

Maureen Pierce 17-3 - Translation

James: Thank you, very hard to read aloud something like that.

Maureen: Well yes and the print wasn't in a good state and there is some faults in it.

James: True, true.

Maureen: That's an old publication.

James: Well well done and we will move to the third part of the conversation now, I will ask some open questions if it pleases you.

Maureen: Yes.

James: Why did you learn Cornish?

Maureen: Why not? I'm not sure in truth, that is many years ago, and always...I believe always there was some history of Cornwall and history of place names and all around, I want to I think know more about it and I love language and especially the language of Cornwall.

James: Are you Cornish?

Maureen: Cornish woman, I'm a Cornish woman.

James: True, good. How do you use Cornish everyday?

Maureen: Through the telephone with some people. I write for a large part, well perhaps fifty percent of the time, e-mails in Cornish. I write letters on behalf of the Board. I check books for the Fellowship before they are published, perhaps for the board as well.

James: OK. What do you do today on behalf of the language?

Maureen: Too much! No, that isn't true. Well because I am secretary for the Cornish Language Board, everyday there's something to do. Perhaps that is nothing but writing a letter, perhaps to the bank to write cheques in Cornish, perhaps to the library in Oxford about books in Cornish, so all, as I believe, a year ago I was printing plans for the Cornish Language weekend and also months before Christmas, perhaps November, I write second grade exams on behalf of the boardans also arrange and organise other grades for this year's exam.

James: OK, that's great, lots to do.

Maureen: True.

James: What's your idea on the language in the future, what are your dreams?

Maureen: To get Cornish in schools, in truth that's for children to choose, not wanting Cornish in schools when it's compulsory for everyone to study that but as a choice, yeah, in every school. So we have to get enough teachers and enough female teachers to get Cornish in every school in Cornwall, so firstly, I believe that would be my idea, my idea about the language and at this time I help with Asset Languages to get Cornish exams in Cornish. To get Cornish in a very good state and at the level of other languages in Europe.

James: OK very good, ver good. What didi you do in resurection of Cornish?

Maureen: Protect Kemmyn...

James: You teach Cornish.

Maureen: Oh yeah true, I teach Cornish and I teach Cornish in school, last year...forgive me, last year as a group at lunch time for children in secondary school and now I go to school to teach a year twelve group. There's a group of eight or nine students there studying Cornish and I have a class in Saltash and I have a class here in Callington and both in Saltash and Callington there is more than twenty in each class.

James: A lot truly.

Maureen: Yep, that...that is higher than past years, the number increases year after year.

James: Marvellous. Why is that do you think?

Maureen: Perhaps Cornish is more in, more in public now, there is more written about Cornish and also there is more advertising in Cornish also. That is good I believe for some business to use Cornish in its business every day for the visitors here, that is very good for them to come here and, 'oh that is some...it isn't the same in England, that is some strange word'. But everyone here can understand and speak Cornish, they don't have a problem.

(Maureen's telephone rings)

James: OK perhaps we'll stop for a moment...OK start again. Maureen, can you remember other people learning Cornish?

Maureen: Learning?

James: Well yes.

Maureen: As a teacher or student?

James: No student.

Maureen: Lots. There are twenty in my class in Callington and also twenty in Saltash's class. There are some students in a class in Liskeard and Lostwithiel and Launceston and time to time I go to the classes.

James: What about when you learnt Cornish as a student?

Maureen: There is...firstly...

James: Was there other people?

Maureen: Firstly there was four of us, but after some weeks one person had to stop learning Cornish because he fell and broke his legs and um after that there was...there was only three and us three did the first grade exam, but starting the second grade there was only me and a friend. So, in those days there was perhaps ten, forgive me, two or three in class, that is all, and when I started teaching Cornish, when there was a class of my own, there was perhaps two students a year, next year perhaps one and the year after perhaps three, that's all. But in these days, and perhaps for the last five years, perhaps there are twenty, about twenty, perhaps nineteen, perhaps twenty three or bigger number.

James: That is marvellous for Cornish.

Maureen: Yes.

James: For Cornwall. What was the obstacles to learning Cornish as a student? What was the obstacles?

Maureen: Time! That is true for the larger amount of people I believe. Most people learning Cornish are adults, in schools it is easier, but for adults it's hard. Men and women have to work and they have families also. We have to find someone to look after the children for the evening and it isn't possible every week, so life today I think.

James: Was there lots of other people knowing Cornish?...there was Graham.

Maureen: Yes I know, well here in...who knew Cornish or can speak Cornish fluently?

James: Well yes fluently perhaps.

Maureen: Fluently, here in East Cornwall. So Wella, Ken, Graham, who lives still in East Cornwall, Tim, Michael, me myself, Margaret, Jan, Sally, Rosemary, who else, Rob, Hazel, lots, lots yes.

James: Yes marvellous. Was the language in school or home when you learnt?

Maureen: No, no almost nothing.

James: And it would be a good idea now to put the language in school?

Maureen: Yes, that is obvious and the best way would be to start in school, in primary school with the young children, and perhaps in theatre groups, every theatre group.

James: Did you go to 'Yeth an Werin' or something like that?

Maureen: This weekend I went to the Cornish weekend. Every year there is a Cornish weekend when people come to some place, to some spot in Cornwall to talk together in Cornish. Last year it was in a holiday park, near to Perranporth, Porth Perran. This year it was a hotel in Newquay, that is Newquay in English. And last year I Believe, staying at the holiday park there was half the people perhaps forty, and through the day... I can't remember, sixty perhaps through the day. But this year I'm sure there was more than a hundred there through the day and we spoke to the hotel, head manager of the hotel, and we said we will need a bigger room next year. The room was big enough this year but next year...well the weekend was very successful. And now, through the school term I teach Cornish, that is lessons, but through the summer, July, August, perhaps June also there is 'Yeth an Werin' or coffee morning or a walk or other things. We say 'Heudh yn Hav', 'Fun in Summer'. So there is something different from lessons. But throughout the year there is something.

James: OK that is the end of the interview, we have finished. If you want to say something else or...

Maureen: Well I'm sure after you leave my house it's possible I will think of something else but now I believe Jim that's all.

James: Well I would like to thank you, that is the end of the interview.

Maureen: Thank you.

James: Thanks.