



Lanhydrock Hotel and Golf Club

Report from the International Celtic Congress 2013

The Cornish Branch organised the Conference this year at the Lanhydrock Hotel and Golf Club. The facilities were ideal for lectures, music sessions and meetings. About 70 delegates attended the week which had as its theme “Youth and the future of Celtic Culture”. The branch were delighted that the speakers and the entertainers, were, in the main, young people. The

delegates were interested to hear the views of the speakers on their idea of where their language and their own culture is going in the future.

Each evening feature a different group of musicians, singers or dancers from Cornwall and also input from the entertainers from the other 5 countries taking part.

On Friday the International

Youth Concert took place in the Public Rooms in Bodmin featuring the Cornish Boys Choir Cambiata, led by Angela Renshaw, and the other entertainers from the week.

The delegates enjoyed a visit to see the Holy Wells in Bodmin, and a walking tour of Lostwithiel and Fowey.

Bodmin Town Council helped to make the week a great success.



Mayor Councillor Ken Stubbs with Vice President David Greaney



Cambiata Boys Choir



During the guided Tour of Lostwithiel

Comments and photographs!

From the Manx Branch

Just to say 'gura mie mooar ayd' a big thank you from the Mannin branch for all the hard work by the Kernow branch for organising such an excellent Congress. We appreciate the effort made by many people, particularly the Gorsedd procession. Please extend our thanks to the Mayor and all the staff at the Lanhydrock Hotel for helping to make our stay a pleasurable one.

Thanks again for making us feel welcome and 'keslowena' on organising such a successful conference.

Oll an gwella,

Roy

From Angela Renshaw, leader of Cambiata Choir:

It was an absolute pleasure. the boys very much enjoyed the evening, especially the dancing and were talking about it all on the return journey. It is important that young people have the opportunity to hear music from other Celtic nations as it is sadly a rare treat in schools so thank you for providing them with that. Many thanks to all involved in this wonderful event

Angela

From members of Cornwall Heritage Trust:

I was delighted to attend, along with my fellow trustee, and we thoroughly enjoyed the performances of such a variety of talented young people.

It was encouraging to see the pride they held in their own traditions and to know that these traditions are being kept alive and passed on to the future.



Canon Graham Minors explains the history of the old church

From the Irish Branch Secretary:

Feed back first of all: I didn't hear one bad word or complaint about the Congress. We had a meeting last week and everybody thought it was great. The hotel was wonderful; the hotel staff could not have been nicer; the meals were most enjoyable; the outings were very interesting (a pity the weather didn't oblige: it was very cold). Most of the young lecturers were amazingly interesting. The drama about Cain and Abel in the Cornish language impressed me a lot. I personally only got two of the concerts. I thoroughly enjoyed the first one. The second one was the one on the last night most of which I enjoyed but I must confess I run a mile when I hear heavybeat music. I find it pervasive, persistent, overpowering and deafening. The ecumenical service was lovely. I intend learning "the Lord's my Shepherd" in Cornish! The Cornish lessons were great: I still have the little cards of graded lessons in my handbag! Well done!



Bardic Procession to Mount Folly

From the Secretary of the Scottish Branch:

We enjoyed the Congress in Bodmin very much and I'm sure I speak for all the Scottish delegates when I say we were so well treated, made to feel so welcome and had a very interesting programme of lectures and visits to the surrounding area. It was our first visit to Cornwall and I hope will not be our last!

After the Congress we stayed in Truro for a couple of nights and "did" the tourist bit. We visited Falmouth, Penzance, Land's End and St Ives and managed to enjoy all of it thoroughly despite the cold wind.



Dancing on the Friday evening

Vice-President's Opening Address

It's a wonderful thing, yet again, for the six branches of An Guntelles Keltiek to meet together in Kernow: Alba, Breizh, Cymru, Kernow (del wodher – of course), Éire, and Mannin.

I'm always impressed by the dynamism and dedication of the Cornish Branch and by the fact that some of its members have been associated with our Celtic Congress since childhood, and some, I suspect, since infancy. Some of you here have long association with other cultural organisations in Cornwall, not least with Gorseth Kernow, an institution held in high esteem in Wales and the in other Celtic countries too.

We last met nine months ago in Gwengamp, in Breizh - Brittany, and left enthused and refreshed after a fantastic week.

Now, I collect odd things ... fossils, bits of scientific paraphernalia, lots of strange curios ... and I have a card game in a tin – a parlour game, no doubt – with a bold question on each card.

One of the questions is: *Are your teeth your own?*

And my answer *now* has to be “Alas, no. Not all of them.”

And since last July, I'm having daily battles over which pair of glasses I should be wearing – reading glasses for close up – or glasses for further away

So, to those of you who were there in Breizh last July: *I think* you look as young as ever ...

... but as for the rest of you no comment!

Bodmin is a very ancient name. We Welsh could call it **Bod Mynaich** in modern Welsh and in ancient Welsh, **Bod meneich**. This means the 'habitation of monks'.

And many of you, Welsh or not, will be familiar with 'bod' in our word 'eisteddfod', whose older meanings are 'a place of assembly' for formal meetings, 'a seat of learning or government', 'a throne' even.

Another common Welsh word is 'hafod' – 'haf' and 'bod' – a 'summer dwelling place'. Interestingly, in Welsh place-names, 'Bod' is found largely in North Wales – for example, Bodelwyddan, Bodedern, Bodffordd - and generally refers to an ecclesiastical settlement of some kind.

Well, North Wales is a long way away from here but there's clearly a very old language connection.

And we have the word 'llan' too in Welsh, which is exactly the 'lan' that we have in 'Lanhydrock': 'llan' an enclosure for keeping crops or animals, that came to mean, too, enclosed consecrated land, particularly a place associated with a Celtic saint.

It seems that St Petroc, one of Cornwall's patron saints, who built his monastery here (his dwelling place for monks – his *bod meneich* – or Bodmin), was born in South Wales, probably of royal birth, and has churches dedicated to him there in two places, in Y Ferwig, in Ceredigion, and in St Petrox, Pembrokeshire. There is also Llanbedrog in Llŷn, North Wales. These are signs of very ancient connections between Wales and Cornwall, by way of example. But Petroc had associations with Brittany and Ireland, too, as well as other places.

And some of you here will know of another Pedrog, Pedrog Archdruoid of Wales (otherwise known as John Owen Williams), who opened the first Gorseth in Kernow in Boscawen-un on September 21st 1928. That's a cultural connection of some 84 years – and a very significant one.

And we have today's connections, Celtic Congress, for example, and Cornish people working and studying in Wales.

We Celts can look back over many centuries of connections in these islands. There's one thing we say about ourselves in Celtic Congress:

Sole-mpnya hag avonsya gonysegeth ha tавosow Kelttek hedhyw
Celebrating and promoting Celtic cultures and languages today

Note the Cornish word 'gonesegeth' – culture; in Welsh we say 'diwylliant' – *unwilding* – which might say a lot about the Welsh! But gonesegeth sounds to me like our word 'cynhysgaeth', which means 'endowment', or a 'gifting'.

We are here today because of a shared and lively history and because of our loyalties and continuing friendships. We have a strong sense of being part of a big family, a family that wants to pass on, to those who will be coming after us, precious things that bind us together in special and meaningful ways.

"And who will come after us?" is a question I've asked myself lately.

This visit of mine to Kernow could well make me feel suddenly ancient. I chanced upon a serious poem some while ago – it'll be familiar to some of you – *Kernopazoola Rap* (a poem by Alan Kent).

And, I'm quoting at random:

*If y' straight otta' Camborne, then you're cool ...
There are surfers, babes, down on the beach.
In Cornwall, sea, sun, and surf are easy to reach*

If these lines were about Aberystwyth we'd have to add something about 'cold temperatures' and 'miles of ungolden pebbles' too!

But, it's Land's End that's got me really worried about how *out of touch I am* with some things in life:

There's gabba, grunge, rave, rock, kickin' drum and bass

Please, if you've come from Land's End or anywhere near, do give me a demo of gabba and grunge at one of this week's Ceilidhs.

"See", Alan Kent says, "*Cornwall is young, and Cornwall is new. Cornwall is kickin' for me and for you.*" And he goes on to say that there's: "*A happenin' lingo in the Kernow zone.*"

My appeal to all delegates here in Lanhydrock is to reflect well on the week's theme "Youth and the future of Celtic culture".

Like many formally-organised groups [and I belong to many] we have a static or, possibly, a declining membership and a problem of ensuring succession – that is, of having people willing to take the reins for us to ensure a long and active future.

It's easy to celebrate. But it's much harder work to promote and sustain.

So here in Bodmin, maybe, we should rededicate ourselves to being active participants of Celtic Congress and to make being Celtic 'cool' and 'kickin' and 'happenin' and to make our *things Celtic*, whether they be contemporary or of great antiquity, worthwhile things to gift to the young generations around us (some of whom might not yet have teeth!).

Kuntelles Kelttek lowen re'gas bo yn kettep pen.

I wish you each and every one a very happy Celtic Congress.

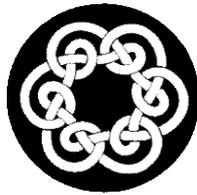
Meur ras | Diolch yn fawr

The International Celtic Congress in 2014 will be held in
Cardiff from Monday 11 until Saturday 16 AUGUST

The theme will be:

The Industrial Heritage of the Celtic Countries

More information is available at cymru-celtia@hotmail.co.uk
or telephone 029 2035 0088



INTERNATIONAL CELTIC CONGRESS

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

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The Cornish Branch have a few programmes still available and some Congress bags – these are £2 each plus 50p postage. Please let Denise Chubb know if you would like one – or two!

This newsletter is the first to be produced. It was agreed at the 2012 Congress that these will be compiled following each International Celtic Congress week. Updates or information about events to be held {or those which have already taken place} from any branch can be sent to the International Secretary along with photographs if applicable.