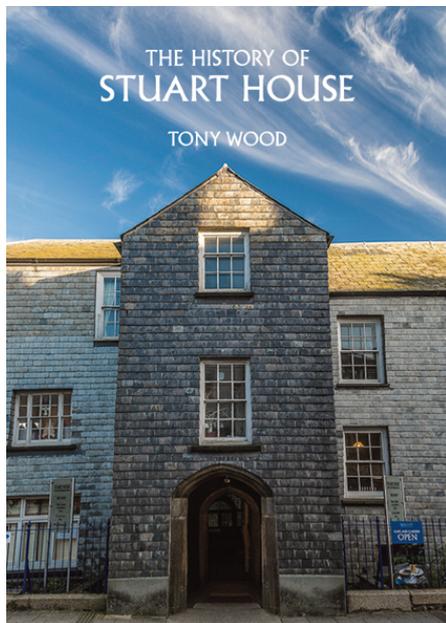


February 2015

A New History of the House.

In 1985 Tony Wood wrote 'An Architectural History of Stuart House' based on a talk by Eric Berry, and now, 30 years later, he has been able to fill in a lot more detail although there are still large gaps. The new 'History of Stuart House' is produced in colour with many photos and descriptions of its development over 500 years. It is priced at £3.50 and is available only from the house.

(see also p.7 ed.)



SOUTH WALL REPAIRS : update from Bruce Hawken, Chairman

Well there's good news and a challenge to start the New Year. Last year the extreme weather caused a lot of water to penetrate the south gable wall of the House. In turn this led to a worsening of the bulge in that wall and a significant crack developed. To solve the problem and prevent further deterioration required a major project to pin the wall, replace some lintels, re-point and protect the finished work. Architect Richard Church prepared the plans and specifications for the work. Five companies tendered for the project and a Bodmin Company, Heritage Cornwall, were successful. The problem then was the cost which worked out at just short of £30,000 for which we needed to seek grants. After a helpful exchange with our insurance company we were surprised to receive an offer of £21,000 for the damage element of the work.

continued on p. 2

Bruce Hawken's Report on the South Wall repairs continued from the front page..

The loss adjuster's view was that the replacement and repair of lintels was 'improvement' rather than water damage repair as was the treatment of the wall to make it weatherproof. The insurance contribution meant the grant needed to finish the job was much less than we feared and we were able to consider repairs to the Kings room at the same time. Accordingly we applied to our Cornwall Councillors, the Town Council and Town Forum for expressions of support and small grants. We also applied to SITA Cornwall Trust for a major grant of £10,000. Amazingly all applications have been successful and we have all the funding needed to complete the repair of the wall and Kings room floor.



Timing of the work is an issue because part of it involves the injection of lime mortar into the wall voids and this cannot be done when it is frosty. On the advice of our architect and the contractor we now plan for work to start immediately after Easter in the week beginning 7th April 2015. We expect the project to take 8 weeks if all goes well but there are challenges for us in this period. First we need to take as much furniture as possible out of the affected rooms – the Surgery, Jane room and Tudor room. Secondly where this is not possible what is left will need protection from dust and grit. Thirdly we will lose income from these rooms for the duration of the project. Last but not least although we will be able to keep the rest of the house open keeping it clean and presentable will be a non-trivial task – but not impossible.

Once complete we will have a structurally sound wall, three redecorated rooms and hopefully the Kings room suitable for general letting. Although this will be satisfying we have to expect that a 500 year old building will throw up such 'little local difficulties' on a regular basis. To this end we have to capitalise on our major source of income for the last 3 years – the café. Experience has shown that keeping it open in the afternoon is important but to do this we need more volunteers willing to put in a couple of hours if not on a regular basis perhaps as a back up for when others are away. Please give it some thought and let Sioux know if you are able to give some of your time to helping in the café.



The House looked lovely at Christmas – thanks to Sioux. Both these features are on the inside of the South Wall which is to be repaired



‘PAST TIMES’ : an introduction to a new regular feature in our Newsletter by Sue Glencross, Hon. Sec.

For goodness knows how many years now (actually since 12 September 2000!) I have acted as Honorary Secretary to the Trust and amongst my duties has been the role of taking and maintaining accurate Minutes of the monthly Trustees’ meetings. They are all filed, together with various trustees’ reports, in Lever Arch files in strict date order and kept in a secure cabinet in my garage. Rachel (ed.) and I thought it would be a good idea to remind long-standing members of the progress which has been made over the years and to give newer members an insight into how the House finally came to be open full time as a functioning Arts and Heritage Centre. A future article under the heading of ‘Past Times’ will therefore contain extracts from Minutes of days gone past.

The extracts may not be in chronological order. The history of the House itself is well documented and the subject of an excellent publication by founder member and historian Tony Wood (see p.1). My articles will focus on ‘behind the scenes’ work.

To commence, some background on the administration side. When I first joined the Trust, initially as a member and quite soon after as Hon. Secretary, the House was kept closed and was only open for exhibitions, coffee mornings, or sales. Keys for use by hirers were kept at Taylors’ Garage, and hirers were given a card to present to the garage in order to obtain their key. The key was returned to the garage after the event. There was no telephone in the House! It was the early days of mobile telephones and most networks did not work in the House anyway. Bookings were taken by Louise Kidd at Painters, who were then in Windsor Place and afterwards by Coodes, Solicitors who were also (and still are) in Windsor Place. Coodes have always given support to the Trust both in their role as its Honorary Solicitors and also financially. At that time I was a private client and property lawyer with Coodes so was fortunate to have my own secretarial assistance and complete office facilities to hand. The House diary was kept at Coodes and I delegated one of my own secretaries to take notes of all telephone calls received in respect of the House and to maintain a diary of bookings. She kept a shorthand notebook in which she recorded all those calls and sometimes received more calls about Stuart House than she did from clients! In those days, of course, there was no House Steward. The Trustees would make and

receive many telephone calls and deal with as many administrative tasks as were possible from their own homes. That in itself was not as easy as it is now with our plethora of electronic equipment. Eileen Crouch’s hard work and expertise, during the period of her Chairmanship, led to a grant by the Esme Fairbairn Trust which was to enable the employment of a House Steward and the purchase of essential office equipment - it is Eileen we have to thank for moving our administration forward to where we are now.

In February 2002 the job description for the post of House Steward was under discussion at our meeting. It was decided that there should be two stewards, working on a job-share basis. There was to be a 15 minute overlap between the two to allow for banking and other administrative duties. A major decision made at that meeting was to confirm with BT the order of a telephone line and the purchase of two portable handsets which would double as an intercom. The first tranche of the grant would be applied for at the earliest opportunity. The House was on its way to opening on a daily basis!

The ‘Past Times’ articles are bound to bring back memories of past events – if you feel you have something interesting to say, please put pen to paper (or rather fingers on the keys!) and let Rachel have your thoughts.



Sioux and Sue in the office with the reflection of the ed taking the picture!

The Regular Report from our Garden's Overseer

The tall buildings that surround Stuart House garden ensure that the low winter sun is kept well away from nearly every nook and cranny for a while. However, it is now over a month since the shortest day, which means an extra hour of daylight already, and, despite the frost and frozen fountain, there are signs of Spring. The wallflowers, always incredibly hardy, look promising. The many dwarf narcissi bulbs planted in the autumn are showing through (the tulips are a longer wait) and a few of the very early primroses and winter pansies are in flower. Winter colour is precious in the garden – further thoughts about this in a future article.

The garden looks very sleepy, but no doubt those pestilent weeds that ever vex the soul are biding their time, priming their seeds and girding their roots and shoots for the perennial battles. However, for once, I will not let such thoughts infest my article, even though I know that the impudent oxalis has no intention of hibernating. Instead I will write about *Calendula Officinalis*, a plant very dear to me, as well as to the Elizabethans.

For the first seven years of my life, I lived in a little cottage with a large wild garden on the edge of Swansea, overlooking the valley sides made barren by the pollutants from long-time smelting of Cornish copper. One day (I must have been about four) my father took me to a piece of ground he had cleared, gave me a packet of *Calendula Art Shades* (I still remember it) and helped me scatter and cover those curious crescent-shaped seeds. I then forgot all about them until one day my father asked: "Have you seen your seeds?" I hadn't, so we went out to have a look, and I stood there astounded. The bare brown earth had magically transformed into a sea of yellow and orange flowers, each boldly bearing a dark brown centre. So began my fascination with the world of plants.

Calendula is remarkably accommodating, and as a hardy annual so easy to grow: sow in Spring for summer; for late autumn and winter blooms August is about right; and September sown seeds should flower in mid to late Spring. Their name comes from the Latin word "calendae", the first day of the month, indicating the year-long flowering of this plant in its native Mediterranean areas. In early Christian tradition it was known as "Mary's Gold", hence the name marigold, although of course it has no connection with the *Tagetes* marigold types. It was also a sacred flower in India, used to decorate statues of Hindu deities. And in mediaeval times it was customarily thrown into pots of stew, hence its other name: pot-marigold.



Calendula was indeed a very popular plant in Elizabethan times for its many uses. The flowers are safe to eat, and Henry VIII is said to have enjoyed seeing the petals adorn his meals. (One of the recent Masterchef finalists also used them in this way). From early times, the flowers have been known for their anti-microbial and skin-healing properties. Extracts made from leaves and flowers were used for treating wounds and amputations in the both English and American Civil Wars and during WWI - Gertrude Jekyll grew large quantities for this purpose. Other uses of the flowers during the Middle Ages included adding colour to butter and cheese; as infusions in drinks, curing tired eyes; making conserves that were thought good for the heart; and as a natural dye where, by using different mordants, a variety of yellow, orange and brown shades can be obtained. Moreover, *Calendula* was referred to in folk tales as affording protection against darkness and evil. What more could anyone ask of a plant? The Elizabethans grew it in both their herb and floral gardens, which is exactly what we'll do at Stuart House.

Those of us who visited Cothele during December must surely have again been impressed by the huge dried flower garland snaking from the ceiling in the Great Hall, where helichrysum, statice and acroclinum were the main constituents. I thought: could we at Stuart House do something like that for next year? This will require either many of us growing small numbers of flowers, or someone with a big garden growing lots! All suggestions welcomed. More about this next time following further discussion with the keen band of SH gardeners.

Malcolm Mort

PS. Handy topical garden tip. Don't take notice of seed packets that advise sowing seeds during February and March. Save yourself a lot of bother and get much more success by waiting until mid-April. That's always early enough for nearly everything.

Frank Morcom and the Stuart House clay poppy

Frank was a member of the Morcom family who owned and lived in the House in the early part of the 20th century. He volunteered for active service in the First World War, was commissioned as a 2nd Lt. and was killed in action on 8th May 1917. A clay poppy has been bought from the exhibition **Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red** at the Tower of London. It will be set up in the house with a photograph of Frank together with a lot of information about him and the action in which he lost his life.

This small exhibition and the dedication of the Memorial Poppy will be held in the **Max Lock Gallery at 7.30 pm on Thursday, 19th February.**



Tony Wood

As an Arts and Heritage Centre, Stuart House has many events already planned for 2015, and lots more will be booked in later. The Newsletter aims to give advance publicity – please come: don't just read the reviews afterwards!

Rose Gibbon held an exhibition with ceramicist **Laura Lane** in the Gallery in November. Stuart House Artist in residence **Linda Maynard** writes:- Although not born in the West Country, Rose is presently living and working from Looe. Rose maintains that she has come to love Cornwall and that the West Country does much to inspire her imagination. Her recent Exhibition in the Max Lock Gallery, Stuart House; certainly illustrated her diverse interest in myth, legend, and fantasy.

This was Rose Gibbon's first Exhibition at Stuart House and we look forward to the result of more West Country 'Magic', as she calls it, in the future. Thank you, Rose.



Rose has two further exhibitions in the Max Lock Gallery –
June 22-27
September 28 to 3 October



Local artist **Jane Wood** will present an exhibition 'A New Way of Drawing'.
March 16 – 21.

Other concerts in the Stuart House Series are on Sundays July 19th, September 27th and October 18th. Look out for details in the Newsletters, in the special leaflet and on posters.

The Stuart House Concert Series 2015.

Co-ordinator Angela Wunnam writes:-

We are delighted to announce the first three performances of the 2015 Music Programme. Please keep these dates for your diary:

22nd March – Alison Smith, renowned classical guitarist;

26th April – Gareth Lee and Annie Baylis, up-and-coming Cornish folk duo;

21st June, The Two Jonathans – keyboard and voice

All concerts are on Sundays at 2.30 pm, in the Gallery. Tickets obtainable from the office, price includes complimentary tea and biscuits in the garden if fine.

Alison Smith has been described as one of the most exciting and lyrical guitarists to emerge in recent years, delighting audiences with her fluid technique and expressive playing. She regularly performs nationwide and in Europe.

Gareth Lee and Annie Baylis combine lyrical singing with beautiful guitar and violin to give an intimate and powerful performance.

The Two Jonathans, Jonathan Delbridge and Jonathan Lewsey, are well-known for their ability to convey musical synergy of the highest order.



Geoff Ransom held his first Stuart House exhibition of seascapes in early December. The colours were glorious, including the wonderful light of sunrise.

Phillippa Hodge held an excellent exhibition in the Gallery in December. Works were varied and thought-provoking, with some helpful labelling, for example on the paintings of door fastenings, which helped the viewer (*well, certainly me – ed*) to appreciate their meaning. Phillippa has had to postpone the exhibition planned for March but hopes to reschedule for later in the year.

HERITAGE events include:

Eileen Crouch will give a talk on May 6th on **The Great Evacuation of World War II** – the mass movement of 3 million people, including herself.

Tony Ball will mount an exhibition relating to the year **1915** in the context of how the events of the First World War involved local people and communities. This will be in November, and follows on from his full and fascinating exhibition about 1914 which ran last year.

Remember too the permanent **Henry Rice Exhibition** on the top floor and all the displays around the house.

Eileen Crouch is holding an exhibition 'Poetry and Art' in the first fortnight of June. Visitors will be invited to use art to express their reaction to her poems.

Ian Coggins plans a photographic exhibition in July – look out for more details.

Stuart House Artist in Residence **Linda Maynard** is gathering work towards an exhibition. Do you know where her studio in the House is? Ask at reception if you would like to visit, or are interested in Linda's classes.

Thursday 19th February 7.30pm
Dedication of the **memorial poppy** to Frank Morcom (see p.5) and launch of Tony Wood's new "**History of Stuart House**" (see front page)



Alison Smith, classical guitarist. Playing at Stuart House on Sunday 22nd March (see opposite)



The "Members' New Year Do" on the morning of 10th January was well attended. Delicious cakes and coffee, friendly and constructive talk and welcome donations to the fund for new garden furniture



Readers may be wondering where Hon. Sec. Sue's reports on the December and January **Committee Meetings** are. In fact, as all events and discussions which we could report on have been covered elsewhere in this Newsletter, including South Wall developments and SITA funding, Tony Wood's new book, help for hirers, Sioux's Ten Years, and continuing gratitude to all café and other volunteers, we decided against anything more this time.

Ian Bowman. We are sad to report the recent death of one of our members, Ian Bowman. Ian and Gill have supported the Trust for many years, Gill rather more actively (Committee, history, gardening) than Ian as his health was not good. However he regularly came to our Sunday concerts and exhibitions and it was because of his support that Gill was able to give so much time to the Trust's work.
Tony Wood

Thanks to Norma. One of our most active volunteers has decided to step back from café duties for a while. Norma joined us in July 2011 and has been a stalwart in the café ever since. She has seen us through some of our busiest times, sometimes covering up to 3 sessions a week. This has been hugely beneficial to us and our customers, all the more appreciated as her only means of getting to the House is by bus, which is fine when the weather is good and when the busses run. I have relied very heavily on Norma over the years and will be sorry to see her go. **HOWEVER**, she will not be leaving us totally, as she will put her volunteer hours into stewarding exhibitions and the Arts, Crafts and Gifts shop when it re-opens. I hope that we will see her smiling face back in the building soon, and I would like to thank her for all her hard work over the past four and a half years.
Sioux Dunster

At December's Committee meeting, House Administrator **Sioux Dunster** was presented with a bouquet to mark her 10 Years in post. She does an amazing amount for the House in so many ways, and we are so grateful



Sioux is again doing a sponsored slim, aiming to lose a stone in 6 weeks. Money will be split between Stuart House and the soccer scholarship scheme for her daughter Corrie, Last year she raised over £200, split in the same way. Thank you in advance to anyone willing to support her in this.

CHARITY SALE ON BEHALF OF STUART HOUSE – we will be using the Surgery from Monday 16th to Saturday 21st February to raise funds for the House. If you have any good quality/new items, maybe duplicate or not-needed Christmas (or indeed birthday!) presents, please bring them in. We will also need stewards – at least 2 each day – for the week. If you have any time to spare please step forward. Many thanks, Sioux.

'HELP US TO HELP YOU'

When you have organized an event at Stuart House, like you we want it to be a success. We value your support and the hire of available rooms is an important source of income for us.

In recent times we have striven to upgrade the appearance of the House, both inside and out. The installation of the main signs outside the House required planning permission but our first application was turned down. After negotiation, permission was granted on the understanding that we reduce the number and frequency of use of banners on our railings and maintain the outside appearance in keeping with the listed status of the House. We are mindful that publicity of your event and signage is essential to both of us. You want to bring people to your event and the more people who visit Stuart House, the better it is for both of us.

If you wish we can:

- Place your poster in the 'coming soon' section of our outside notice boards and in our Westbourne Car Park notice boards in advance of your event.
- For the duration of your event, place your poster in the 'What's on now' section of those notice boards.
- Publicise your event in our newsletter, which is sent either electronically or by post to our membership.
- Publicise your event on our website.
- Publicise your event in our café.

To take advantage of this you should:

- Send us information about yourself and the event as soon as possible and no later than 23rd of the month before your start day. This will allow us to put a short piece in the newsletter which is distributed on the 1st of each month as well as our monthly 'What's On' leaflet and post something timely on the website.
- Submit three laminated A4 portrait posters for your event to House Manager at least two weeks prior to the commencement of your event.
- Provide your poster in electronic form so we can adjust the information to ½ A4 for use in the café.

You should not

- Display any further notices in the House without our permission.
- Display any banners on our railings – although in certain one off, one day, events banners in House colours and previously approved by us may be permitted.

If you have any questions House Manager, Sioux Dunster, is there to help you get the best from your time in the House.

News of our partner and fellow organizations



For more information or to book tickets www.sterts.co.uk e.mail office2@stertsarts.org or 01579 362382

Our partner, STERTS THEATRE, resumes its events and activities in February. Check the website for details.
Apologies for the lack of detail in this Newsletter.



Another organization which Stuart House supports ;
WALKERS ARE WELCOME

Liskeard & District Museum 14th to 21st February **MINERAL LANDSCAPES : A Celebration of Science, Art and Industry**

During half-term week there will be a series of special talks, displays and activities linked to our mining landscape.

- Artist Helen Marton will describe how she works with mineralogists to create sculptures from the Cornish rock.
- Jason Cleverly will talk about how designers can help museums to create unique installations.
- Phoebe Gowan will explain her work in rock and glass.
- Dr Isabelle Risner will discuss her work which is stimulated by the changing coastline.
- Lucy Frears an expert in “app” design , will give a talk on bringing the mining landscape alive.
- The digital world is also explored through our new exhibits presented by Jason Cleverly and Tim Shear of Falmouth University.

There will be pop up activities in the galleries and “drawing with microscopes” sessions for children.

For more details see our programme at

<http://www.liskeardmuseum.org/index.php/mineral-landscapes/mineral-landscapes-programme>

Stuart House hopes that people will take the opportunity of this week to explore the Research Hub in the Rowse Room , which was also funded by the CHAHP project. The computer suite there links to early editions of the Cornish Times, local census material and parish records.

MINERAL LANDSCAPES

A CELEBRATION OF SCIENCE

ART & INDUSTRY

14th -21st FEBRUARY 2015

Saturday 14th

11.00 Talk:

Gabbroic Clay: Links between the Past and Present.

Overview of practice and collaboration with mineralogists
Helen Marton

12.00 Talk

Maker, Audience & Object: Approaches to Enhancing Interpretation. Overview of practice and the development of the Enlightened Eye
Jason Cleverly

Monday 16th

Museum closed 11.00 to 13.00 .

Wednesday 18th

11.00 Children's workshop

ROCK PAPER SCISSORS

Jason Cleverly

15.00 Talk

Landscape, Rock and Glass

Creating sculpture in rock and glass
Phoebe Gowen

Thursday 19th

11.00 Children's workshop

ROCK PAPER SCISSORS

Jason Cleverly

19.30 Talk

Moving Boulders: Communicating Coastline Change Through Ceramic Practice.

A collaboration with Dr. Larissa Naylor
Dr. Isabelle Risner

Friday 20th

19.30 Talk

The Bodmin Gospels, Cornwall's Earliest Book

Cornwall Archaeological Society Lecture
Prof Michelle Brown

Saturday 21st

11.00 Talk

One Foot in the Past, One Foot in the Future
Walking with the Hayle Churks mobile phone app
Lucy Frears

12.00 Talk

Maker, Audience & Object: Approaches to Enhancing Interpretation. Overview of practice and the development of the Enlightened Eye
Jason Cleverly

Daily Events

Mon – Fri 10.00 - 16.00

Silk Paintings Inspired by the Caradon Landscape
Exhibition in the Hub Café, Liskerrett Centre,
Varley Lane

Be Creative with the Enlightened Eye

Demonstration sessions with Jason Cleverly

Pop up activities in the Museum Galleries
Expect the Unexpected

Landscapes of Rock and Glass

Exhibition of original creations by Phoebe Gowen
and Victoria Andrew

All Museum events are free. It would be helpful if you could let us know in advance if you are attending a talk.

LISKEARD & DISTRICT MUSEUM

Tel: 01579 346087 www.liskeardmuseum.org

FALMOUTH
UNIVERSITY



CARADON HILL AREA
HERITAGE PROJECT



Diary of Events

February 2015



ALL MONTH	Do call into the House to revisit the permanent exhibitions including the Henry Rice exhibition on the top floor. Why not investigate the Research Suite there too? And do you know where our Artist in Residence is based?
Monday 2nd to Saturday 14th	Sale with Terrie, Gaby and John
Monday 2nd	Rummage Returns with John Early
Monday 16 th to Saturday 21st	Charity Sale in aid of Stuart House funds in the Surgery. Donations welcome (see p. 8)
Thursday 19th	7.30pm Dedication of Frank Morcom's Poppy and accompanying exhibition and the launch of Tony Wood's new book on the History of Stuart House. (see pp.1, 5, 7) . All welcome.
Saturday 28th	Antiques Valuation Day with Richard Hamm from Bearnese, Hampton and Littlewood. 10am to 12 noon
COMING IN MARCH	More table-top and craft sales, Jane Wood's Art Exhibition, the first of the Concert Series and more.....

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 (who must reserve the right to edit as necessary) please, by 25th of the month for inclusion in the next newsletter. Leave with Sioux in the Office or email to rachelpbennett59@gmail.com