

LOVE CORNWALL WEB REPORT

Conversions and healings as Christians take to the streets in Cornwall

Street Encounters

Over 100 people came to faith on the streets in the towns of Cornwall during September 2006 as Christians came out their churches and went to meet the people with a message about the love of Jesus.

Combined Operation

Nearly 100 evangelists representing 16 ministries from outside Cornwall joined with local believers from many churches across the County to reach over 10,000 people during the final two weeks of 'Love Cornwall' September 2006. Half of this number were reached on the streets while an additional 5,000 people of all ages were reached in 17 meetings in 8 different schools, 22 special church services and church-based activities for adults, plus a variety of training sessions, men's meetings, meetings for women and others designed for youth and children. 3,500 burgers were served in 11 free Barbecue lunches and over 200 free cream teas were served in 2 other locations. Additionally there were open air meetings, street drama and music groups drawing crowds in 10 towns.

Well over 10,000 people were reached with the gospel in 14 days with over 100 known to make decisions to follow Christ and hundreds more receiving personal prayer!

This doesn't include the many listeners to BBC Radio Cornwall and Premiere Radio who heard Rev David Hull, Liz Doyle, rapper "Joey G", Dr Clifford Hill and Wendy Cashmore speak of the event and share testimony.

Prayer

Prayer has played a large part from the beginning of 'Love Cornwall' as the whole venture was built on a base of 112 prayer groups around the County. A telephone prayer request line offered prayer support in emergencies and there were several teams of intercessors from S. Africa, the USA and different parts of the UK who came to Cornwall, independently, to pray during the 'Love Cornwall' event

Free Food

In six towns across the County around 4,000 people were served with free barbecue lunches and cream teas during the final week of Love Cornwall. The barbecue lunches were organised by *On The Move* who have an international ministry of street evangelism. Their team visited churches in each of the towns two months prior to the event and trained groups of volunteers in how to engage people in meaningful conversations or pray for them while handing out leaflets inviting people to a free lunch. Other volunteers were ready to talk about faith in Jesus around lunch tables and to pray for specific needs. Decisions were noted on cards so that they could be passed on to local churches for discipling and pastoral follow-up.

Drama

Street drama figured highly in many of the outdoor events in the towns. This was provided by visiting groups like Master Speak and Cornish groups like Selah, with a membership of around 200 who work together in the Liskeard area.

Schools

In schools and colleges young people listened to the message about the love of Jesus and responded positively. In one school where the message was taken by a young black rapper 20 pupils gave their lives to Jesus. In another school a group of sixth-form lads came the following day to the outdoor barbecue in their town where they came to faith in the street. In several other schools one of the Americans presented a 'Native American Seminar' which was greatly enjoyed by the children and led to her speaking about Jesus and praying for the children many of whom made life-changing decisions.

Miraculous healings

Hundreds of people were prayed for in the streets and in special meetings in towns and villages all over Cornwall and there were many reports of people being healed in the name of Jesus. In St Ives, Glen, a man of about 40, was prayed for by team members for healing after the barbecue on Thursday and then again on Friday morning. He is well known in St Ives as someone who for 10 years has been in a wheel chair or

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hobbling around on two walking sticks. The first prayer was for his neck, which caused him great pain especially at night when he would wear a collar. The next morning he reported that the pain had totally gone.

Wheelchair abandoned

With faith levels raised team members prayed for complete healing and suddenly he got up and walked! He walked at least two miles that day although his legs were a bit weak, but he could walk quite normally - no visible limp or difficulty. His amazement and joy was echoed by his wife, who was in tears hugging him, and his young son of 11, who could hardly remember seeing his father walk. *Glen gave his testimony at the street BBQ in St Ives!* On the final night in the marquee at the Cornwall County Showground he was called up to the platform. *He ran forward and jumped up onto the stage!*

Weather miracles

Even the weather provided some notable occasions for praising God! Towards the end of the month a hurricane was forecast which gave rise to much prayer, but by the time it hit the Cornish coast it had calmed down to an overnight storm. The weather outlook for the whole final week was very poor. In the event, Tuesday's barbecues were all bathed in sunshine. Wednesday, the sky was thunderous but it didn't rain until after the street BBQs were finished. Thursday, the weather across the County was pouring rain in the morning. In each of the towns the rain stopped just before midday so that the barbecues, all timed for 12 noon to 2 p.m. took place in sunshine.

For this to happen on one day would be notable; two consecutive days would surely be more than a coincidence; three days in a row would be remarkable! But with the same pattern lasting for *five days* - from Tuesday to Saturday - of black skies rapidly turning to sunshine for just two hours and then back to rain - that surely has to be a response to fervent prayer! It was not only the Christians who noticed these spectacular weather patterns. A reporter from the *Cornish Times* was genuinely struck by this and noted how the Christians had brought blessings on the Saturday 'street fair' in Liskeard.

More News

News is still coming in of more outcomes of this great outreach stretching across such a large county. It will probably take a long time to gather all the Good News from so many different groups and programmes taking place over the county – all working towards a common end – sharing the Good News of Jesus with local people. Stories and reports are appearing on the 'Love Cornwall' website on the "Getting Involved" page which is remaining live. This website also has details of the churches linked into the follow up.

Unity

Many of the Christians who went out onto the streets found themselves working alongside Christians from other churches in their town whom they had never met. In some places church leaders came together who had previously had no fellowship. Links were forged that will have a lasting effect upon mission in each of these towns. This was noted by a number of leaders who recalled the promise of the Psalmist that where brothers dwell together in unity, God commands the blessing. This new unity that many discovered through 'Love Cornwall' has been seen as a response to Jesus' prayer for his disciples that they should love one another. In going out onto the streets and into clubs and pubs and schools with the love of Jesus some of that love was shared with fellow believers!

Central Events

Two marquees were loaned from Harvest Time (an Elim ministry based in Wales) and set up on the County Showground at Wadebridge for the final two nights – one for the central gatherings which included a youth night on the Friday, a family fun afternoon and the final event on the Saturday evening with both local and visiting speakers such as Geoffrey Birtill and various musicians – and the other for exhibitions.

The ministry of evangelists Syd and Liz Doyle was particularly effective on the final evening. They and the group of 11 from the USA and 7 from Wales were highly active in the final two weeks of meetings in many places in the County. Many in Cornwall are giving thanks for their ministry.

Youth Events

There were a number of special youth events in various places across the County throughout the month of September. These climaxed during the final week of Love Cornwall with a packed crowd of young people enjoying music provided by a local youth band in Liskeard and challenging messages brought by Liz Doyle of Nations Lights, the singer Rachel Martinez, who released her new CD at this event, and Rachel Gardner of the *Romance Academy*. Rachel G had featured in a series of BBC Two TV programmes, 'No Sex Please We're Teenagers'. The powerful words from all three brought a ready response with many young people coming forward for prayer to make fresh commitments of their lives to the Lord, with more than 20 first-time decisions.

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Music

On the final Friday evening two well-known bands came to Cornwall to perform in the marquee at the Cornwall County Showground. 'YFriday' is widely known among young people in the world of secular entertainment although as Christians they love ministering at Christian events. They were hugely popular with the large crowd of young people in the marquee and their music could be heard for miles around! Members of the band gave their testimonies and urged young people who had not yet made decisions to respond to the love of Jesus.

The second Christian band, *GKReal*, an African band from London of five young men and two girls, were received with wrapt enjoyment. Several members of the band gave their testimony and powerful messages that made a clear appeal to young people many of whom responded to the call to come forward to give their lives to the Lord and to seek the blessing of God upon their lives.

A particularly powerful performance was given by a young African rapper, Joey G, from North Wales who was hugely popular with the young people who urged him by noisy acclaim to do more than one encore.

There was also a popular harpist from Wales and a number of local singing groups from the churches who got involved wherever it was appropriate.

Generation Gap

Older Christians, more used to organ recitals, hymns and traditional liturgies, might have found the youth events to be in an alien culture yet there can be no doubt that they were reaching the young people with the gospel in a way that most church services fail to do. When young people who are on fire with the love of Jesus have the courage to share their faith with other young people within their own culture the results are spectacular! Most of the life changing decisions during the month of 'Love Cornwall 2006' were among young people which demonstrated the new openness and hunger for truth there is in a young generation whose godless parents know nothing of the gospel. The almost unbroken diet of bad news in the media and the bitter experience of broken homes have left many young people longing to find a new way. Many of them found that new way when they discovered Jesus through 'Love Cornwall'.

Next year?

Will there be a 'Love Cornwall 2007'? That has yet to be decided by church leaders in Cornwall, but if the many young people who gave their lives to Christ in September this year were consulted they would plead for the opportunity to bring their friends to Jesus next year.

Clifford and Monica Hill

From the Centre for Contemporary Ministry

Supporters and enablers of Love Cornwall

On behalf of the local steering committee of David Hull, Doreen Sparey Delacassa, Wendy Cashmore and Paul Jeffrey .