

Newsletter

July 2019



‘Spotlight on Herbs’: the Stuart House festival of all things herbal was a great success. The exhibitions and sales occupied three rooms, and our Old Kitchen Cafe and Garden played their part too. The lovely scents pervaded the whole House, and there was a general ‘buzz’ of appreciation and involvement, which the comments in the Visitors’ Book reflect.

We thank all those who contributed – as stewards, artists, exhibitors, gardeners, craftspeople, cooks and musicians, and especially the initiators and organisers: Friends Eileen and Jac, together with Chairman Bob.

For Eileen’s account of everything that went on, and more photographs, see pp. 2-3.

It is still ‘work in progress’, but this photograph of our Reception Hall is very different from that on the front page of last month’s Newsletter. More detail in ‘Sue’s News’ (p.3). Do call into the House and have a look.

Don’t be confused by the reflection in the mirror of the ed. taking this picture – House Manager Sioux is behind the counter!





SPOTLIGHT ON HERBS

**Key organiser Eileen Crouch writes
Summary of our two-week event.**

GALLERY

Exhibition highlights – Jac's pot pourri, herbal essences and books on “how to”; Linda's eye-catching aprons made from specially selected 'themed' fabrics; Valerie's topical bee cards were popular with visitors; Helen's “Scentsy” display wafting its perfumes from warmed wax dispensers; Alison's much admired and purchased botanical paintings and cards; two local shops

supported us with colourful herbal wellbeing displays; an extensive display of framed paintings by Alli, above the herbs on sale from Goldenbank Nurseries; Jenny's painting using spices and her art class students' entries; PLUS all our Friends' potted plants that sold like the proverbial hot cakes.

Music Thursday's music evening by Ilow Splann showed their versatility, weaving their choice of music around the herbs theme. Maggie's amusing words to the childhood song “one potato, two potatoes...etc” and Carlton's rendition of “Parsley, the Lion” song from that well-remembered childrens' programme 'The Herbs' brought us fond memories of times past.



Their Cornish songs with join-in choruses encouraged audience participation and then they finished off with two Cornish tunes: Delkiow Sevy (Strawberry Leaves) and Pencarrow, played as an evocation of a moorland morning. Following the music, refreshments with Maggie's herbie scones rounded off the evening. PROPER JOB!



JANE ROOM

The stunning herb photographs displayed by Bob and Sue, were admired and brought forth comments such as the hope that they would be a long-term feature.

SURGERY

With lovely herb-related crafts and more plants for sale visitors were offered even more choices.



GARDEN

The new planters, full of herbs, were a focus of attention, as were Malcolm's colourful potted plants, together with the plants for sale. Lots of compliments from visitors.

THE OLD KITCHEN CAFE

The enthusiasm shown by Sioux and all the cafe volunteers in providing special herb related choices (in addition to the usual menu) was brilliant. Bunches of herbs on the tables for "pinch a smell" were a nice touch.

A big THANK YOU to all !!!



RAFFLE

Thanks to those contributing raffle prizes and buying tickets – if you have not heard the results please check with Sioux who has the winning numbers and prizes.

Eileen Crouch

All photographs by the ed. The one on the left is at the Preview and Welcome Evening on the first Monday.

Hon. Sec. Sue's News

The new **reception counter** is in place. There are many conflicting views as to its look and suitability for use. I would ask visitors to bear in mind that the whole Reception Hall is being re-arranged so it is very much 'work in progress'.

We are told that **various cracks** which have appeared are only superficial. 'Tell-tales' which had been fixed show no signs at all of movement.

We are now desperate to have some more help in the House. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, if you are able to offer assistance in any way, or have specific skills which you feel can be of use – let us know. Like other voluntary organisations we cannot function properly unless we have enough people to enable the House to continue to run on a daily basis. Do you know any friend or family member who can help, or neighbours who are new to the area and keen to be involved with our community?

We are keen to **develop family involvement** and to encourage the very young on board – they are the basis of the future of the House and its volunteers. Some months ago at our meeting we suggested having a **'dressing up box'** so that children could dress up and more fully experience the period of the House. I recollect that this was initially suggested many years ago. Do any of you have spare fabric? Do you have sewing skills? Is it possible to arrange a 'sewing group' who can get together to make us some costumes? They do not need to be elaborate and need to be 'wrap around' in style, fixed with Velcro so that they can be worn over the child's clothing. Hats would be very welcome too.

Remember that Stuart House is a community asset!

July's Thoughts from our Garden's Overseer

What a pleasant surprise! The Tree Mallow, *Lavatera clementi* "Barnsley", that was sawn right to the ground in December to make way for the Christmas tree in the left-hand front border, has sprung to life with great determination. I thought we'd never see it again, as it seemed that all the growing points had been removed, but suddenly it is over 4ft high. This means we'll have a beautiful bush of pink blooms all summer long once more. This plant is described by the RHS as being a short-lived perennial. Well, hopefully it will continue for many years as it seems to like where it is: behind railings, close to a busy main road and with very little direct sun!

The damp June weather has frustrated the early efforts of the roses whose first flowers were damaged by frequent rain. Of great interest is the rose planted near the tap in the rear garden. Over the years its long arching leaders have been trained against the house wall, but these are actually the wild-type rootstock. Last year, some of the supposedly rootstock stems were trained under the café windows to see what would happen. This year they have grown prolifically (though rather thornily) and have already produced deep crimson flowers. So they're back-to-front, and this winter will need to be swapped around. Or we could just mingle them together!

Progress report on the rooted cutting of the *Rosa banksiae* "Lutea" planted next to the arch to take the place of the deceased jasmine: at the rate it's going, it will have climbed to the top by this time next year. Left to its own devices, this rambler can get to 40ft or so, and as it's thornless and evergreen it's a great subject for winding up around a large tree or training against a high wall.

Putting on a grand show in the far corner of the garden is a deep blue clematis, whilst against the wall near the shed the Potato Vine, *Solanum crispum*, has reached great heights, producing prolific quantities of blue and yellow flowers throughout June. It's a very easy and very determined climber and very helpfully it doesn't seem to mind how inexpertly you prune or trim it.



Blooming currently in the garden are Sweet Rocket, *Hesperis matronalis* (white) and Foxglove - *Digitalis*. This sort, from seed, is just called "Speckled Spires", so it might not be derived from the wild species *purpurea*, as plant breeders now often use different species (of the same genus) to create hybrids. Anyway, they're cream and very spotted, of medium height so don't get blown over, and look very



jolly. Both these plants are biennials, so seed needs to be sown each year for flowering the next. The best time to do this is now (mid-summer) in a seed tray, then pot up the seedlings or line them out in a nursery bed, transplanting them into their final flowering positions in late autumn. Use this method also for Sweet William, Wallflower and Canterbury Bells. Many easy to germinate perennials can also be treated in the same way, for example: Echinacea, Coreopsis, Teazel, Anthemis and Gaillardia, all of which give a cottage-garden effect.



The warm wet weather has made the lawn grass gallop up, of course, and in a formal garden such as ours it does need mowing regularly and the edging kept sharp to give the garden a cared for look, no matter what battles are going on in the shrubbery. The beds around the lawn are festooned with geraniums, the hardy cranesbill sort. This is another of those plants that seeds itself into other areas without asking permission and starts smothering plants not able to stand up for themselves. However, they reliably

produce masses of calm-coloured flowers and on a sunny day recently there were bees galore wanting nothing other than cranesbill nectar! This year too, for the first time, the related wild-growing herb-Robert, *Geranium robertianum*, has made a quite daring appearance in the garden, suddenly covering the area behind the plant stand and the bed under the café window.

These days we are advised to be more aware of the needs of wildlife. Recent sobering research has shown that some 40% of all insect species are in decline as well as up to half of plant species. This is serious, one commentator comparing the situation to hacking away at the mortar between the bricks of one's house: a little lost has no effect, but a critical stage is finally reached. I've seen gardens this summer where the grass has been left unmowed and masses of flowers have quickly appeared to attract insects. Indeed, if we were to do this at Stuart House the lawn would indeed be festooned with flowers as the sward is full of non-grass plants. If you are tempted to do this, then maybe it's best to let your neighbours know first just in case they object to "weed" seeds blowing all over the place (which they do in any case) and lowering the tone of the area. Plants left to seed display a fearless ability to start to colonise every little nook and cranny. For which we should be truly grateful!

Malcolm Mort (*who took all the beautiful photographs. ed.*)

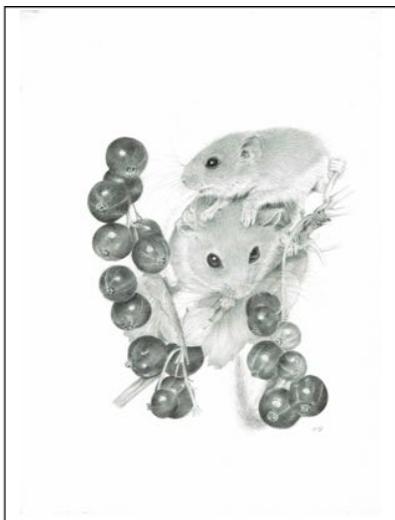


STUART HOUSE GARDEN CLUB

next meets

Monday July 22nd 11.30am to 1.30 pm

New members welcome – please contact Val
Moore on 01579 228518



ARTIST of the MONTH in the
Surgery for July is **Chrissie Rivers**.
There will be finely detailed drawings in
pastel and pencil, and prints too. These are
dormice on a redcurrant bush.

STUART HOUSE EVENTS IN THE PAST MONTH

In addition to 'Spotlight on Herbs' (see pp. 2-3), there has been plenty more activity in June



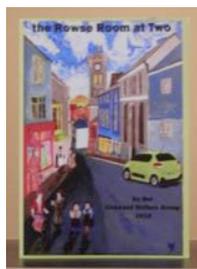
The North Hill Art Group

held another lovely and very successful exhibition in the Max Lock Gallery during the first week of June. There was a wide range of art and craft work from different members, some for sale, some 'just' to appreciate. More members are very welcome, and workshops and demonstrations take place too. Here, artist Brenda Ferris and John Ferris steward. We look forward to their next Annual Exhibition.

The fourth Grand Family History and Heritage Day

, organized by the South East Cornwall Museums' Forum (of which Stuart House is an active member) took place in the Public Hall on June 15th. Trustees Dave and Rachel ran our stall, which attracted a lot of interest. The 19th century Cornish Times on our computer (usually available in the Rowse Room) is always fascinating for stewards and visitors alike!

Here, Liskeard's Mayor, Rachel Brooks, who opened the event, visits us -after she'd removed her chain of office for comfort!



The Liskeard Writers' Group, who meet twice monthly in the Rowse Room on the top floor of Stuart House, have produced an excellent book 'The Rowse Room at Two'. For sale in the House, £7.99.

STUART HOUSE CONCERT SERIES

June's Concert, by **Jazz Tapas**
is on

Sunday June 30th at 2.30 pm.

The review will be in August's Newsletter – and you might get this in time to be a reminder to come to their concert!
(Our Series resumes in September)



EVENTS COMING IN JULY

ART IN CORNWALL
EXHIBITION



beautiful local art exhibition by mid cornwall based artists

stuart house, barras street
liskeard

8th July to 13th July 2019

free entry

Alan Kingwell makes a welcome return to the Gallery from 24th July to 10th August. He will again give demonstrations on a work in progress and Mags and Amber join him.

**Valerie Moore
and Friends**

ART EXHIBITION

15th to 20th July

no details at the time of going to press, but we look forward to this. You may know Val's work from sales in the House, including at the recent 'Spotlight on Herbs'.

We welcome **Rose Gibbon and Jude Kellaway**, who have both exhibited in Stuart House before, to the Max Lock Gallery from 8th to 13th July.

*An Exhibition of
Landscapes & Seascapes
in Oils by
Alan Kingwell*

with silk paintings and craft by Mags and Amber.



At Stuart House, Liskeard

29th July until 10th August 2019

www.alankingwellworkshopsandtutorials.co.uk
www.alankingwell.co.uk
Email: alan.kingwell@googlemail.com

**ARTS AND CRAFTS
SHOP
IN THE
SURGERY**

22nd July to 31st August

Diary of Events

July 2019



all July	Chrissie Rivers is the Artist of the Month in the Surgery (see p.5)
Tuesdays 2 nd , 16 th	Liskeard Writers' Group meet 2 – 4.30 pm. (see p.6)
Monday 8 th to Saturday 13 th	Rose Gibbon and Jude Kellaway Art Exhibition (see p.7)
every Thursday	Craft Club: all welcome 12 noon to 3pm.
Monday 8 th	Liskeard Poetry Group meet 4 to 6.30pm.
Monday 15 th Saturday 20 th	Valerie Moore and Friends Art Exhibition (see p.7)
Friday 19 th	Fake or Fortune – antiques valuation with Richard Hamm of Bearnas, Hampton & Littlewood. 10am. to 12 noon
Monday 22 nd and through August	Arts and Crafts Shop in the ground floor Surgery
Monday 22 nd	Gardening Club 11.30am. to 1.30pm (see p.5)
Monday 29 th to August 10 th	Alan Kingwell Art Exhibition, with silk painting and crafts by Mags and Amber (see p.7)
Events coming in August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alan Kingwell Landscapes and Seascapes (continues until 10th) • 'Summer in Cornwall' Arts and Crafts exhibition and sales (12th – 31st)

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

9.30am – 3.30pm 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.

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