

April 2016



The AGM, on Monday 21st March, showed its recognition of, and tremendous appreciation for, all that the outgoing Chairman Bruce Hawken (centre) has done in his three years in office. Margaret too has given so much active support to the Stuart House Trust. We wish our new Chairman, Bob Hollingdale, well for the continued challenges that lie ahead.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT to the AGM

Repairs to the south gable wall dominated 2015. Work started after Easter and continued for 13 rather than the planned 10 weeks. The Surgery, Jane Room, King's Room and Tudor Room were out of action as work was undertaken. The Tudor Room turned out to have woodworm needing treatment and thus extra costs. Close inspection revealed the windows to be in a poor state of repair with two of them needing significant rebuilding. The final phase of the project was to repair the King's Room floor and put in LED lighting, whilst outside, the windows and doors of the south side were repainted. The south gable is now structurally sound for many years to come.

The parlous state of our other windows and the deterioration of the walls in the café and kitchen was plain to see. A hurried grant application was made to Viridor Credits to meet their deadline for a November decision. The good news came at the end of November and attention turned to raising the third party contributions of £3300. Thanks to donations from the Lions, Town Council, Town Forum, Cornwall councillors and a generous £1200 from the Pannier Market traders we were able to meet all the Viridor requirements and have our funding agreement in place in time to start in January. We are about half way through now and the café is back in full use.

The other major issue that exercised Trustees was the sale and resale of the Taylor's Garage site. The site is now owned by JD Wetherspoon and their plans have long been in the system. Formal planning consent with conditional approval is expected soon. The Wetherspoon project team will then be able to go to the company board with the final plans and costs and only then can capital be released to go ahead.

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*continued from p.1*The gallery was unaffected by the building work and has again hosted many art and craft exhibitions which attracted favourable comments, as well as the concert series at which some outstanding musicians entertained us. It proved too difficult to find a suitable time in 2015 for the Bo Foaks Festival of Youth Music but a third event is planned to take place in May 2016 in the Public Hall.

Volunteers continue to work wonders - the garden team have kept the garden looking attractive and the café volunteers have had another splendid year. Without the café our finances would be in a pickle so last year's effort amidst all the project mayhem was particularly valuable. We were fortunate to end the year in a sound

financial position with further funding to improve the fabric of the building.

It is the job of the Trustees to secure the future of Stuart House for the benefit of those who live in Liskeard and the surrounding area. I must thank my fellow trustees who contribute in a multitude of ways that are not always obvious, particularly of course your trusty secretary and treasurer. I have enjoyed my three years as chairman but I am very happy to hand over the reins to Bob Hollingdale who will bring fresh thinking and impetus to securing the future of this valuable institution. I have been lucky to have been part of a group with so many who contribute to our purpose - thank you all for your help and support.

Bruce Hawken



“your trusty secretary and treasurer”, with Chairmen past and present.

Stuart House Finances for 2015 from our Treasurer Tony Britton.

Given the disruptions to the house whilst structural work was being undertaken, the Trust has had a good year financially. Most of the structural work costs were covered by insurance and grant monies. Some work continues into 2016.

The following summary sets out the cash movements for the year. A full copy of the Trustees' Report and Accounts is held in the Office for members' inspection. Any questions can be addressed to me (Tony Britton), as Treasurer.

	Reserved funds	Unreserved funds	Building Projects	Total Funds
Opening balance	2,036	14,526	20,304	36,866
Movement in Year	-911	1,536	-19,650	-19,025
Closing balance	1,125	16,062	654	17,841

Sue's News of the Committee Meeting and AGM, both 21st March

This month there have been two meetings. The Trustees met as usual on the third Monday of the month - 21st March. The meeting was followed by a buffet for members (in place of the New Year's Party which could not be held due to the closure of the cafe during building works). As if that were not enough, the Trust's 31st AGM followed at 7:30 the same day.



Pasties, cakes, nibbles and appropriate beverages for the Members' 'Bash' before the AGM.

We have now seen the retirement of Chairman Bruce Hawken who stood down in favour of new Chair Bob Hollingdale. Bruce also retired as a Trustee. Tributes were paid to Bruce and, at the AGM, Tony Wood gave a vote of thanks to Bruce and Margaret and outlined Bruce's achievements throughout his three years in office. Sue likened Bruce's appointment in 2013 as the former Army officer being asked to Captain a Naval ship whilst being totally unfamiliar with the craft and the crew. He had bravely stepped in to chair the trustees, not having had the benefit of being a trustee himself prior to his election. During Bruce's period of office he had obtained substantial grant aid from both Sita and Viridor; overseen the south gable wall project; been instrumental in standardising signage inside the house and implementing the public presentation project which involved new external notice boards and signage and the improvement of the front entrance porch - to name just a few items on his very busy agenda. He has been



From the darkened garden as members were ushered up to the AGM.



currently very much involved in the substantial maintenance/repair programme.

At the AGM, after his election, Bob also thanked Bruce and presented Bruce and Margaret with a bouquet on behalf of the members.

We wish Bruce and Margaret all the very best for the future and I gather Margaret has prepared a list of long-overdue domestic tasks in hopeful anticipation! We have been assured of their continued membership and support in future.

Bob outlined his vision for his term of office which would, in his words, consist of 'the three Ms' - namely Maintenance, Members and Money. It is unlikely that substantial grant aid will be available in future and therefore the Trust must embark on a continuing cycle of maintenance. New members must be found

from a wider community. The need for more fund-raising is essential. We all congratulate Bob on his appointment and look forward to working with him to help him achieve those objectives.

Tony Britton presented his 8th report as Treasurer and was pleased to report on the accuracy of his previous year's forecast. Briefly the Trust's bank balance stood at £17,840 in the Bank at the end of 2015 which was £4,630 up on forecast although a large part of this was donations of almost £3,000 towards the current building project which were not foreseen at the time of the forecast. Tony's current forecast is that we should end the year with around £17,600 in hand - in other words not much different from the start of the year. Tony's accounts have been audited and once 'signed off' will be lodged with the Charity Commission.

With the exception of Bruce, all trustees agreed to stand for election and your trustees and officials for the coming year are therefore: Bob Hollingdale (Chair); Victor Briggs (Vice-Chair); Tony Britton (Treasurer); Sue Glencross (Hon Sec); Dave Howard; John Gliddon; Valerie Moore; Rachel Bennett and Jo Hoskin.

In view of the fact that the Charity Commission places strict requirements on the method of recruiting and appointment new trustees, although there was a nomination immediately prior to the AGM, no appointment will be made until the Trustees have considered what specific requirement (if any) there may be. The Trustees will be reviewing their individual roles and the overall position will then be considered.

Our trustees' meeting did not provide anything particularly newsworthy this month: planning permission is still awaited for development of the garage site (but seemingly anticipated within approximately four weeks) and the current maintenance/repair programme is half way through, which John Gliddon continues to monitor.

Finally - we are all very pleased to welcome Nancy back to the fold again following her lengthy period of illness.

Sue Glencross, Hon.Sec.

This Month's Thoughts from our Garden's Overseer



Spring is upon us, the grass has had its first cut, colour has returned, and the garden looks and feels cosy and inviting again, especially in the warming sunshine.

One of the main challenges in the Stuart House garden is to maintain colour and structure in the jewel borders around the lawn during the growing season (thank you Liz, Wendy, Judith, and Gill for your help here). I mentioned last time the

difficulty of ever keeping to the idealised garden design in the hallway painting, as some plants refuse to stay in their allotted spaces. For example, the *Schizostylis* ("Kaffir") lilies, although from South Africa, grow exuberantly in Stuart House's back garden, delighting in the moist, humus rich, free-draining soil, adding welcome colour to the garden in autumn. The relatively warm winter weather has helped these lilies spread like wildfire, stifling virtually everything in their path, including spring flowering bulbs, primroses, London Pride, and even (and it's difficult to believe this) the perennially problematic alkanet and creeping strawberries. They also burrow beneath the bricks between the border and the lawn, sending up a frustrating forest of shoots in the gaps. The bluebells seem able to stand up to the *Schizostylis*, but can themselves turn problematic in the formal beds. There's a lesson here: if you choose to grow *Schizostylis*, use physical boundaries to keep them within allotted spaces, and regularly thin them out: when they get too crowded they lose flower power. Thankfully, they do pull up without too much problem if you fork around the roots first.

"He who plants a garden plants happiness" I once read. Yes, gardens are happy places especially when plants come back to delight year after year without too many problems. However, not many tulips returned last Spring (disease and *Schizostylis* strangulation being possible causes), and this year nearly all of the Japanese primulae (Miller's Crimson and Postford White) that took so long to grow from seed have so far failed to reappear. And extremely strangely, many of the strong foxgloves planted in the autumn in the back wall border have just disappeared.

Highly perplexing, too, is the state of the primroses that in early March were planted in ornamental pots around the garden. Within a week or so, they were savaged (see photo) – there's no other word to describe it. All the flowers vanished, and the leaves of some of the plants were gnawed to shreds. Slugs and snails are just waking up and probably wouldn't get up to such vandalism quite so early in the season. So maybe a suspicious eye should be cast at the birds who for some reason either have taken a liking to the taste of the flowers, or who maybe want them to decorate their nests. Then again, caterpillars could be the main culprits: in my own garden I've found some that haven't hibernated because of the warm winter, and have continue to creep about looking for tasty morsels. It did seem that the pretty violas planted in



the pots on the garden tables might be immune to all this, but then they began to be suffer too. Readers' thoughts and ideas are most welcome. (Interestingly, the native primroses in bloom in the garden are not so affected.)

Thankfully, the large magnolia tree that plays such a pivotal role in the garden is ever-reliable. However, it does not belong to Stuart House, as its trunk and roots are over the fence next door - where much commotion will no doubt occur when the site is re-developed, so let's hope the tree will withstand the changes. Thankfully it has a Tree Preservation Order to help protect it (all trees in a Conservation area such as Liskeard Town Centre have this protection). From the third week of March and through April it is in full bloom, so now's the time to come and marvel at its beauty.

Malcolm Mort

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**Stuart House
Fund-Raising Event
Wednesday April 20th
7.30pm.**

'What's it Worth?'

This event is, we hope, a fund-raiser which should be both informative and fun. Paul Clark, whose auction house is in the Heathfield estate here in Liskeard, has kindly agreed to bring along 10 antiques and to describe them and talk about them. Each member of the audience will have a sheet listing these items, with a space beside each for a valuation figure. Paul will have set his own valuation on them, and, at the end of the evening, the person who has got the overall evaluation closest to his will win the prize. This will allow for some hits and misses.

A glass of wine or juice will start the evening but bring further supplies if you want to have a really lively time.

We are very grateful to Paul for giving up his time to support Stuart House Trust.

Tickets from Sioux or at the door.... **£5 each.**

ALL WELCOME

Please encourage new people to come or bring them with you.



**Out and About Liskeard
The Bo Foaks Memorial Walk
2016**

Saturday 9th April

ALL WELCOME

A walk circling the town centre, answering questions, such as "where were Liskeard's criminals executed?", "where could no decent female be seen walking on a Sunday night?" and "where did the town's earliest known inhabitants live?"

Led by walking and local history experts Iain Rowe and Brian Oldham.

Approx 2.5 miles on pavements and footpaths

Stuart House, 9:45 for a 10am start

No charge, but donations for Stuart House will be collected in memory of Bo.

A light, end of walk lunch, can be booked before departing.

Java 5 at Stuart House

Sunday 13th March

Gerry Hillman (Leader), John Batey, Peter Dukes, Euan Hunter, Pete Maslen



For explanation of Tony Piper's photo, ask him – or wait for an answer next month!

The new season of Music at Stuart House opened, on the first beautiful, cloudless Sunday of the year, with **Java 5** performing to a near capacity audience. This 'geriatric' (by their own definition) 'boy band' skilfully performed a huge range of close harmony songs from the early 1900's to the 'naughties'. It was truly an afternoon of sheer delight! They made it all seem effortless, as do most highly competent musicians. However, the truth is that an enormous amount of work goes into learning each piece and Gerry, the leader, is extremely skilled in the quality of the arrangements that he makes. They sang with precision timing and told

jokes with equally precise timing. They announced each item, giving a brief story about the composer, the arrangement, the time it was originally written and who originally performed it.

There was a real equality of effort as they moved around to be either the soloist or the harmony. Each took either role as they moved through their repertoire. They really looked as though they were enjoying themselves immensely – as much as the audience was enjoying them. Everybody tapped feet and jiggled along to songs such as **Rag Doll, Ain't Misbehavin, Only the Lonely, Blue Moon, Boardwalk**, to name but a few. Stuart House rang with the applause and cheers until they agreed to do an encore. It was a fantastic start to the new season of music.

Angela Wunnam, Concert Series Co-ordinator

♪ Coming next ♪

Sunday 17th April, 2.30pm

Valley Voices

We are continuing the a capella theme with the return of this very popular choir. In fact, the choir is now far too big to fit into Stuart House and to have an audience as well, so a smaller group of the local Liskeard members will be coming. They will perform in a range of styles and there will be an opportunity for some audience participation – but only for those wishing to do so! Do come for another wonderful afternoon's entertainment.





The Saturday Café

Regulars in the café on Saturday mornings will have missed Erin over the past month or so. She volunteered with us for well over 15 months, but has now had to leave to concentrate on school exams. We thank her for all she has done, we shall miss her greatly, and send our very best wishes for a happy and successful future.

Erin's departure means that there is a need for more volunteers to serve in the café on Saturday mornings. Thanks to all who have so far signed up on the notice-board in the café – more would be very welcome!

Our Membership Survey

Many thanks to all those who have volunteered answers following on from the request in March's Newsletter, and made other constructive suggestions concerning retaining and attracting members, including active ones.

The opportunity to respond – to Bob Hollingdale, via Reception, or by email to the editor - has not passed. Remember

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?

The Art, Crafts and Gift Shop remains open in the Surgery, now Easter themed.



Margaret Van Meurs

We were sad to hear of the death of Margaret Van Meurs who died in March, aged 88. She had been a supporter of Stuart House for over 30 years and served on the committee in the 1990s. Being a keen gardener herself, she took an active interest in the development of the garden and was a regular supporter of all art exhibitions.

Tony Wood

Tony adds I hope that new, young members are helping to fill the places of these long-term supporters to ensure the vigour of the Trust in the coming years.

🎵 Young Performers' Concert Series 🎵

More details about three afternoon concerts in Stuart House on Sundays July 17th and August 14th, and December 11th (all TBC) will follow soon. Each concert will be duplicated : in Stuart House in Liskeard and in St Lalluwly Church in Menheniot, and will have a varied programme which the gifted young performers will devise, as well as being involved in the publicity and planning of the events. A hope is to attract not only existing classical music lovers, but also introduce a new audience of younger people to it.

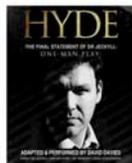
Chris Howarth will oversee the organization supported by Angela Wunnam, who organizes the Stuart House Concert Series.

ART EXHIBITIONS COMING TO STUART HOUSE LATER THIS YEAR

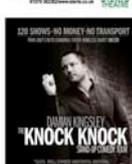
Bookings and enquiries are still coming in but already we look forward to the return of **Charles Summers** at the end of May, to **Rose Gibbon** in June, to a **Brenda Arundell** retrospective in August, and to **Louise Kidd** also in August, and to the **Big Draw** in October. Watch out for details and more news soon.



Sheer Indulgence in Concert
Sterts Studio
Friday 1st April 7.30pm
Bank Holiday - 1st April 7.30pm
Bookings: 07866 292414



HYDE
THE FINAL STATEMENT OF DR JEKYL
AND MR HYDE
MARTIN KINGSLEY PRESENTS DR JEKYL AND MR HYDE
Bank Holiday - Saturday 2nd April 7.30pm
Bookings: 07866 292414



DAMIAN KINGSLEY
KNOCK KNOCK
THE ONLY ACTOR TO PERFORM IN 120 COUNTRIES
Bank Holiday - Friday 8th April 8.00pm
Bookings: 07866 292414



STERTS SINGERS
IN CONCERT
THE WIZARD OF OZ & JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR
Bank Holiday - Saturday 16th April 7.30pm
Bookings: 07866 292414

STERTS THEATRE

Spring at Sterts

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.

Hyde - The Final Statement of Dr Jekyll
Saturday 2nd April. 7.30pm Tickets £8/6

"In each of us, two natures are at war – the good and the evil". From the famous novella by Robert Louis Stevenson, Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde comes a gripping drama that will keep you on the edge of your seat!

Damian Kingsley - Knock Knock Stand Up Tour.
Collection for **Shelter** at the end of the show.
Friday 8th April. Sterts Café. 8.00pm Tickets FREE

Please note age recommendation of 14+
Stand-up comic Damian Kingsley is set to travel penniless from Lands End to Edinburgh on a 120 gig tour to raise money for the homeless charity Shelter.

Sterts Singers in Concert
Saturday 16th April 7.30pm

Our final Spring Season event is a concert by Sterts Singers. This concert will also feature songs from The Wizard of Oz and Jesus Christ Superstar, part of our summer line up.

Sterts Summer season is on sale now.
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

Events at our partner, Stert's Theatre

South East Cornwall Museums Forum
Further information available from Chairman L.Aggrey 91733 847360

Grand Family History Discovery Day

DISCOVER YOUR ANCESTORS
DISCOVER YOUR HERITAGE AND YOUR ROOTS

Liskeard Public Hall, West Street, Liskeard

Saturday 21st May 2016 10.00am -3.00pm

Information & displays by

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plymouth & West Devon Record Office. Cornwall Family History Society Cornwall On Line Parish Clerks Devon Family History Society Kresen Kernow Liskeard Old Cornwall Society St Neot Community Archive Polperro Family History Group Cornwall Regimental Museum Saltash Heritage Museum & Local History Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Torpoint Archives Elliotts Shop (TPS) Liskeard Museum Stuart House Looe Museum Launceston Museum Callington Museum Bodmin Museum Lostwithiel Museum Fowey Museum
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There will be lots of online assistance and advice
So take advantage of this free service

Refreshments available

FREE Entry

As an active member of the South East Cornwall Museums Forum, Stuart House will run an information stall at the coming Family History Day.

Diary of Events

April 2016



Tuesday 5 th and Tuesday 19 th	Liskeard Writers' Group meet 2 – 4 pm.
Every Thursday	Knit 'n' Knatter meet from 10.30 am. to 1.30 pm. All welcome.
Saturday 9th	Bo Foaks Memorial Walk. Meet at House at 9.45am for 10am. start. Bread and Soup lunch after, but booking essential. See p.6
Monday 11th	Liskeard Poetry Group meet 4-6 pm.
Sunday 17th	Concert in the Gallery. Valley Voices. 2.30 pm. Tickets £7 from reception, include refreshments and a chance to talk with the performers afterwards. See p.7
Monday 18th	Fake or Fortune – antiques valuation with Richard Hamm of Bearnas, Hampton & Littlewood. 10 am. To 12 noon.
Wednesday 20th	“What's it Worth?” - antiques quiz sponsored by Clark's Auction House. 7.30 pm. £5, raising money for Stuart House. All welcome. See p.6
Coming in May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Stuart House Participates in Family History Day Saturday 21st • Bo Foaks Youth Concert in the Public Hall on Sunday 22nd. • Art Exhibition with Charles Summers from 30th.

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