

# Newsletter

*April 2021*

## Chairman's Update

As promised in my brief contribution to the March newsletter I am able to give a further update in regard to the House re-opening.

The Trustees will be meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> April to discuss the way forward and to decide on a "Stuart House Roadmap" out of lockdown. It may be that a conditional phased opening will have to be set in motion. Much will depend on what arrangements can be made in respect of manning the garden, café and House and what the prevalent

"lockdown rules" state – particularly in the light of Parliament's decision to extend emergency coronavirus powers for a further six months. As always, even in these extremely testing times, we will be partially dependent upon volunteer help so any offer of assistance will be most welcome.

My fellow trustees and I are intent on re-opening the House as soon as possible. I know it is really frustrating for all but we have to be certain that the proper decisions are made as we move into what we all hope will be the final phase of the pandemic. Please bear with us!

*Bob Hollingdale*



*The wonderful magnolia tree which dominates our garden at this time. More photographs from March 2021 on pp.3-5.*

## **A word on behalf of all Friends of Stuart House from Eileen Crouch: a past Chair and trustee and now a very active Friend.**

The good news in the March Newsletter (*more funding secured by treasurer Tony Britten and a generous legacy from the estate of John Rapson ed.*) was most welcome. Thanks to the Trustees for their continuing commitment to the Trust – also to others for their work in the House and garden, and to the editors of the Newsletter and Website for keeping Friends and public well-informed. We all look forward to the doors being re-opened – soon! *Eileen*



*Leaflet Sponsored by Coodes  
Honorary Solicitors to Stuart House Trust*

## Greetings, News and Hopes from House-Manager Sioux

A year on from the initial lockdown and we have seen so much upheaval around us. Our calendar has had several changes along the way, with some of the 2020 scheduled events being moved to the same period this year, and a couple opting to go for 2022. Needless to say we are keen to open at our earliest, safe opportunity. No matter when that is we will have something in the Gallery from day one.

The magnolia has come into flower over the last couple of weeks and has given me a gorgeous view to look upon from Reception. It is such a shame that we are unable to share this sight with visitors.

August sees a full month of events, Covid allowing.

- **The “Celtic Celebration”** is well under way in planning, with many enquiries for exhibits. **Ilow Splann** will be bringing their unique performance to the middle weekend – Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> August. (*more from key organiser Eileen on p.6*)
- **Alan Kingwell, along with Mags and Amber** will have an exhibition in August. The Kingwell family exhibitions are always fabulous events, and I am really looking forward to seeing you pop in. (*We remember the Kingwell exhibition in August 2019, below*)



- **A craft event** is planned which will have materials for crafting as well as completed items for sale.

These are just tasters of what we have to look forward to when we are finally allowed to open doors once more.

I have several ideas for events that can be flexible ‘to go’ with little notice:-



**An exhibition entitled “Our Wedding”** will need your help for it to be successful. The idea being a display of a couple’s wedding day. So would include things like, the dress/suit, bridesmaids dresses, invitations, Order of Service, photographs, flowers, menu, cards, etc. I need as many people as can, to come forward with their contributions for inclusion. This could be in photo form if the actual items are not available. If you would like to be involved please contact me so I can get an idea of how practical this would be. I think it would be great to get more of

you involved in the House and its events.

You can contact me at the House on Tuesdays and Thursdays, in person by letter and phone or by email on:- [info@stuarthouse.org.uk](mailto:info@stuarthouse.org.uk) or [siouxduster@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:siouxduster@yahoo.co.uk) on this, or with any others suggestions of what you would like to see in the House.

I have had a suggestion and would like feedback on the idea:-

**Take away cakes.** Cakes ordered Monday for collection on Tuesday or ordered on Wednesday for collection on Thursday. It would be very simple, a choice of coffee or lemon and ginger cake. Available as a whole cake (cuts into 8 slices) £7.00 or a half cake (cuts into 4 slices) £3.50. Would you like to see this service available from 1st May?

I look forward to talking with you as I continue with my ring round of you all.

Keep safe and see you when we are able to reopen our doors.

Sioux

## Sue's "Memories from the Minutes" continued .....

The meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1997 largely revolved around the forthcoming building works. Bookings for July, August and September had to be cancelled. That did not stop Phyllis Head from organising events to be held in future – including talks by Christine North on Medieval Markets and by Peggy Stewart on Japanese occupied China where she spent part of her childhood. How very interesting. Phyllis expressed frustration with accuracy, grammar and spelling of Trust events reported in local newspapers. Wendy Lindesay reported balances of £306 in the current account and £6,161 in the deposit account.

By June the Trust was preparing itself for the commencement of building works and HLF had been asked whether money could be released on signing of the building contract. There had been a meeting of the Town Millennium Project, and the next meeting was on 8<sup>th</sup> July and Eileen Crouch would attend and then take over from Mr James. It was unanimously agreed to proceed with Tony Wood's suggestion of the acquisition of a circular lead pond and



statue for the garden in the sum of £1,060.

It seems that there were still obstacles to overcome as it was reported at the July meeting that English Heritage needed to receive and approve details of the proposed heating layout and restored window to the King's Room before HLF could be given the 'go-ahead'. The railings and gate repairs were in hand and the fireplace in the 'Pink Room' was to be removed to allow an inspection of the south wall. Details of a proposed culvert adjacent to the south wall had to be sanctioned by the owner of the

adjoining garage site. Eileen Crouch was congratulated for her work in organising the Celtic Art Exhibition. Although money had been expended on the lead pond and statue, this would soon be grant aided by the District Council. Exeter University were planning a course to be held at the House under the title 'Four Victorian Heroines' It was suggested that a talk by an astronomer might be held in the Eclipse Year, 1999.

The next meeting was on 10<sup>th</sup> September by which time the building works were well advanced. A good granite fireplace had been discovered in the King's Room behind



a Georgian facing. The excitement at the time must have been tremendous! It seemed probable that fireplaces existed in the two rooms on the second floor above and investigatory work would be undertaken.

A discussion took place on the subject of heat loss in the ground floor passage when the external doors were open. [It is hoped that it will not be too long now before the much-awaited automatic doors can be installed – this project was temporarily halted due to a supply problem as a result of the pandemic] . **to be continued....**

## April's Thoughts from our Garden's Overseer

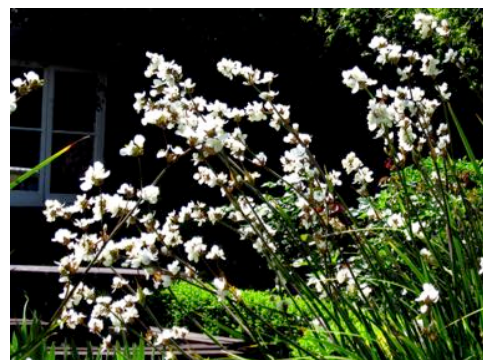


Let's start with two thank-yous. Firstly to fellow gardener Jeff for repurposing two discarded wooden pallets that for almost a year had been a nuisance in the yard behind the garden exit door. These have been turned into three window boxes – two for the sills outside the café windows, and one for the reception office. Come summertime, we'll plant them up with white-flowered begonias grown from the self-sown seedlings gathered last autumn from the gravel under the outside tables. I've kept these at home all winter (in trays perched on the back of my settee in the window), and they have grown really well: they should have formed large plants by June.

Secondly, thank you to keen gardeners Sandra and Derek Fairhall of St Neot who responded to the request for cuttings of winter-flowering shrubs for the garden by donating a rooted cutting of the variegated leaf *Daphne odora* 'Aureomarginata'. It's still very small so will need to be grown on in a pot for a while, but already has a powerfully scented flower.

Daphnes have the most delicious fragrance of early Spring shrubs. They are evergreen, hardy down to at least  $-5^{\circ}\text{C}$ , rarely grow taller than 2m, *and there's no need to prune them*. Daphnes like a humus-rich, moisture-retentive (but not wet) neutral to slightly acid soil. They grow best in dappled shade in a sheltered spot away from harsh winds, all of which Stuart House garden provides. They have a deep but delicate root system and dislike being moved. Propagation can be difficult (well done Mr and Mrs Fairhall!). Take 6-inch-long semi-ripe wood cuttings from the tip of a vigorous branch in midsummer, use a 3:1 mix of compost and perlite, and keep outdoors in a shaded sheltered position. During this year I shall nurture the St Neot cutting in a cold frame at home, and plant it in the woodland border at Stuart House when it has put on sufficient growth.

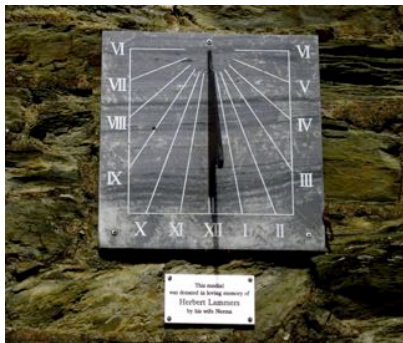
One of the pleasures of the Stuart House garden is that it is based around plants that are evergreen – dwarf box hedging, shaped bays and conifers, together with the bold shiny leaves of *Acanthus* for most of the year. Together, these look inviting and restful and form a good background for displaying the colours of herbaceous flowering plants. A few years ago I was drawn to a description of *Libertia chilensis grandiflora* in a seed catalogue and thought it sounded ideal for Stuart House. I raised three good plants which quickly established themselves in the lawn border near the potted bays, forming impressive non-spreading evergreen clumps with spear-like leaves and bearing masses of white flowers on strong arching stems in June and July. These plants are not attacked by pests, and are oblivious to competition from bluebells, *Schizostylis* and *Montbretia*. This winter I felt they needed thinning and moving as they were not symmetrical with the bay trees – important in a formal garden such as ours. After digging up (a very warm job!) and dividing, several smaller clumps have been placed in more suitable positions, and one also in the library-side front border. I recently sowed seed saved from last year: these have already germinated and are eager to get going. So if anyone would like a potted *Libertia* plant, do let me know. (See picture taken last summer.)



Last autumn the central pond (see p.3) was cleaned out and is as yet unplanted. In such a small container, perhaps it would be better to have just one sort of an easy-to-look-after plant. I particularly like the floating leaves and flowers of water lilies so if anyone has any to spare, they would be very welcome. Gardening is all about sharing.

I recently took pity on a £1 rose in the shop of that name. The packet simply said it was a red climber. The warmth of the store had prompted it to send out several hopeful shoots

- thin and fragile. I took it home, carefully cut these back to one bud, and it is currently in my cold greenhouse hardening up. It will be planted at the foot of one of the tall arches at the bottom of the garden. A few days later in a different store I succumbed again to the plight of another rose which had been cooped up during the lockdown months. Luckily, this plant came with a name – Rosa “Goldfassade” - and a picture showing it to be a climber covered in glorious yellow blooms. It too had several spindly shoots and so is also undergoing rehabilitation in my greenhouse. An internet search revealed its flowers to be very scented and produced all summer. Another good one, then, for the end wall arches.



On the south facing Library wall, at the side of the larger pond, facing into the garden is a sundial donated by Stuart House volunteer Norma Lammers in memory of her husband Herbert. Sundials can be remarkably tricky to site. Both horizontal and vertical sundials need to be just that – exactly horizontal and vertical – and their gnomon (the projecting piece that casts the sun’s shadow) aligned exactly south (or more precisely on the axis of the North Celestial Pole). Even then, it is rarely that the dial will tell the exact time, because clock time as defined by the time at 0° Greenwich will be different from solar time for places of different longitude.

Liskeard is 4.4647° W of Greenwich, which means that time here is about 18 minutes later than at Greenwich. (Earth rotates at 1° each 4 minutes so Liskeard’s noon time is 4.4647 x 4 minutes later.) In addition to this, timings need to take account of the Earth’s elliptical orbit (Earth travels at different speeds during the year) and also the tilt of the Earth’s axis (the Sun travels faster at the times of the equinoxes). All these factors are combined into The Equation of Time to determine average or “mean” time to coordinate daily activities. A table of corrections for each day of the year is published which need to be combined with the longitude adjustment for a particular place. When we measure noon in Liskeard according to the highest point of the sun, a sundial will read 12.00. However, our clocks and watches, set to Greenwich “Mean” Time (GMT) will show this happening between 12.01pm and the 12.32pm depending on the day. I was in the garden on sunny 8th March and noticed at 12.30pm by my watch the sundial shadow had just passed noon. Referring to the solar tables, I found that for that day 28 minutes should be added to the dial’s reading in order to get Greenwich Mean Time. So it was, almost exactly. We can therefore conclude from this that the sundial is positioned very accurately, and that the wall faces due South. Of course, when the clocks go on an hour, that’s a source of more confusion!

**Malcolm Mort**

*All photographs of the garden, including the ones on p.1 and p.3 (taken from the shed roof!) are by Malcolm. ed.*

***April’s snippet from Brian Oldham, President, Liskeard Old Cornwall Society, who are based in the Trecarrel Room of Stuart House.***

GRAYLANDS, DEAN STREET Grade II listed Dean House, Dean Street was built by Henry Rice in 1855 for Peter and Mary Clymo. In 1861 they employed Amelia Blamey (27) as Cook and Charlotte Bowden (21) as Housemaid. Now called Graylands it houses the Register Office with what is thought to be the last remaining WWII bunker under the front lawn. With his brother James, Clymo discovered copper at South Caradon Mine in 1836 which, in 1873, employed 600 people and had the highest output of any mine in Cornwall. He was also Manager and Purser at Wheal Mary Ann lead/silver mine in Menheniot where over 400 were employed; the workforce presented a fine silver plate tray to him, now on display in Liskeard & District Museum, “as a testimonial of their respect and esteem”. All Liskeard’s businesses closed on the day of Peter Clymo’s funeral in July 1870. The cortege of 1,100 was led by 600 miners and a further 1,000 people lined the streets.



# Diary of Events

April 2021



**In the current situation, none of the events once planned for April 2021 are listed.**

More from Eileen on the Celtic Celebration (see p.2)

## CELTIC CELEBRATION

Is the title for our exhibition scheduled for **9-21 August**. In addition to Celtic arts and crafts, it will include some of our Celtic Bards and their contributions to our heritage, plus music. Early days for planning so further info. from Sioux in due course as opening times are revealed. In the meantime, please continue (or start) your own exhibits for the event.



### An excerpt from “Bards of the Cornish Gorsedh”

*The echoes of Celtic tradition of writing, painting and song are acknowledged as being the culture Cornwall's built its traditions upon historians, poets, craftsmen, architects, performers on stage all add a fresh contribution whatever their background or age*



A message from Sue Glencross: ‘I am pleased to announce that the **John Hatfield art exhibition** which had been planned for this July (already postponed from July 2020), has now been re-arranged for July 2022. John felt that it had to be cancelled this year due to uncertainty. The artist lives in the North of England and the logistics of an exhibition such as this are complex enough (as well as being arranged with a surfing break in Cornwall) and if arrangements had to be cancelled at the last moment it would be costly and difficult. In addition John and his wife Claire are both National Health Service workers. Whilst it is a disappointment that it will not take place this year, I am delighted that it will happen next year – third time lucky! This means that advance publicity can be undertaken with more positivity and we can look forward to a bumper show’.

## LISKEARD UNLOCKED 2021 - main day Saturday September 11th

This year's theme (set nationally for Heritage Open Days) is food, and Liskeard's preparations are underway although how much will be in person and how much electronic must still be uncertain. There will be walks, talks, exhibitions, demonstrations, films, open buildings, and lots more.

Stuart House will again play a part. An exhibition ‘Discover Liskeard's Roof Features (remember the Doors, Windows and Date-stones of previous years?) is planned for the two weeks leading up to the main day, and the ed. also hopes to give a talk on cooking and eating at Stuart House in Tudor and Stuart Times. Some of the plants in our garden will link to the theme too.

Articles (including memories of events or times at Stuart House), information, notices and photographs for the Stuart House Newsletter to the editor, please (who must reserve the right to edit as necessary), before 25<sup>th</sup> of the month for inclusion in the next newsletter. Send to Sioux in the Office or preferably, at present, email to [rachelpbennett59@gmail.com](mailto:rachelpbennett59@gmail.com)