

Five Alive

The Magazine of the Redruth Team Ministry
St Euny Redruth, Christchurch Lanner, St Andrew Pencoys
St Andrew Redruth and St Stephen Treleigh



MARCH 2023
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by FRIDAY 17 MARCH

Rector's notes – MARCH 2023

Keep going / keep growing!

One of the hallmarks of the Christian faith is that as disciples of Jesus there is an expectation that our faith will grow and develop as the years go by. Lent is a really helpful opportunity to take stock of these things. In my view there is no better way for our faith to grow, and for us to be encouraged, than by taking part in some sort of small group meetings. Groups of four, or six, or eight people or so create environments where people can ask honest questions, and discuss heartfelt matters relating to faith. We may not always discover every answer, but there's something about honestly questioning together that is really important.

I'm proud of the fact that we have a culture of small groups in our benefice, but I want to remind you that if you've never been part of one, it's never too late to give one a go! And Lent Groups are the ideal groups to have a go at. This year we have four to choose between, all at different times on Wednesdays as follows, alongside the Alpha Course which continues at St Euny on Thursday evenings:

Wednesdays from 1st March

11am – *Growing Good* (led by Anya) in St Andrew's Crypt

11.45am – *The Sanctuary Course* at Christchurch, Lanner (after 11am HC - bring a packed lunch)

6.45pm – *Growing Good* (led by Jason) at Pencoys Church (after 6pm HC)

7pm – *Sacred places – the journey of faith* (led by Jim at Robin and Trish's house)

Growing Good

The Growing Good course helps churches explore the connection between social action, discipleship and growth, and how our churches can be faithful and fruitful in our local communities.

The Sanctuary Course

One in four people will be affected by a mental health challenge at some point in their lives. The Sanctuary Course is a resource designed to reduce stigma, raise awareness, and engage communities in meaningful conversations about mental health and faith.

Sacred places – the journey of faith

Adventurer Ben Fogle is on a very personal pilgrimage. Travelling across Scotland's remotest islands, he discovers that their spiritual legacy still resonates today. Jim will help us unpack how these discoveries can challenge and build up our own faith.

With my prayers and best wishes
Caspar Bush (Team Rector)

Earth Story

As discussed on Sunday, as a church, we enter a new season of Lent with a particular focus on creation. And not just on creation but on our relationship with creation and God. Our reading on Sunday was the lovely beginning of God's story in Eden and how the world and cosmos around us were created. Our New Testament reading was one of my favourites where Paul, talks about Christ reconciling the 'whole world' back to himself and not just the classic anthropocentric view of 'humankind' being the centre of God's reconciliation.

I really enjoyed writing my sermon for last Sunday which I believe was a gift. On the Friday I had written a totally different talk about the sounds that humans, creation and God make, however, it didn't feel like what God wanted to share with us. So we got a rewrite and an eco-theological talk instead. Definitely, more spirit-led.

As part of my research, I read a few chapters from the book 'Earth Story in Genesis' by Norman C. Habel & Shirley Wurst. It is a series of articles by scholars from around the world reading the story of Earth in Genesis in the light of the ecojustice, looking at the idea that the earth is a character in itself in the creation story. In Volume 1, it looked at Genesis from the perspective of Earth. It explores how the Earth may be valued or de-valued, given a voice or denied a voice, dominated or served, depending on the orientation of the text. Genesis 1, for example, the intrinsic worth of Earth is highlighted in the 'revealing' of Earth's presence but negated when humans are given the right to 'subdue' it. We learn later in Genesis 9 text the Earth Community and Earth itself are bound together equally in a covenant. The first covenantal promise is to both humankind and earth kind.

Historically the earth has been denied a voice, or the voice of creation has been ignored, had no part in the Good News or poorly represented. This new liturgical season brings creation's voice into our worship. It has agency, and representation but how can we as a community be the voice of creation where we are or in our connection to God? Is the issue of eco-injustice an important issue for us? It should be, but maybe we need to be more intentional in playing our part in humankind's reconciliation with creation. Hopefully, this is a new start for us in this Lent season. Maybe it can be something we can reflect on, or lament, as we approach Easter and the ultimate act of reconciliation for all things. Christ on the cross.

Revd Chris Harrigan

LENT AND BEYOND

The old English word LENT simply means SPRING and the daffodils that have appeared in the Benefice churches are sometimes called LENT LILIES. When the season of Lent was developed, it was essentially seen as a period of preparation, both personal and collectively for those seeking baptism at the great Festival of Easter.

Over the centuries, as Christian traditions developed the season of Lent became seen as the prelude to Holy Week and Easter Day. Mirroring the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness, Lent has now become a time of study, giving to others, fasting and drawing closer to God through facing those words and actions which have separated us from others and finding ways to build bridges of forgiveness.

Beginning with ASH WEDNESDAY, the Benefice churches will offer the opportunity to receive the mark of ash and to hear a version of the traditional words: ***“remember, dust thou art and to dust shalt thou return”***. The Benefice also offers a variety of study groups and these are detailed in the weekly sheet.

You may also wish to contribute to this year’s **SHELTERBOX** Lent project **A TENT FOR LENT**. The Benefice has supported this project before and with the disasters that have taken place recently many more tents are needed. One tent costs £350.00 and it would be amazing if the Benefice could raise the money to buy one. If individual churches collect what they can, the APRIL magazine will let you know how the donations can reach SHELTERBOX.

Lent will finally lead each one of us to HOLY WEEK and the TRIDUUM, the three days that lead up to Easter Day, *Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday*. Within the Benefice, there will be the opportunity to *walk the stations of the cross, share a Seder meal (the Last Supper), watch at the foot of the cross, renew baptismal vows and light the new fire of Easter Day*.

However you are able to journey through LENT and HOLY WEEK, may you know the joy of Easter Day and rejoice in God’s love for the world.

FP

ST STEPHEN'S TRELEIGH



We were honoured to host the Benefice Service for January in St Stephens Church and we thank all those from all our sister Churches who attended. It was also a pleasure to welcome Graham Adamson back to Treleigh after his licensing as Deanery Missioner for Carnmarth North by Bishop Hugh at Chacewater Church the previous Thursday. Graham gave an inspiring sermon which was enjoyed by all. As the service was a celebration of Candlemass, during the service Caspar blessed a selection of our candles which we will use during the coming year. The ladies of Treleigh as usual did us proud with the refreshments after the service. These were served in the church as the refurbishment of the hall is not yet complete. We are still waiting for the fitting of a new fire door, and the men on the hall committee are busy painting etc and generally getting the hall shipshape after the fitting of the new ceiling.

The following Sunday the 5th February saw us host our first pet service. There were several nail biting moments before the service including whether anyone would turn up. Of course they did, and after a few anxious moments when we did think dog war 1 would begin when first one dog started barking, quickly joined by dogs two and three. Peace soon reigned and apart from one dog who decided to go walkabout during the service (we put it down to his age) they behaved impeccably, not a peep out of any of the seven of them.

On Sunday the 5th February we held the first of a new version of the Holy Communion service, devised by Caspar and the rest of the ministry team. It is a slightly shorter service with the Gloria sung to a well-known hymn tune. (Thine be the Glory) and the Sanctus, Agnus Dei etc set to the tune of holy, holy holy is the Lord. Some of the prayers are rewritten but basically the actual Liturgy of the Sacrament followed Eucharist prayer E from the usual service book. Our congregation enjoyed the different singing although we still had our five hymns as well.

On Saturday the 28th January was a sad occasion for the congregation of Treleigh, when we gathered with the family of Terry Waring to say our goodbyes. Weather permitting Terry would be at church if not on a Sunday, would be there on a Thursday morning for the mid-week service. He was beginning to get over the loss of his dear wife Rose just 10 months ago, when an unexpected sudden decline in his health led to his passing. Our thoughts and prayers are with Martin and Stacey and their families and the wider family of Terry and Rose. He will be greatly missed.

Mary Harris

ST EUNY

World Day of Prayer will be hosted at St Euny on Friday 3rd March at 3.00pm. This is a joint activity with other churches and Christian groups in the parish and the venue rotates annually, always falling on the first Friday in March. The theme this year has been chosen by people in Taiwan and is based on St Paul's letter to the Ephesians, 1: 15-19 'I have heard about your Faith'. The purpose of the day is to engage in prayer as a global community through which we can listen to stories of faith and receive inspiration from God in our lives. After a service of around 45 minutes you are invited to stay for a traditional Cornish tea with splits, jam and cream. We would love to see as many as can attend, so please do put the date and time in your diary and help us to welcome visitors and participants.

It was lovely to see so many people from the whole benefice at the Patronal Festival of St Euny, and thank you to those who stayed for supper afterwards.

We were lucky with the weather on Friday 10th February when Rev Graham Adamson led us on a prayer walk through the church yard, the Coombe and up to Carn Brea village before stopping off at St Euny's Well and returning to Churchtown, A good opportunity for dogs and humans to think and pray in the open air, appreciating so much that we have around us.

The Methodists have held pilgrimages in the past and are reviving this again this year, focusing on miners' chapels. St Euny is the first stop and the group will arrive by Hopley's coach at 9.10am on Saturday 13th May for their first guided church visit. After an hour's talk and tea they will continue to Four Lanes, Troon and Centenary chapels to learn about their development and role in Methodism in the C19th and C20th the proceed to the Octagonal Chapel at Hayle and finally St Erth. The programme is strictly timed with buses setting off from Truro Catholic Church at 8.15 am, with a pick-up in Redruth at 8.50am at Railway Bridge. Packed lunch is required and tea will be provided at St Erth after a talk there. The total cost is £20 including tea and anyone who is interested should contact Ann Picken on 01872 863262 or see Linda Beskeen for further details. If you would like to join the group for a historical tour of St Euny you will be welcome for the hour from 9.00am to 10.00am.

Congratulations to Sarah and Fernando on their marriage at St Euny on 7th February. Both Bride and Groom looked as happy as could be and it was a special treat to see a 'Guard of Honour' of red 'Postie' vans lined up opposite the church, decorated in white ribbons, to offer their best wishes.

St Euny is reducing the number of Five Alive magazines ordered to reduce waste. There are several unclaimed magazines every month, so if you would like to receive a copy but have not been able to collect it in recent months, please do contact Lucie, our churchwarden, at lucierogers28@gmail.com so that we can make arrangements for the future.

St Euny is setting up a 'social events' team. Several people have volunteered to help with planning and delivering events, and anyone who has anything to offer is most welcome to join us. Please contact Lucie, our churchwarden, if you are interested.

Linda Beskeen

St. Andrew's Pencoys with Four Lanes Methodist Church
'FLAPJACK'

Worshipping, praying and working together as 'One in Christ' St. Andrew's Church remains open daily from about 10am-4pm with optional Covid-safe precautions in place

The members of Flapjack are grateful to our friends in the Methodist Church for welcoming us to their church for our Sunday morning services until the end of March, as a warmth-saving initiative during the cold weather. We hope to return to St. Andrew's Pencoys for our Easter celebrations, when our normal pattern of worship will resume. In the meantime, the said Holy Communion services on Wednesday evenings and the third-Sunday evening will continue at 6pm at St. Andrew's Pencoys.

The next First Sunday Evening Event will be at on Sunday **5th March** at 6pm at Four Lanes Methodist Church, supporting the Cornwall Deaf Children's Society, when everyone will be most welcome.

Flapjack services and events during **March** will be:

The 'Warm Wednesday' community project continues each Wednesday 2—5pm at the Methodist Church and said Holy Communion each Wednesday at 6pm St. Andrew's, Pencoys.

Saturday 4th March: Quiz, Pencoys Hall, 7pm

Sunday 5th March: Flapjack Holy Communion, 11.15am
Lighthouse young people's event, 3—5pm Methodist Church.
First Sunday Evening Event, 6pm Methodist Church.

Sunday 12th March: Flapjack Family Event, 11.15 am
Said H.C. (CE rite) 12.30pm

Saturday 18th March: Games (Bingo) Evening, 6—8 pm Pencoys Hall, £3 p.p.

Sunday 19th March: **Mothering Sunday** Methodist Service, 11.15am
Holy Communion at St. Andrew's, 6pm

Saturday 25th March: Bangers & Mash, Methodist Church, from 11am

Sunday 26th March: Flapjack Holy Communion at the Methodist Church, 11.15am
(BST begins) Teatime Celebration, Pencoys Hall, 4—5pm

A Lenten thought from "Bees in Amber" by John Oxenham (Priest & Poet):

"God is a zealous pruner, for He knows

Who, falsely tender, spares the knife but spoils the rose."

Jill Tolputt

CHRISTCHURCH LANNER



With love and best wishes to all 'Five Alivers'!!

Christchurch remains open 10.00am – 4.00pm and Holy Communion is celebrated each Sunday at 9.30am, except on the second Sunday when an informal all age event (CHAMP) is held and Holy Communion 11.00am and follows the Prayer Book rite. The third Sunday is a Communion with new music.

TOASTY TUESDAYS: In response to the church and government initiatives both locally, and nationally Christchurch Hall plans to be open every Tuesday afternoon from 1.00pm–4.00pm. Soup (which is AMAZING!!) bread, tea and coffee etc. will be available as well as games and chat!! This links in with the **OPEN PANTRY** which has been available since the covid lockdowns.

WARM WEDNESDAYS: A similar response has been put in place by the FLAPJACK community who will open the Methodist Chapel in Four Lanes every Wednesday afternoon from 2.00pm – 5.00pm. This again links with the **OPEN PANTRY** at St Andrew's, Pencoys.

DON'T STOP BELIEVING YOUTH THEATRE GROUP

Sadly, the performance of the *Rock Nativity* had to be 'paused' due to illness and movement of young people to other areas. BUT the faithful group who meet each Saturday, 3m – 5pm are working on a **Talent Show!!** NO DATE YET!!

THE FILM CLUB

This meets on the LAST Friday of each month. Membership for a year is £6.00 (reducing to £3.00 in July) and each visit costs £3.00 with free ice-cream. You will be very welcome and the next film is on FRIDAY FEBRUARY 24 ("The Courier"). Future dates are March 31 and April 28.

MARGARET'S TEA PARTY

This is on the LAST MONDAY of each month: 2.00pm – 4.00pm, and you can enjoy home-made cakes and tea in CHINA CUPS. There is a table with fascinating items and the opportunity to contribute to various projects.

THE LAST MONDAY BIBLE STUDY

Following the tea party you could ZOOM in on the Morning Prayer link for the Bible Study which has been going for years!! Various topics are studied, including major festivals and the readings for the previous / next Sunday.

ST ANDREW REDRUTH

Monday mornings at St Andrew's have developed into a hub of social activity. Several regulars attend the breakfast, available from 8.00am to 9.30am and some stay on for tea and chat into the later morning coinciding with Food Bank. This has been so popular for one regular visitor that she was waiting before the cooks arrived at 7.45 am. It seems that this is a much appreciated service and we will see how it develops.

It was wonderful to see such a good turnout for the funeral of Rosemary Seymour, a staunch supporter and attendee of St Andrew's for over half a century. We will miss Rosemary, but thanks to all who contributed toward the lunch/tea in the church after the event. This enabled many who would otherwise have missed the 'wake' to stay and meet, reminisce and relax after the service.

Monday 13th February saw the prayer walks led by Rev. Graham Adamson at St Andrew's. Graham (formerly curate of this parish) joined us this year as Deanery Missioner and immediately set off with new ideas and activities. The prayer walks have been a success, offering an enjoyable hour or more stroll around nearby streets with prayers for the residents, workers, activities and links that occur to people on the way.

'The Randoms' extravaganza 'An Evening with Irving and Cole' was extremely popular and sold out well in advance of the event, a testament to the artistic prowess and charm of the group. We wish them well and look forward to their next production, due in October.

Messy Church returns to St Andrew's for young people and will run on Sunday 2nd April from 3pm to 5pm. This is Palm Sunday and activities will reflect the Easter Season. All young people are welcome for the arts and crafts activities followed by a service and then tea. Activities and tea will take place in the Crypt.

St Piran's Day will be celebrated across Cornwall on the weekend around March 5th, with the Redruth fair and procession being on Saturday 4th March. Unusually for us St Andrew's will not be holding an event in the crypt then, but look out for more in the coming months. The St Andrew's Art Festival this summer will be on the theme of "Over Sea, Under Stone".

Linda Beskeen

Pastoral Reorganisation – one page summary by Caspar

In early March the three PCCs of our benefice will meet separately to vote on a new Pastoral Reorganisation Scheme that would bring our three parishes into one, overseen by one PCC. Each PCC has been talking about this for some time.

Why?

Our benefice has been in its current make-up since 1988, and our churches function extremely well together, with really good support across the churches for each other's services and events and so on. Yet its formal governance structures don't reflect that as well as they could. Currently Lanner and Treleigh each have their own PCCs, while Redruth PCC oversees St Andrew's, St Euny and Pencoys churches, but those three churches also each have a District Church Council (DCC) to oversee each church. In addition we have a Team Council with representatives from all five churches, which decides about things like mission, discipleship (eg home groups), administration, and other things which impact on all churches equally. That makes seven committees altogether, and of four different types.

How will the new PCC work?

A single PCC would take over the function of the Team Council, but importantly it would also handle the finances of all five churches in one bank account, though careful records would be kept so each individual church's finances can still be assessed. It will also oversee safeguarding in all churches. Every church would have a DCC to look after the details of that local church's life eg special events, services and groups, building / fabric issues, health and safety, and developing links with outside groups (eg schools) unique to that church. That would result in us having six committees, but of only two different types (one PCC, five DCCs).

The new PCC would be governed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which sets out how it will properly honour the differences of each of our churches, and the will of each individual congregation. The MOU will prevent any one church from being railroaded into doing something which it reasonably doesn't wish to do.

Other issues

The new scheme would allow for each church building to continue to be referred to as 'The Parish Church of...'.
There would be five churchwardens in total, ideally one per church. In addition the proposal is for each church to have a deputy churchwarden, which we believe would be an easier way into the role of full churchwarden for the new people we will have to recruit to that role at some point in the future.

Two further reasons

As Team Rector I would like to tidy this up now before at some stage I move on to another post. I fear that if we don't tidy this up now, the churches are likely to be required to do so by the Diocese before any new Rector could be appointed. More positively, I believe this single PCC will increase the chance of our group of churches staying as it is in the future, rather than further churches being added to it.

If you would like any more information about this matter, please contact Caspar.

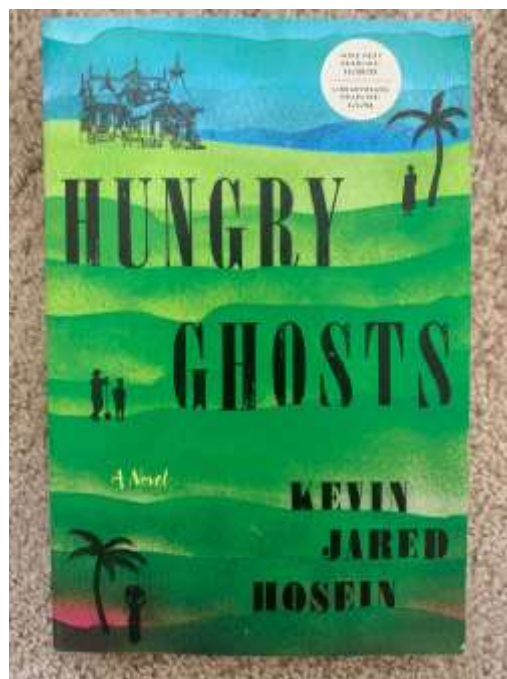
Book Club – open to anyone who likes reading and having a chat (you don't have to be a member of any of our churches)

Do consider coming along on March 3rd when we will share our response to *The Long Road from Kandahar* by Sara MacDonald. This is a novel that is at once heart-breaking and uplifting and it's focus on themes of war and loss, love and friendship across cultures is both topical and timeless. A very powerful story that follows the life of Raza who tends his father's goats among the almond orchards in the Swat Valley. Zamora, his father, must make a heart-breaking decision if he is to protect his youngest child from the Taliban . . .

The story tracks his relationship with a boy he meets in Cornwall and the ups and downs of family life in difficult times

We hope to read a very new book in April – *Hungry Ghosts* by Kevin Jared Hosein but the price might mean we change our minds at the next meeting. *Hungry Ghosts* is set in Trinidad in the 1940's at the tail end of British colonialism, contrasting the stories of two families, one wealthy and one living in poverty.

Superficially it is a mystery about a missing man but there's so much more to it; the writing is superb, there's an incredible sense of place and it explores some big subjects – religion, class and racism in an original way.



If you want to know more then contact me on 219059 - there's always room for one or two more in my conservatory!

Margaret Saville

Pastoral Group

Just a reminder to everyone in our churches to look out for one another. If you have concerns about someone who is not well amid would like a visit or holy communion at home please tell your church warden or your pastoral co-ordinator (listed below). You may also have noticed someone missing from church over a number of weeks and don't know why. Please do let us know, it's better to hear from two or three people than not to hear at all.

Your co-ordinator is:-

St Andrew Pencoy's

Fr Peter

St Andrew Redruth

Pie Louis-Smith and Lavinia Green

St Euny

Jason Hoole-Jackson

St Stephen Treleigh

Ann Youlton

Christchurch Lanner

Linda James

The co-ordinators try to meet once a month to pray for those in need and support one another

Revd Margaret and Fr Peter

World Day of Prayer

This annual event takes place on Friday March 3rd at St Euny Church at 2.00 pm and is open to everyone. You may recall this global service was called Women's World Day of Prayer and although the service is still written by women we especially welcome men to come and join us. This year we learn about the life of women in Taiwan and a little of the history of the island.

See you there!

Revd Margaret

British Summer Time begins on Sunday 26 March



Living in Love and Faith

You may be aware of the recent vote in General Synod about the blessing of same sex couples in church. This has followed the whole church being asked to listen carefully and respectfully to different views on same sex relationships and the experiences of transgender people whilst Living in Love and Faith.

Whatever our individual views and experiences might be, the vote to allow the blessing of individuals and not their union in church will no doubt be different to some of those around us. However, we still need to continue to show love and respect for everyone and continue to listen to the hurt of the past as well as the present as we move forward together.

Below is a poem that was written back in 2004 that reflects the fact that the hurt of non-acceptance does not go away in spite of the small steps forward. Perhaps it will make us all think a little more deeply of those who have different experiences and expectations to ours.

When hostilities cease. . .

And would we then emerge from our prisons
Blinking into the sunlight – unscathed?
Feet uncalloused by restless journeying?
Hands not coarsened by blows of bruising labour?
Would we emerge, miners deep from the earth
Faces unblackened by grime?
Would we be plump and ruddy, our bodies firm, eyes dancing with delight?
Or would we hesitatingly, wearily, look upon the new landscape
Muted, distant, backs bent, faces lined
Carrying our dead?

Sigrid Rutishauser-James

Margaret Saville

REDRUTH PCC

Since January 2022, St Andrew Redruth, St Euny and St Andrew Pencoy's, combined to become Redruth PCC. The separate bank accounts for these churches are now no longer in use; any payments for these churches should now be made to:-

Account Name:- Redruth PCC
Bank:- Lloyds
Sort code:- 30-97-00
Account Number: 00183108

FROM THE REGISTERS

FUNERALS

20 January	2023	Audrey Kistel	St Euny
23 January	2023	Gerald Salmon	St Euny
28 January	2023	Terry Waring	St Stephen Treleigh
03 February	2023	Mary Cross	St Euny
15 February	2023	Marion Selwood	St Stephen Treleigh
17 February	2023	Claude Johnson	St Euny

Correction to date entry for Sheila Meyers, should read—04 January 2023

INTERMENT OF ASHES

20 January	2023	Margaret Matthews	St Stephen Treleigh
03 February	2023	Mary Cross	St Euny

WEDDINGS

07 February	2023	Fernando Barbosa Da Silva and Sarah Nicole Case	St Euny
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BAPTISMS

05 February	2023	Oliver Campbell Price	St Andrew Redruth
05 February	2023	Isaac James Price	St Andrew Redruth

A MINE CELEBRATION AT CHACEWATER IN 1856

by Michael Tangye

When passing through Chacewater we are made aware of its former activity and prosperity by the buildings flanking its main street; many now dwellings can be easily recognised as once having been shops. Like St Day, the village was once surrounded by numerous mines which employed hundreds of folk who depended on their local markets for food, particularly on Saturdays when miners were paid.

Much has been written of the massive mineral output of this area but less of its social life when any respite from labour was welcomed with enthusiasm. In February 1856 the Penzance based Cornish Telegraph reported on the re-opening of Great Wheal Busy at Chacewater, which had closed in 1828, a venture which would assure the local community added employment.

The celebrations commenced with a procession from the mine to Chacewater Chapel for a Service, followed by an evening firework display. On the following day 400 elderly folk enjoyed a dinner served at a long table, consisting of a large ox of six or seven hundred weight, its abdomen stuffed with numerous loaves of bread and cooked to perfection. Its weight was such that whilst being cooked for fourteen hours it was supported with wood at either end, and also by a low wall, while the spit was slowly turned. The public paid two pence to watch it being roasted and along with a loaf of bread, eight feet long and two and half wide, being baked. Several butchers later carved the meat after the ox had been lifted onto a stage.

The celebration continued in the village street which was spanned with festoons of flowers, laurels, flags and various mottoes. Beneath these 190 children of the National School, bearing flags, paraded and were led by a band to assemble at the mine on the site for a new mine engine, one of five planned, for an address by Mine Captain Pascoe (a managing director of the mine). He told those present that when the mine was idle, from February 1828, she had sold 11,528 tons of copper ore and 577 tons of tin. The parade had also been joined by members of various Masonic Lodges who had arrived on a special excursion train of the West Cornwall Railway, provided for the celebration.

A dinner followed whilst the band played music from a platform. That evening one hundred friends occupied a loft for a 'celebration', before the day ended with the burning of an effigy of the Leader of the Opposition!

Today, apart from its recognition as being notorious for its traffic flow problems, Chacewater remains just a quiet village, gone are the surrounding mines, with the monotonous sound of thudding mining stamps lulling folk to sleep at night; gone too are the numerous mine engines which once powered them from within the castle like surroundings of their engine-houses which reminds us of a now lost Cornwall.

My way to Compostella

Day 1 Part 2

Len Cunningham

As we pass the old custom post which marks the boundary between France and Spanish Province of Navarra we make our way through a gap between the Col de Bentarte and the ridge of the Pic De Leizar Atheka along an eroded gully and on to a woodland path heading for the highest point of the route. This was a gentle climb through a scattered beech wood, just within the snow line. As we climbed further up we encountered heavier snow, left over from the previous snow storm that we had been told about in St Jean. As we made our way along the path avoiding twisting our ankles on the hidden beech nuts under foot, we came across a stone monument which marked the spot of the "Fontaine of Ronald". It was here that on his retreat from Pamplona he and his army were ambushed by Basques as revenge for his sacking of Pamplona, legend has it that the entire rear guard was massacred. Luckily for us it was only the snow and the beech nuts we had to avoid. The snow, which by this point was quite substantial, stayed with us for a further 4 kilometres until we arrived at the highest point of this section of the Pyrenees the Col de Lepoeder 1450meters (4057ft) The view from the top was stunning and was our first look at the Province of Navarra, with the roof of the Abbey of Roncesvalles, our stopping point for the night, in the distance. As we crossed the road that runs up from the Valley of Roncesvalles we came across a unit of the Spanish Fire Brigade who appeared to be trying to recover one of their vehicles which was in a ditch. It was interesting to stop and watch for a few minutes their attempts at getting it out!! From here the last 4kilometers were straight in front of us, downhill all the way through a magnificent wood known as "Bosque de Irati" one of the largest beech forests in Europe.

This was indeed a very steep descent which certainly took a toll on the knees.

As we approached the last 500 metres of the path, we came upon a memorial to a Pilgrim who had died of a heart attack at this spot the year before. It reminded me of the comments made in the Pilgrim's registration office in St Jean of the snow on the top of the mountain and that people have died on this mountain. Seeing the memorial was a very poignant moment. Yes people have died doing this, here was a true pilgrim who died within sight of his first resting place, which has become his last resting place.

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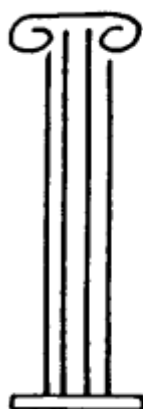


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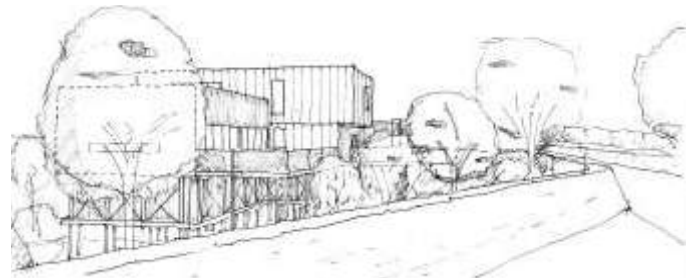
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