

# Newsletter

*December 2021  
&  
January 2022*

We wish all our Friends, volunteers and readers a Very Happy Christmas and all good wishes for 2022 and thank you so much for your continued support over these difficult months.



Preparations are still underway, but the House will again look lovely for Christmas.



**Sad news:** with deep sadness we report the death of **Dave Howard**, long-term trustee and Friend of Stuart House, see p.2.

**Good news:** we are delighted to welcome a new trustee, **Kevin George**, see p.2.

**Annual donations for Friends** Hon. Sec., Sue Glencross writes: for very many years now our suggested annual donation for Friends of Stuart House has remained at £10. Indeed, insofar as existing Friends are concerned we have no intention of increasing that amount but that is largely due to the administrative effort which would be involved, as many pay by standing order which would mean fresh Bank mandates being completed. For new Friends however, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022, the minimum suggested donation will be £15 per annum. Although this is a 50% increase it is still an extremely nominal sum in this day and age. Naturally the Trust would like to maximise its income, particularly in these very tight times, and it would make our Treasurer very happy if existing Friends saw fit to increase their donation to £15 per annum or indeed to any sum upwards of that amount!

**2022 brings a few changes** House Manager Sioux Dunster writes: as a result of the last 18 months or so, we have had to look at the way we run the House on a day to day basis and revise our opening times and prices.

**The opening days** for the time being will be Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9.30am- 3.30pm and Saturdays 9.30am – 12.30pm when there is an event taking place.

The cafe, room hire and donations from new Friends of Stuart House will all see some cost increases but will still represent very good value for money.



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

## David Howard 1941 – 2021



This photograph was taken at a South-East Cornwall Museums' Forum's Family History Day, held annually in June. Dave was the Stuart House rep. on SECMF, and I (as sec.) so valued his input and company. (ed.)

**Chairman Bob Hollingdale writes:** "Stuart House will be so much the poorer without him" - the words of a fellow Trustee when we learned of Dave's untimely death.

Dave was one of the mainstays, supporting so much of what goes on in the House. He was one of those who was always there, always the willing helper be it chair stacking, washing-up or generally clearing up. He covered Reception on a regular basis in order to give the House Manager some breathing space. He mounted heritage exhibitions himself and helped others with theirs.

His interests and knowledge were far-reaching: places visited on a foreign holiday with tales to tell, a fervent supporter of the Dante Quartet. He was an Old Cornwall Society committee member, a volunteer at the Liskerrett Centre and active member of U3A with a special concern for music and films and had a long-term association with Liskeard & District Museum.

As a Trustee he was invaluable. Having been on the Committee in 1999/2000 and subsequently becoming a Trustee he had a wealth of knowledge, measured opinions so vital in decision making and a wonderfully dry sense of humour which rose to the surface from time to

time. His support for what was best for the House was undiminished. His contribution was far more than considerable. He was a mild mannered, humble man – a gentle man, a gentleman. The Trustees will sorely miss him as will all those connected with the House.

**House Manager Sioux Dunster writes:** When in 2004 I went from co-optee on the Committee to House Manager, I was still involved with four sewing exhibition circuits and was often away for long weekends. Dave very kindly stepped up to cover them firstly, like me, temporarily. When it was confirmed that I was to take on the permanent role of House Manager, Dave stepped up again to share the Saturday morning cover, after Di Shaw stood down due to ill health. For quite a while it was the two of us working two Saturdays each and we formed, I think, a good working relationship, which was to continue.

As time went on I learned so much about Dave. His interests were varied and his knowledge of those interests extensive. I grew to look on him not just as a work colleague but as a friend, and cherished the time spent with him, and of course with Linda.

Dave was a doer! He did things as he saw them without being asked and with no desire for thanks, so maybe I did not express my appreciation as much as I should have, BUT Dave, thank you from the bottom of my heart for all you did for me personally, and in the House. You may not be here, but you will never be forgotten. My heartfelt condolences are with Linda and with Dave's family.

### Kevin George : new trustee

Hon. Sec. Sue Glencross writes: good news is scarce at the moment, so it gives me great pleasure to announce that Kevin George, a solicitor and partner with Coodes, has agreed to join our Trustees and was formally appointed at our November meeting. Kevin is no stranger to voluntary organisations, having in the past been a trustee of Citizens Advice Bureau, a Rotarian, and a governor and chair of governors of a primary school as well as a trustee of a local Multi Academy Trust.

Kevin is a Member of the Country Land and Business Association and is a Fellow of the Agricultural Law Association.

I have had the privilege of working with Kevin in the Liskeard office of Coodes over a great many years. Coodes are of course Honorary Solicitors to the Trust. Kevin is a family man who lives with his wife and two daughters near Saltash and is the ideal person to help us drive into the future with a sense of direction and professionalism.

We are all delighted that he has now joined us and welcome his expertise.



## Hon. Sec. Sue Glencross' Memories from the Minutes

### March 1999 continued ....

Eileen had someone visiting in May to show computerised designs for the rooms' name plaques. Dr Wigham expressed dismay that moneys received from the Lottery Fund had not measured up to what was expected and would be taking the matter up with Heritage Lottery. Eileen reported further on SET99. Seven rooms had been used in all and both the Mayor, Mrs Jeanne Rees, and the MP, Mr Colin Breed, who had visited, had enthused about the potential of the House. Several exhibiting organisations may well use the House again. Mr Harvey would pass on all forms, envelopes, and stamps and his diary to Painters after the forthcoming AGM. Eileen was investigating the playing of music in the House. A policy on allowing dogs into the House should be thought about. There were concerns about tables being set out in the hall which would have hindered passage during any emergency. The upstairs toilet should be used by exhibitors. A Strategic Plan was necessary now the House building etc. was just about finished, including the question of an Administrator/Caretaker.

At the AGM, which was held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 1999, a report was given on the restoration works which had been undertaken during the year – including a surface water culvert against the south wall, the installation of granite mullioned windows, vertical slate hanging to the east wall, structural repairs to the south wall, the erection of railings, repairs to floors, windows and doors and decoration throughout including the staircase and front and back doors. Small problems persisted in the toilet area and the rear lateral chimney stack. The House was in better



condition than for the past 40 or 50 years. The King's Chamber and Coved Room remained to be done. Cornwall Enterprise Trust had awarded the Trust a grant of £10,000 with the proviso it was to be spent on a specific item and the King's Chamber was thought to be the most appropriate area. Thanks were recorded to the committee and everyone who had assisted throughout the year. There were now 8 letting rooms in the House and advertising and promotional issues would now need to be addressed.



11<sup>th</sup> May was the next meeting by which time bookings were being taken for lettings by Painters. The Trust's website was now on-line and the vandalised door had been repaired.

Eileen had attended a meeting on 'Caradon Festival of Arts & Culture' which would take place 9<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1999. She had been making enquiries about an entertainment licence, but had found that at that time the Trust did not require an entertainment licence.

*The King's Room (top) and Coved Room as found when the Trust took on Stuart House. By the end of 1999, their transformation was complete, although their presentation and use has varied since.*

The Trust was to be awarded a commendation in the Cornish Buildings Group Annual Award Scheme Restoration category. Mr Pearce had submitted an entry in a similar award scheme run by the District Council. HLF had said they might be able to support the restoration and furnishing of the King's Room in respect of which the £10,000 award from Cornwall Enterprise Trust

would also be utilized. It was thought a broad range of activity should be undertaken in the House including the arts, heritage, education, music, literature and local environmental interpretation. Promotion of relevant local industry and commerce might also be included.

**to be continued ....**

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

Have I been imagining it, or have the trees this autumn really been clothed in gold for much longer than usual? In the Stuart House garden, the leaves on the wisteria and



fan trained cherry seemed to have lasted for many weeks, splashed in vivid yellow and crimson almost to the end of November. The Morello cherry is situated against the north facing library wall - on the left as one looks out from the café door. It was planted about ten years ago and took some time to get going, but now makes strident summer growth which needs to be kept under control. Morello cherry trees grow well on shaded walls and are self-fertile, producing dark crimson, rather sour fruit. There were many flower blossoms in the Spring but no fruit was

produced. Oh well, maybe the sparrows who live under the roof fascia boards got to them first.

On the subject of fruit trees, a wonderful example of garden experimentation was reported in the news recently. This concerned an Australian amateur gardener who had produced a tree bearing ten different types of fruit. Starting with a nectarine sapling grown from a seed, he'd successfully grafted on an almond, two peach cultivars, a cherry, an apricot, a peachcot (peach/apricot cross), a satsuma, a plum and two nectarine cultivars. He said that his multicultural community tree provided a message of peaceful coexistence between different species!

The white fibrous begonias in the containers and pots in the rear garden are still in flower. What excellent value they are: they need no dead heading, maintain a tidy civilised habit, and carry on from May until almost winter. Columns and cascades of this white flower with green leaf sort are regularly used to frame the doorway and steps of St Nicholas' Church in West Looe Square. They present a quite heavenly picture!

The tuberous begonias with their large yellow blooms, which when glimpsed from the front doorway of Stuart House beckon visitors to enter and explore the garden, usually finish flowering by the first week of November, though their large leaves then turn an attractive golden shade before finally falling. The tubers can be lifted and stored, but one needs to be careful to first wash them thoroughly and to look out for the little white grubs of the Vine Weevil.



These are often found in pots and enjoy feeding on roots, causing the plant to weaken and even collapse. Given the chance they will burrow into the tubers and feast all winter. Any found can be thrown out for the birds who will quickly spot them. An old gardener I once knew used to dust his begonia tubers (and dahlias) with "flowers of sulphur" powder, still available. If ordering online, be aware that this is also the name of a cultivar of Epimedium, a tough spreading perennial that grows well in shade (and which, come to think of it, would probably do well in the far corner of the Stuart House garden).



The hardy fuchsia that grows so well in the narrow bed under the café window is also still in flower - this was a cutting from a plant in my own garden which grows deeply rooted in a stone wall. I noticed recently that some of the leaves on the growing tips were distorted and bunched, a sure sign of the fuchsia gall mite insect that sucks sap and is almost invisible to the naked eye. It's a native of Brazil and was not known in Europe until 2002 when an enthusiastic fuchsia collector brought plants back (illegally) to Jersey. As the mite is so small, it spreads easily in the wind, and is now widespread in Northern France and Southern England. The only

answer is to cut off infected growth and, well I was going to say burn it, but burning garden waste is frowned upon these days as wood smoke is now known to be polluting and hazardous. Hopefully Cornwall Council's green waste composting process will deal with it.

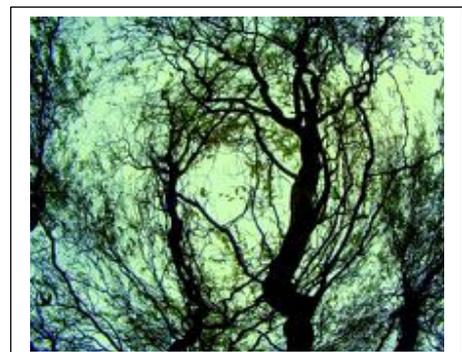
I often wonder how those who practice the ancient Jainism religion of India manage about dealing with pests that destroy crops and cause illness and disease. They hold that one should not injure, abuse or kill any living creature: even the smallest has an awareness of the universe in its own way, thus possessing a spark of divine consciousness. Well, I suppose that there has to be a middle way here. As far as dealing with garden nuisances is concerned then the first line of defence must surely be prevention, rather than reaching for insecticide sprays which often cause unseen havoc within the immensely complex ecosystem networks.

So, it's nearly the end of the year, and in the Stuart House gardens, back and front, the jobs are mainly to do with tidying up, especially weeding out the tiresome tangle of *Lamium* (deadnettle), forever determined to take over the ground underneath the roses. Fallen leaves will be gathered and spread around the shrubs. Gardening can be a very time-consuming business, and I'm always on the lookout for short cuts. I make quite a lot of compost in my own garden but never turn the heap, it all rots down eventually. Torn up packaging cardboard is excellent composting material. And the quickest and easiest crops to grow are salads – loose leaf lettuces, mustards, rockets, minuzza, leaf beet etc, - and free from chemical sprays. All that is needed are a few large boxes and a cold frame or two. Choose a shady position in summer, or a sunny place in winter: no heat needed. And for having a touch of gold and yellow in the garden all year round, just scatter around handfuls of corn marigold (*Chrysanthemum/Glebionius segetum*) and common *Calendula* (including the variety "Winter Sun" from King's Seeds) in late Spring, July and September. There'll always be some plants flowering (and self-seeding) to draw the eye and brighten up even the darkest months.



*Malcolm Mort*

*Thanks as always to Malcolm for the photographs which fit with the text, plus the three below: Mountain Ash leaf against the new garden wall, Japanese Anemone seed-heads and looking up through the Twisted Willow (with a fish-eye lens). (ed.)*



## EVENTS OVER THE PAST MONTH



**'We Remember'** ran from 3rd to 13th November and was a fascinating and thought-provoking exhibition. Jenny Chester included information about how the use of the poppy for remembrance originated and has developed. It was also good to see again the information about Frank Morcom, who lived in Stuart House and left it for the First World War but was killed in action.



### **Cornish Abstract** **Monday 8th - Saturday 13th** **November**

It was great to welcome Janine Ward and Hannah Whale into the Gallery for a week. with a wonderful mixture of original paintings and ceramics with some houseware, soap and vintage items too. They were so pleased with the result that they hired the Surgery on the ground floor for the following week, which meant that more visitors had easier access.



### **Marina Paints Art Show Sunday 14th-Saturday 20th November**

We were treated to a wonderful collection of Marina's gorgeous animal artworks along with Allys Dualli Bears and Bunnies, and Billy's landscape art. There was an auction on Sunday of artwork and quilts raising funds for the Dartmoor Ponies Charity, which raised over £500. It was great to see the Gallery so vibrantly laid out. Early warning: Marina has provisionally booked for November 2022. Watch this space for more information.

Marina is based on the Moorswater Industrial Estate. [www.marinapaints.co.uk](http://www.marinapaints.co.uk)

## EVENTS COMING IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY

### STUART HOUSE CHRISTMAS FAIR

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> November until  
Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December



There will also be a changing selection of arts and crafts from the Fair for sale in the Surgery downstairs when possible.



**Calling all Vintage Lovers!** A treasure trove of vintage and antique pieces will be available to buy for one week only at Stuart House. Tilly and Maisie's Vintage Emporium is usually a web-based shop, but they are bringing a wonderful selection to the Old Surgery. A wide variety of items to suit all tastes and pockets – after all, buying vintage is great recycling!

### WAVE ACADEMY STUDENTS' ART EXHIBITION

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January to Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> January

We look forward to the return of this annual exhibition, which is always exciting.

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### Another snippet from Brian Oldham, President of the Liskeard Old Cornwall Society who have their office in the Trecarrel Room on the top floor of Stuart House.

An enquiry was received a few weeks ago from Brian Dingwall of Truro, who has been researching his grandfather, Wilfred Bliss Spender. He told us that Wilfred stayed in Stuart House for 6 months in 1880 when he was 4 years old, while his mother and sister were visiting Paris. Wilfred's father and two older brothers had drowned 2 years earlier in Whitsand Bay. He was a guest of his uncle, Charles Bainbridge Rendle, a surgeon who had recently bought Stuart House and the 'cottage and surgery to the South side'.



The 1881 census for Stuart House lists: Charles B. Rendle (Widower, G.P., 44), Ruth L. (daughter, 11), Arthur R. (son, 9), Hugh R. (son, 7) and Charles Bliss (nephew, 9, born in Madras, India). Also living-in were a Governess, Cook, Housemaid, Under Housemaid and a Groom.

The nephew Charles Bliss was a cousin of Brian Dingwall's grandfather. We couldn't add to Brian's knowledge of his grandfather, but it was interesting to follow the career of Charles Bliss. At 19 he was a 'Military Cadet' at Sandhurst, at 29 he had become a Lieutenant in the Indian Army, and at 39 he was promoted to Major.

# Diary of Events

December 2021

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January 2022



Continuing until Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup> and resuming later	Christmas Arts, Crafts and Gift Ship in the Surgery ( <i>see p.7</i> )
Continuing until Wed. 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Christmas Fair in the Gallery
every Thursday	Craft Club: all welcome 12 noon to 3pm
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> to Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Tilly & Maisie Vintage Emporium Pop-Up Shop in the Surgery ( <i>see p.7</i> )
Tuesdays 7 <sup>th</sup> & 21 <sup>st</sup>	Liskeard Writers' Group meets 2 - 4.30pm
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup>	Fake or Fortune – antiques valuation with Richard Hamm of Bearnese, Hampton & Littlewood. 10am. to 12 noon
Monday 13 <sup>th</sup>	Liskeard Poetry Group meet 4 to 6.30pm.
Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Last day open before the House closes for the Christmas and New Year Break – reopening on Monday January 10<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Coming in January</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wave Academy Students Art Exhibition Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 13<sup>th</sup></li> <li>• Craft Club on 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup></li> <li>• Poets on Monday 10<sup>th</sup></li> <li>• Writers on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup></li> </ul>



The last rose of 2021,  
photograph by Malcolm.

*The House, Garden, Old Kitchen Café and (check first) Computer Research Facility are open*

*9.30am – 3.30pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday  
and usually until 12.30pm (Café 12 noon) on Saturdays.*

Articles, 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. Leave with Sioux in the Office or email to [rachelpbennett59@gmail.com](mailto:rachelpbennett59@gmail.com)