

# St Ives Old Cornwall Society

## Midsummer Bonfire June 2019

On Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June, nearly one hundred people gathered on Carnstabba Hill, Halsetown, to celebrate the lighting of the Midsummer Bonfire. This event was organised by the St Ives Old Cornwall Society using land farmed by Mr Vaughan Bennett who was also responsible for building the bonfire.

Before the bonfire was lit at 9pm everyone was welcomed by the St Ives Old Cornwall Society President, Mrs Margaret Stevens. There was some entertainment by Vaughan Bennett and his son, Tristan, who delighted everyone with some Cornish songs and all those present were encouraged to join in. William Thomas with a few others also sang before the ceremony began. As is the tradition, pasties were on sale.

Brian Stevens, Chairman of the St Ives OC Society, gave a brief resume of the history of this celebration – origins being pagan but now linked to the Feast of St John. Prayers were spoken in Cornish by Peny Melmoth and in English by Frank Stevens. Sheila Griffiths, a society member, had the honour of being the Lady of the Flowers. It was her role to throw a bouquet of flowers made up from good as well as bad flowers, on to the bonfire when it was lit.



So at 9pm Brian Stevens, with help from the St Ives Town Mayor, Cllr Tony Harris, set the fire ablaze with much cheering from the crowd.

It was good to see so many people gathered again this year, also to welcome the President of the Old Cornwall federation, Karin Easton, who came along with her husband.

*Written by Frank Stevens, Recorder, St Ives Old Cornwall Society.*