

*The Voice of Yowann Parker recorded by Mick Paynter in Lelant 4<sup>th</sup> April 2008*

**Reading of Yowann Chy an Hordh**

**MKP** Good Morning, Yowann.

**YP** Good Morning.

**MKP** How are you, are you in good shape ?

**YP** In good shape thankyou.

**MKP** Well, there are some questions here.

**YP Very good.**

**MKP** In the first place why did you learn Cornish ?

**YP** When... when I was first living in Cornwall I knew, I was aware that the Cornish language was written and spoken in the county, at home , and when I went about a country I like to learn the language, so I started to learn Cornish.

**MKP** But ....you're not a Cornishman yourself ?

**YP** No, no, I'm not Cornish, I'm English but ..ah. when I was young I went to Wales, and learnt some Welsh and very interesting it was, and Welsh wasn't so unlike Cornish, so I had to learn the language because it was so very interesting.

**MKP** Well, as I believe 80% of the language, the Cornish vocabulary is the same as the Welsh..

**YP** O ..Yeah?

**MKP** . How do you use you Cornish every single day ?

**YP** A.... a little Cornish...little enough..but I don't speak Cornish everyday but I prepare lessons for my class in Cornish. An Evening class ,a.. and writing from thence maybe and perhaps reading.

**MKP** Well, what do you read ?

**YP** Well, I read An Gannas or the texts for my class. I'm studying Resurrectio Domini at the moment with the fourth grade.

**MKP** What do you think about the old texts ?

**YP** Quite splendid..they are ...quite splendid. V ery interesting.

**MKP** Very interesting..

**YP** And it's true there are some phrase in in them which I 've not , emm, met in the written or spoken Cornish at this time. Perhaps we should return to the old texts to teach correct Cornish.

**MKP** Yeah....and have you got a computer ?

**YP** ....much Cornish in the Computer..

**MKP** That's right there are many websites..

**YP** Yes ..yes...

**MKP** And many texts...

**YP** All the old texts are on my computer, and prepared by Keith Said, there are all the texts..And the Bible.. complete .. well part of the bible.

**MKP** Part of the Bible..

**YP** Well, all the New Testament translated into Cornish by Keith Said and others.

**MKP** And is it planned to translate the Old Testament too ?

**YP** Well there are many books, I translated the books Ruth and the book Ecclesiastes, myself, well with Keith Said who did most of the work

**MKP** And as we... the book of the Apocrypha ?

**YP** A The Apocrypha, there is ..there is Ecclesiasticus part translated by Jowann Richards, who died last year

**MKP** Yes

**YP** But I don't know about..... the other books .. or any part of them.

**MKP** The other books ...

**YP** The other books... The notes written by Ray Edwards are all on the computer.

**MKP** Yes the notes are very interesting.

**YP** Very interesting, so..

**MKP** And you, you'll receive and write e-mails ?

**YP** Truly. I did write a letter to Ray Edwards thanking him for all his work in Cornish, brilliant work in Cornish.

**MKP** Very brilliant, he's somewhat ill now as I believe....

**YP** And his eyes are weak.. in his eyes.

**MKP** Yes, but .. his work is brilliant.

**YP** O how that is... I did, did read his Alice in Wonderland several years ago and that was splendid. There are many phrases in it. How you getting on ? Fatell wreta spedy a ?

**MKP** Very good, very good. OK. Well. What are you doing for our language today ?

**YP** Well, I do teach it, teach it in the evening class, and I've many students....

**MKP** How many ?

**YP** Well, right now there are three but there are four retiring now but I expect them to return to the class next year. Three are students who will take the fourth grade. That is very hard work. But they will , they will battle on for ever.

**MKP** Well, as we know ourselves it's very, very hard work, it's not only language, or only the texts , there's history, literary criticism...

**YP** And I'll write something out again, I'll enter into the literary competition, this year, for the, for the Gorsedd that's a story in prose about a hole in the road.

**MKP** A hole in the road ? And you're a Bard of the Gorsedd as well ? What in your mind is the importance of the Gorsedd for the Cornish Culture ?

**YP** I don't understand that, again please.

**MKP** What's the importance of the Gorsedd to our culture ?

**YP** Well, important, through, it is.

**MKP** What did you do in the Cornish Revival ?

**YP** Ah little enough , I didn't do, I didn't do much, except teach the language, write some books in it, or I wrote conversations, conversations.....

**MKP** Conversations

**YP** Conversations for the beginners.

**MKP** As games.

**YP** As games , conversations...

**MKP** Amusing ?

**YP** Amusing if you like.. and important Gorsedd competitions, and the reading in Truro each year, in competition and and in...

**MKP** And your work in Bible translation too. What are the difficulties with translations like that ?

**YP** What's the what ?

**MKP** Problem.

**YP** Many problems because the ... I don't know, I don't know anything about the old languages, Hebrew and Greek, Greek perhaps, but there's Keith Said to help, to help me, and I translate it as quick as I can and she (sic) corrects the.. my writing very quickly. It's hard it is.

**MKP** Well it's hard because it's emm... a matter of faith too...the language of faith..and the meaning of the translation...

**YP** Yes , yes...

**MKP** So... Can you remember other people teaching or learning the language at the same time as you ?

**YP** Well, my own teacher was Jori

**MKP** Jori Ansell

**YP** Jori Ansell ..ah.. very knowledgeable he was, he is, in the language,..he a..he went to teach, he taught many years ago and he was very fluent and it was he examining,..to examine I don't know what to examine is.the candidates for each grade and then the fifth grade.

**MKP** That's true. I'm afraid to think of the fifth grade.

**YP** And there's Koreen Twydell teaching a little Cornish now. And she's fluent, and Rosemary Beedle who taught in a time, these years .....

**MKP** What's Rosemary doing these days ?

**YP** Well I don't know about, about here but in time pass...

**MKP** In time gone by she had a class in St Just

**YP** It was a class inSt Just .

**MKP** Other students..

**YP** No there weren't well. You ... Roger Garside

**MKP** Roger Garside too that's right...and like Denzil Monk who makes films now , and some in Cornish too.

**YP** He did, he studied with me for year, only he's okay.

**MKP** OK, what obstacles were there to learning ?

**YP** Well, the language is very hard to learn. And very hard, the language isn't like English... and many who start to learn the language, and then after, three months, four months five months they drop out because it's become so hard to learn the language, a reason...seven out of ten people..

**MKP** There are problems with the a grammar

**YP** Ah, truly, the construction isn't like that in English or French or German.

**MKP** Well, for example the mutations are hard to keep in your mind. Was there any language in your school or at home.?

**YP** No, no

**MKP** What do you think about teaching the language in schools ?

**YP** That's a very good idea . It must be taught to the children and they will learn it well at school I believe.

**MKP** What do you think about the idea of an Academy for the language ?

**YP** Really that's a very good idea.

**MKP** Do you go to a Yeth an werin or something like that ?

**YP** Yes, every month I, Well I have to go to the yeth an werin to hear the spoken language , I'm not very fluent, I do, I forget many words, many phrases,

**MKP** That's easy to do .What do you think about them yeth and werins ?

**YP** Umm, I don't know . Well the yeth an werin is a good thing but perhaps the people who come are very fluent, it's hard to invite begins who won't understand what's said there .

**MKP** But, that's true , I believe, but that young man there, Sean... how many yeth an werins has Sean attended ? Maybe three or four but he's fluent every night. What are your ideas for the language in the future ?

**YP** Well the way I think it will advance , go forward in schools, if there are teachers enough to teach it. And in Truro, and in the cities, well Truro if there are signs, signs in Cornish that would be a good idea. Names, street names and other signs in Cornish it will show the people that the language is a live one.

**MKP** Well, thanks ,I've finished the questions now but perhaps you want to say something in the other language.

**YP** Well maybe. Umm, no I've been very happy to have been connected with Cornish. I still am happy to be connected with the language. I've found it a fascinating language myself and I'm not very competent at speaking it myself but then I don't have a lot of practice, so I think if, the more you can get together and talk in a language, the better, but I , my strength lies more in writing it and explaining it rather than actually speaking it.

**MKP** henn yw oll

**YP** FINE