's Day cards in Cornish and a puppet show featuring Brân, the Cornish speaking crow.

The event attracted a high level of media interest, and although John Craven from Countryfile didn't quite make it down in the end (despite showing an interest in the event) there was plenty of coverage in the local press and on local radio stations.

This was just the first of what is hoped will be many sessions run jointly through the Partnership's Marketing Group, and it is wonderful to have people from each of the groups who are keen to work together on promoting our language through such events.



Packed library for a session on basic Cornish

Website Archived



MAGA has been invited by the British Library, on behalf of the UK Web Archiving Consortium, to allow its website to be archived as part of a permanent collection. At present there is no legal copyright deposit for digital materials in the way that there is for printed materials and this project is a step towards achieving a similar copyright status for digital materials.

The Consortium is aiming to archive selected websites to represent documentary heritage. It means that the site will then be available to researchers in the future. Updating will take place so that snapshots are taken of the site as it changes over time.

We are very pleased that the site has been chosen for this and that Cornish will form part of the archived material.

Busy Pirantide for MAGA

The Cornish Language Partnership has spent a busy Pirantide out on the road attending a number of St Piran's Day related events.

The celebrations kicked off in Penzance on Friday 29th February, where MAGA ran a stall at St John's Hall for the St Piran in Penwith morning parade and evening concert. In the morning, Cornish Language Partnership officer Elizabeth Stewart was joined by Andrew Climo to help give out stickers to the 500+ children taking place in the parade, and during the interval of the concert held that evening there was a chance for people to ask questions and pick up information about Cornish.

On Tuesday MAGA took part in Diver-sifest – a celebration of diversity at University College, Falmouth. There



One of the St Piran's Day Parades at Bodmin



You can't miss MAGA with its new bright orange stall!

was a wide range of stalls participating at the event, including CAVA (the Cornish Audio Visual Archive), An Daras (the website that acts as a gateway to the Cornish folk arts), and the Fair-trade Foundation. In the evening there was an evening of Bollywood and Bhajis, which involved a screening of Brett Harvey's Cornish 2006 Govynn Kernewek award winning film in Cornish, *An Jowl yn agas Kegin* alongside a Bollywood classic.

Then on Wednesday, St Piran's Day itself, MAGA ran a stall at the St Piran celebrations in Bodmin. The day comprised three parades around the town and there were speeches and singing at Mount Folly at the end of each. Again it was an excellent opportunity to make contact with a large number of children and introduce them to a few words of Cornish by giving out stickers, and there was a high level of general interest from members of the public throughout the day.

Dayschool in Cardiff

The Cornish Language Today was the subject of a talk given by Jenefer Lowe at a dayschool in Cardiff recently.

The day, run by the Cymdeithas Carnhuanawc, was devoted to talks on aspects of the Celtic Languages and included a look at developments within Gaelic in Scotland, an account of early exchanges between Wales and Britain and examination of the effect on Irish in Northern Ireland of language learning within the internment camps during the Troubles.

It was a very interesting day and we were delighted to have been asked to take part. The Cymdeithas visited Cornwall on a study tour in 2006, when they met with Rod Lyon, who talked with them about the history and development of Cornish.

Date for Next Forum

The next Cornish Language Forum will be held in St Austell at the Polkyth Leisure Centre on Tuesday 22nd April from 7pm.

The Partnership will also hold an open office at the leisure centre during the afternoon, from 2-5pm.

Next Forum:
Polkyth Leisure Centre
Tuesday 22nd April

Cornish Language Weekend Set to Take Over Newquay

The Cornish Language Weekend run by Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek is taking place from 14th-16th March at the Sandy Lodge Hotel in Newquay.

The weekend is turning out to be rather more popular than originally predicted by the organisers, as both the Sandy Lodge Hotel and a nearby second hotel are now fully booked. Anyone who has not yet booked their

accommodation is being advised to book into other hotels in Newquay, though they will still be able to participate fully in the weekend by coming along to the Sandy Lodge each day.

Tony Hak from the Kowethas says "It is always difficult to estimate demand, and this year we have been a little overwhelmed by the popularity of the Weekend. It's clearly proving to be the

event of the year. See you there!"

For further information about the weekend, and to book your place at the events taking place each day, contact Koreen Twydell at koreen@freshapproachaccountancy.co.uk or phone 01736 758344 (during office hours).

Gorseth to Support SWF



Gorseth Kernow procession

Gorseth Kernow has announced its intention to support the Standard Written Form of Cornish.

At a meeting of the Gorseth Council held in February a resolution was passed that once the SWF has been formalised, it is intended that the Council recommend to the AGM that

the Gorseth adopt the SWF.

Grand Bard, Vanessa Beeman, explains the reason behind the Council's resolution: "The Council of Gorseth Kernow thinks it is important that the Cornish language should move forward, with official backing, to be offered as an option in Cornish schools, and that it should have continued funding for teaching and research."

This is a significant decision, coming from one of Cornwall's most prominent cultural organisations, and the news has been welcomed by the Cornish Language Partnership, which hopes that other organisations will follow the Gorseth's lead by fully embracing the SWF.

Cornish and Breton Workshop at Aberfest

There will be an opportunity to learn both some Cornish and some Breton as part of a Cornish-Breton festival taking place in Falmouth over Easter.

The Aberfest, which takes place biennially in Cornwall, will run from 21st-24th March, and on Saturday 22nd there will be a joint Cornish and Breton language workshop for beginners.

Alain le Gourven from Brittany will be present to introduce people to some basic Breton, and volunteers from

Agan Tavas, Cussel an Tavaz Kernūak and Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek will be running Cornish language activities suitable for beginners.

The workshop will run from 2.30-5pm, with a refreshment break in the middle, at Falmouth Methodist Church. Entry is free.

For further information visit the festival website at www.aberfest.org.

Cornish Film Shortlisted for Celtic Media Festival

A Cornish language film has been shortlisted for this year's Celtic Media Festival which is taking place in Galway in April.

An Jowl yn agas Kegin, the winner of the 2006 Govynn Kernewek award, has been shortlisted for the "short drama" section of the festival.

For further information about the festival, visit the website at www.celticfilm.co.uk.



Still from Cornish language film, *An Jowl yn agas Kegin*, which has been shortlisted for the Celtic Media Festival in Galway

Letter from the Celtic League

On visiting UNESCO's website of the 'Red Book on Endangered Languages' recently

(http://www.helsinki.fi/~tasalmin/europe_index.html) Celtic League General Secretary, Rhisiart Tal-e-bot, and Cornish Branch Secretary, Michael Chappell, were surprised to discover that Cornish, and other Celtic languages, were listed under the Extinct Languages section for Europe.

The information was compiled in 1993 and the website last updated in 2003. The Westminster Government has now officially recognised the Cornish Language as from November 2002 and there are full time staff working as a Cornish Language Development Manager and a Cornish Language Administrator. There are more Cornish speakers and learners than for many years and current estimates place the numbers from between 300 to nearly 1000 plus.

To state in the Red Book that the Cornish language is extinct is not only unfair but inaccurate. By stating this, it places the language in the same category as 'Klingon' for example. A visitor to the website with an interest in the Celtic languages could easily assume that no one speaks Cornish.

At the League's AGM, the following resolution was passed: "to seek to raise the profile, position and use of the different Celtic languages in the Celtic countries and internationally, during the UN International Year of Languages 2008."

Relating to the resolution, the Celtic League has written to the UNESCO Red Book co-ordinator, Tapani Salminen (tasalmin@cc.helsinki.fi) asking that the material relating to Cornish (and other Celtic languages) be revised.

Rhisiart Tal-e-bot/Michael J. Chappell
Celtic League

Last Chance to Enter Govynn Kernewek 08

The closing date is nearing for entries to be submitted for the Govynn Kernewek Award 2008: the annual prize for the best proposal for a short film mainly or entirely in the Cornish language.

"If you have a great idea for a film, and want a chance to put it into practice, this is the perfect chance", commented Cornwall Film Festival Chair, Denzil Monk, "You don't have to be able to speak Cornish fluently, and you don't have to have a crew in mind, as this year the Festival is offering more support than ever."

This support takes the form of a panel of advisors and has been set up by the Festival to encourage those who might have great ideas, but lack film-making experience. Three ideas will be shortlisted from the initial entries, and each of these three applicants will receive £150 and expert advice and support to develop their idea, on everything from putting together a crew to script-writing and budgeting. In October the three shortlisted applicants will be interviewed, and the win-

ning idea will then be awarded £5,000 with which to make their film, which will receive its premiere a year later at Cornwall Film Festival 2009.

"We've had some great winners in the past, and we hope people will feel they can enter the competition, even if they've never made a film before," said Festival Director Laura Hardman.

The title to inspire this year's film is the Cornish wrestling motto, *Gwari Hweg yw Gwari Teg – Fair Play is Good Play*. Applicants are asked to submit a one-page outline explaining their story or film idea, plus a CV, to the Cornwall Film Festival, Krowji, West Park, Redruth, Cornwall TR15 3AJ, by 31st March. For further information, please contact the Festival on 01209 204655, or by email at info@cornwallfilmfestival.com.

Events

March

11th Yeth an Werin, Queens Arms, Constantine - for further information contact paulshelagh@sabrehost.net

14th-16th Cornish Language Weekend, Sandy Lodge Hotel, Newquay, organised by Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek - further details to follow or visit www.cornish-language.org

16th Perrantide Service in Cornish at Perran-ar-Worthal Church, 3pm

21st-24th Aberfest - a festival of all things Cornish and Breton - for further information see www.aberfest.org

22nd Cornish and Breton language workshop as part of Aberfest, Falmouth Methodist Church, 2.30-5pm - for further information see www.aberfest.org

25th Yeth an Werin, Plume of Feathers, Scorrier - for further information contact ray@spyrays.org

30th Easter Service, Crowan Parish Church, 3pm

April

1st Yeth an Werin, Royal Standard, Gwinear, 8pm - for further information contact jori.ansell@virgin.net

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Further Information

For further information about any of the articles in this newsletter, please contact either Jenefer Lowe, Development Manager, or Elizabeth Stewart, Administrator, at the contact details above.

If you are organising a Cornish language event and would like to have it publicised in this newsletter please send us the details!

If you would like to subscribe to receive this newsletter free of charge every month send us an e-mail or letter and we will add you to our distribution list.

Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to others!

*Deadline for contributions to April newsletter: **Friday 4th April.***

The Cornish Language Partnership is funded by:

