

March 2016

All Members are invited to the
MEMBERS' "NEW YEAR" BASH
at last!
Monday 21st March, 6pm onwards
in the newly decorated café.
Provisions provided.

This will be followed by the
AGM
7.30 pm, in the Gallery.



The small sub-committee working on **Membership** has now met. Our brief is to make sure that we retain old members and attract new ones. We also want to encourage members to play an active part in Stuart House, maybe by volunteering, maybe by having ideas for (or even organizing) an exhibition or other event, maybe just by dropping in for a cup of tea occasionally!

We would appreciate as many members as possible responding to the questions below. We may also approach you directly, but if you are not asked, please do not be offended.

1. Why are you a Member of Stuart House?
2. What do you expect to 'get' as a Member?
3. Do you think that a Membership card could be useful in any way?
4. Do you think that having different categories of Membership is a good idea?
5. Would you be willing to encourage new people to become Members?
6. Our subscription has remained at £10 a year for as long as our Treasurer can remember! Would you suggest an increase and if so what?

Please leave any responses at Reception f.a.o. Bob Hollingdale, or email the editor (see back page) who will forward it. Otherwise speak to a committee member, maybe at the AGM!

News from the February 15th Committee Meeting

The last committee meeting missed secretary Sue Glencross, away in the Caribbean! Our thoughts were with trustee Victor Briggs and Nancy, during her illness.

There was lively discussion about the newly decorated café, which re-opened in the second week of February – all overwhelmingly favourable. There are pros and cons about a few things, for example the brightness of the lights and the newly positioned corner dresser, which obscures the original niche in the wall but does provide much-needed storage .

The sub-committee set up to analyse membership and explore ways of recruiting more, and active members, meets next week – any ideas to Bob Hollingdale, Tony Britton (treasurer) or Rachel (editor), please. (*see the front page*) .

No further developments on the Weatherspoon's site to report, but we are keeping a close eye on an application to prune the magnolia where it overhangs the Post-Office yard.

Our Treasurer's Report was positive – thanks again to Tony Britton for all his work. Along with so many other organizations though, we do need to increase income, and any ideas for events are welcome.

Preparations are underway for more musical events in the House.

The new Stuart House brochure is now printed, and you may have seen the copies available – do pick up one from the House. They will be more widely distributed before long. Do please encourage friends and relations to visit the House – word of mouth is so helpful too.

Our 'New Year' Members' Bash will precede the AGM and we hope that many of you will come to one or (of course we hope!) both, of these events. Should anyone be interested in becoming a Trustee and serving on the Committee, please let Sue Glencross know.

Rachel Bennett, temporary minute-taker.



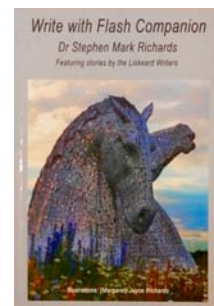
The "Doctor's Surgery" was a dumping ground while the Café was undergoing repair and decoration.

Now it is decorated, with new LED lighting, and back in use again. Louise Thomas ran the first of our series of table-top sales which bring so many people into the House.

The Surgery, like the Gallery, will be shut again for a week or so during March, when repairs to the windows are undertaken.



The Liskeard Writers' Group are currently meeting in the House (*see 'What's On, back page*). Their book, launched at the Looe Literary Festival last year, is for sale for £5 in Stuart house, together with books of poetry and historical accounts by people associated with the House.



Super Sleuths, Cunning Clues & Fantastic Food!

Flapper girls, gangsters' molls, nobility, high-flying business men, film stars – they all turned up to enjoy a wonderful meal at Oppenheimer's Speakeasy (Tapenades in disguise!) on 31st January. The reason : to solve one of the greatest murder mysteries of the 1920's and in so doing bolster funds for Stuart House.

All present entered into the spirit of the occasion and furrowed brows were evident throughout as suspect after suspect gave an account of themselves. Clearly some needed to be questioned further if the villain was to be identified! This lot fell to Chief Inspector "Charlie" Charles of the Yard whose abrasive style of questioning reduced the list of suspects. So was it Benjamin Down or Gertie Wainwright, Nathaniel Jones or Oliver Ironsides? The unfortunate victim in this mystery was also identified as Alice Bear, the treasured friend of Teddy Bear.

Of course it was all good-natured fun fully enhanced by the willingness of everyone to join in. Perhaps more importantly £322.50 was raised for Stuart House funds.

To Sue and Mike Hinks at Tapenades a very big thank you for the venue and superb food; to those who supported the evening thank you so much for being there and finally a word of caution – watch out for anyone called Ironsides!

Bob Hollingdale



Many thanks to Bob Hollingdale for the idea and all his hard work which went into this fund-raising evening.

Photo (thanks Sioux, a.k.a. Gertie Winter) shows Sir Hector (the Postmaster-General a.k.a. our Chairman), his wife Lady Harriet and Eleanor Springer! (ed).

STERTS THEATRE

Spring at Sterts



Family Play
Sterts Studio, Saturday 5th March 7.30pm
Sterts, Upton Cross, Liskeard PL14 5AZ
01579 362382 www.sterts.co.uk



Radio Plays
As part of Sterts' commitment to new writing we are going to produce a series of One Act Plays using the best talent from our writing competitions. Come and be a part of the audience for these plays all recorded in the Sterts Studio.
Recordings will finish at 7.30pm on Saturday 12th March in Sterts Studio. Booking online: www.sterts.co.uk or by phoning 01579 362382



SHEER INDULGENCE
THE SONGS WE LOVE TO SING
Sheer Indulgence in Concert
Sterts Studio
Friday 1st April 7.30pm
Sterts Theatre, Upton Cross Liskeard PL14 5AZ
01579 362382 www.sterts.co.uk

Family Play by Madam Renard's Theatre
Saturday 5th March. Sterts Studio 7.30pm Tickets £8/6
Please note age recommendation of 16+

Radio Plays
Saturday 12th March. 7.30pm Tickets £6
Sterts 2015 One Act Play Competition Runners Up as Radio Plays.
Come and be part of a live audience.

An Evening of Sheer Indulgence.
Friday 1st April. 7.30pm. Tickets £8/6
Eight singers come together to present a special evening performing some of their all time favourite songs ranging from Meatloaf and Mancini to Streisand and Sondheim.

Advance Notice for your diary.
Sterts Summer season goes on sale at the end of the month.
www.sterts.co.uk or 01579 362382 or Box Office 10am-1pm weekdays.
Sterts, Upton Cross Liskeard PL14 5AZ
Café open for all shows. Booking 07866 292414

March Thoughts from our Garden's Overseer

The long list of winter tasks is nearly completed. The roses (front and rear gardens) are all pruned (thanks Lynette and David), and two new highly scented old-English white roses have been planted - many thanks Val for donating these. The jasmine and wisteria in the rear garden have had their annual trims, and much clearing and tidying has given the garden a neat and tidy look, ready to get going. Always first off are the snowdrops of course, and the large glossy leaves of the Bear's Breeches (*Acanthus*) near the compost heap are already making a handsome early Spring display (*see photo*).

Still to do: sort out the mass of *Schizostylis* (Kaffir Lily) rhizomes that have spread far too far throughout the Jewel borders surrounding the lawn, repair the shed, replant the herb bed, sort the Plants-For-Sale stand, scrub the chairs and tables, thin the water plants in the pond, plant up the large pots by the mirror and the small ones on the tables ...



Whilst pruning, two buddleias were spotted growing vigorously amongst the shrubs, probably seeded from the large number of these plants that have become established between the cracked paving of the abandoned garage next door. Buddleia suddenly appears on wasteland anywhere, which means its seeds are forever floating around, just waiting. It quickly finds a foothold and is very difficult to dislodge: after a long battle, one specimen that had inserted itself in the flower bed at the railway station succumbed only after workmen laid a concrete plinth over it when establishing a signalling cabinet.

I have often mentioned in these articles the tiring cat-and-mouse games played with the many weeds species in the Stuart House garden, but of course what they, along with buddleia, are up to is the vital task of trying to restore the landscape to its natural condition. They are the pioneer plants, creating new humus and soil when they decompose, paving the way for diverse flora and fauna, and eventually forest, and of course maintaining essential air oxygen levels. They never seem to tire of this task, and really we should be enormously grateful and give them full marks for their efforts, especially to those such as bittercress and chickweed that will happily germinate and grow on tarmac. Walking down London's Whitehall recently (always a very pristine road) I even spotted them there too, sneakily trying to establish themselves in any little crack or crevice available.

Two of the prettiest natural self-sowers in our area are Valerian (*Centranthus*) in red, pink and white, that readily grow in cracks on any wall (those on the Plymouth Road opposite St Martin's Church are magnificent); and the blue long-flowering Campanula (*C. muralis Portenschlagiana*) which forms large clumps clinging to the tiniest fissure in walls. Some of this has found its way into Stuart House garden, too, where it happily scuttles back and forth at the base of the box hedge outside the café window, bursting into bloom in early to mid summer.

For these reasons, the beautiful garden plan painting by Gail Woolfenden that hangs in the hallway near the garden door entrance can only be an imagined vision. To have the garden like that would require an enormous amount of time and effort to keep out the weeds and to make sure that all the wanted plants never stray outside their allotted spaces. Gardening, just like politics, comes down to compromise and to what's possible. So the aim of the Stuart House garden is to maintain a setting which is (as far as possible) tranquil, balanced, well-kept, colourful and interesting, using

plant types of the Tudor / Stuart times. No doubt, the garden then was subject to close scrutiny by those very same weeds that constantly spring up today, and so a sense of genuine connection with the past continues!

Topical Tip:

Before Spring properly arrives, it's interesting to wander the outdoor areas of garden centres to see which evergreen shrubs have thrived throughout the winter. This means they'll do well all year in decorative pots in your garden, at least for a few years if kept shaped and gently fed. Such shrubs that come to mind are Acuba Japonica, the female variegated sort that will thrive anywhere, doesn't mind drought, and has red winter berries; some of the more delicate Pittosporums; and Viburnum Tinus which has delicate white flowers in all months containing the letter "r".

Malcolm Mort

♪♪ Stuart House Concert Series ♪♪

Sunday 13th March 2.30. pm (note the change of date from that originally proposed)



Java 5 are a local a capella group who sing popular songs from the 1920s though to the present. They have performed widely in the area and we are delighted to welcome them back to Stuart House.

♪♪ Other Sunday afternoon concerts before the Summer are:- ♪♪

17th April : Valley Voices
26th June : Ross Morris (classical guitar)

For details, see the leaflet available in Stuart House or details on the website.



WALKERS ARE WELCOME – many members have Stuart House links - are organizing a walk on 5th March to mark the 3rd anniversary of the Caradon Trail. Walk begins 11am at Lux Park, and goes by footpaths to St Cleer and back via Treworgy. Free, but donations are welcomed.

Do look out for news of the annual Bo Foaks walk in April

Diary of Events

March 2016



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| Tuesday 1 st and Tuesday 15 th | Liskeard Writers' Group meet 2 – 4 pm. (see p. 2) |
| Thursday 3 rd and every Thursday | Knit 'n' Knatter meet from 10.30 am. to 1.30 pm. All welcome. |
| Continuing to Friday 5 th | 'Rummage Returns' with John Early in the Doctor's Surgery. |
| Tuesday 1 st | Fake or Fortune – antiques valuation with Richard Hamm of Bearnese, Hampton & Littlewood. 10 am. to 12 noon. |
| Monday 7 th onwards | Opening of the Stuart House Arts. Crafts and Gifts Shop in the Doctor's Surgery. This runs through to October 8 th . |
| Sunday 13 th | Concert in the Gallery. Java 5 a capella group. 2.30 pm. Tickets, £7 from reception, include refreshments and a chance to talk with the performers afterwards. (see p.5) |
| Monday 14 th | Liskeard Poetry Group meet 4-6 pm. |
| Monday 21 st | Members' 'New Year Bash' from 6 pm. (see p.1 and 2) A.G.M. Begins at 7.30 pm in The Gallery (see p.1 and 2) |
| Friday 25 th Monday 28 th | Stuart House will be closed on Good Friday and Easter Monday, but open as usual on Saturday morning. |
| Coming in April | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valley Voices in Concert on Sunday 17th. • Repair work on the windows in the Doctor's Surgery and then in the Gallery will mean that these rooms are closed for a week or so each. • 'What's it Worth' - an evening 'antiques quiz' sponsored by Clark's Auction House. TBC. • Bo Foaks Memorial Walk TBC. |

The House, Garden, Old Kitchen Café and Computer Research Suite are open 9.30 am – 3.30 pm each weekday and until 12.30 pm (Café 12 noon) on Saturdays. The House is open at these times for all events unless stated otherwise. The Office is open every weekday until at least 2 pm.

Articles, information, notices and photographs for the Stuart House Newsletter to the editor, please (who must reserve the right to edit as necessary), before 25th of the month for inclusion in the next newsletter. Leave with Sioux in the Office or email to rachelpbennett59@gmail.com