

Newsletter

October 2021

The Welcome Back Party for Friends on 12th September

Some thirty Friends of Stuart House and their guests joined for the Welcome Back party, held in Stuart House Garden, with kind weather. There was entertainment with a difference – gin tasting by G&Tea.



Chairman Bob's punches were also much appreciated. There was time to talk with Friends old and new, and to admire the beauty of the September garden, which Malcom and Jeff have continued to maintain beautifully, even when no-one else saw it.



New Venture in the Coved Room

The Coved Room has undergone a transformation from the studio of artist-in-residence Linda Maynard, where happy and successful art classes were run until the pandemic and Linda's need to move on. It is now the base for the **Coved Room Stitchery**, run by our Friend Gaby Johns. We look forward to it flourishing and bringing new people into the House, further developing Stuart House as an arts centre. Read more on p.2.



Leaflet Sponsored by Coodes
Honorary Solicitors to Stuart House Trust

House Opening Hours from House Manager Sioux

We are sticking to opening hours of Monday to Thursday 09.30am - 3.30pm for the moment with two Saturdays a month open to fit in with gallery events. The cafe is keeping with coffee and cake for the moment but I hope to slowly reintroduce items, starting with our home-made soups two days a week in October. Watch this space for any development!

Editor's note:

At present, I am not able to come into the House and take photographs of events etc. I am very much an editor, rather than a reporter!

I thank those exhibitors and others who send details of events and photographs, and welcome input from all Friends.

Contact details, as always, on the back page.

Rachel

Enid Lynch

On Wednesday 15th September we hosted a Farewell morning tea to Enid Lynch, a well known local lady with connections to lots of different groups within the area. Her funeral had been a family affair, but many of her friends wanted the chance to celebrate her life, so elected to come and take advantage of our glorious garden. The weather did not disappoint and just under 40 people came for tea/coffee and biscuits and a good old chat about the lady and her life. It was lovely to see the garden full of people, both users of the House and "new faces". We had lots of heart-warming comments on the building and facilities with several people returning for a proper look round the following week.

Sioux Dunster

The Coved Room Stitchery

Informal and relaxed sewing lessons.

Sewing Commissions

Introductory Offer

£10 per 2 hour lesson.

Book and pay for 5 or more lessons

£8 per 2 hour lesson.

Contact Gaby

Mobile 07502606080

Email: gabyjohn67@gmail.com

Drop in for a chat, help and advice.

Background: Machine Embroidery Design from www.designstitch.com

The Coved Room Stitchery

(continued from p.1)

Another photograph of the room in its new existence, with the details of Gaby's courses.

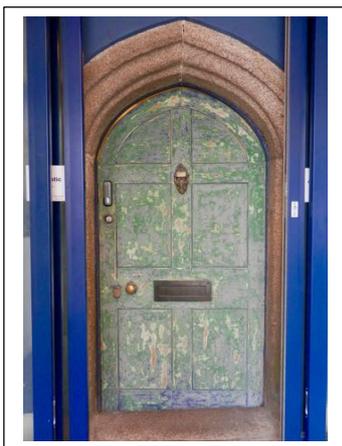


Hon. Sec Sue Glencross' Memories from the Minutes continued

By the following meeting on 9th December 1998 decoration of the stairs had been completed save for the treads, which would be done to coincide with the carpeting. A missing bannister had been found and replaced by George Vaughan-Ellis. The Tudor Room was finished and the Trussed Room was in hand. The Old Kitchen and Surgery, however, needed redecoration and Peter Andrew and the Architect were to have a discussion about treatment for the condition of the walls. [The situation concerning the walls has never been resolved and the Trustees are resigned to the fact that frequent re-painting is necessary].



The front door has been on a long journey before arriving at today's incarnation – and it had been on an even longer journey before 1998 too, which the old paint layers indicate something of.



Barbara Harvey was thanked for her work in preparing the front door for painting and there was some discussion about the colour. David would arrange for colour samples to be available to facilitate the decision. There was also discussion regarding the generally uninviting appearance of the porch.

The large equestrian painting would be hung on the stairs at the foot of the fourth flight, on the second landing, and the other would be hung at the left-hand end of the corridor on the first floor. Commercial services would be engaged to clean the House for 2 ½ hours each week at a cost of £16 to start just before Easter 1999. The Treasurer felt that the £400 quoted to clean and varnish the floors of the Cross Passage, Max Lock Gallery, and rooms above, could be afforded. However, the work would require closing the House for 12 days which might pose some difficulty. The suitability of this solution, as opposed to polishing or lacquering the floors was discussed.

It was proposed to make and hang at least 100 banners in the centre of Liskeard during the Celtic Art exhibition, possibly using the Christmas tree mountings, and also the insides of public buildings such as banks. It was hoped that many areas of the community would participate in banner-making workshops, which would be undertaken in two phases – the first to coincide with the Liskeard Country Fair and the eclipse 1999 and the second during Easter 2000. Eileen was awaiting detailed costings for the workshops and materials from Sue Field, and a synopsis would be sent to Leader 2 for funding and the results should be forthcoming by March 1999. Eileen would get quotes for a brochure, send publicity to the Western Morning News, and report back when she had heard from Leader 2. It was noted that the year 2000 would be The Year of the Artist.

The committee considered the draft of a future prospectus and members would respond individually to Tony Wood. A sub-committee would be set up to explore the options in relation to furniture and sophisticated equipment and its future maintenance, security, and caretaking. It was felt that no more than 2-3 rooms, including the Gallery, needed blacking out; a desk and filing cabinets would be useful but enough tables had been purchased; a fitted display cabinet would be suitable for the Hall but not the Gallery; and the darkroom was put on the back burner for a while. Jenny Martin expressed concern over control of the central heating and the continued use of the electric fires and the resulting cost to the Trust.

to be continued

October's Thoughts from our Garden's Overseer

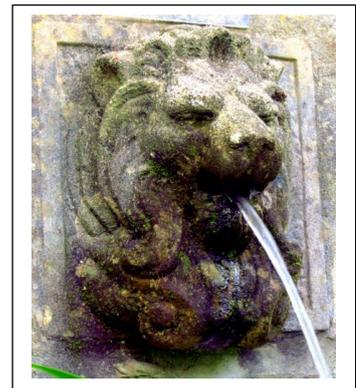
All that work during 2020's lockdown to dig out the mass of congested iris roots in the central fountain in the Stuart House garden and to replace the pump wiring is paying off. The water is flowing reliably, and the new plants have adjusted to their surroundings, clearing the water as they grow. A few more floating lilies have been promised by a reader and these will be very welcome, although apparently they prefer still water to being in a fountain pond. Mmm, we'll see. A long-standing problem of our fountain is that water is thrown too high from the central spout so a good deal is splashed out onto the surrounding path, which necessitates tedious



topping up of the pond, especially on sunny days. To help cure this, the hose connection taking water upwards from the pump has been clamped over a little to restrict the flow. It's instructive to watch birds making use of the top water bowl. The pigeons line up high on the library roof waiting to come down to drink but wary if there are too many people about. The collared dove pairs are braver, though they much prefer to drink when the fountain is still, not liking to get their feathers wet. Blackbirds, too, fly from one bay bush to another, only approaching the bowl when the water is stilled when they will immediately jump right in and fluff out their feathers, much preferring a bath to a shower. And it's informative and amusing

to see who wins the argument when they compete for the limited space. I am indebted to a visitor to the garden, Andie Hunter, who recently captured a white dove landing on the water bowl. A wonderful phone photo!

The fountain pond therefore serves several purposes: birds are attracted, and the sound of running water shuts out the noise of the town traffic (already quietened by the seclusion of the garden) almost entirely. Also, there is something about gently, sparkling, running water (in the right place!) that is soothing and relaxing: one of those innate reflexes again, I'm sure. Garden history books tell us that fountains and water features have been constructed from time immemorial for the purposes of washing, irrigation, keeping fish, bathing, and for pleasure: water was jetted into the air using pressure from a hilly (sometimes distant) water source. Paradise gardens containing ornamental water designs were created by the Ancient Persians to imitate Heaven, and Persian carpets, apparently, are based on the complex designs of their gardens – what a nightmare they must have been to weed. Ancient Roman fountains of 6 BC are known to have featured bronze and stone masks of animals and mythological heroes spouting water, a rather curious tradition which has continued throughout the ages. Even the Stuart House wall pond features a lion head, a gift from Wendy Lindesay as a memorial to her mother. During the Renaissance, intricate mechanics and imaginative art were combined to create vast and stunning fountain displays, for example, those at Versailles Palace in Paris, the Trevi fountain in Rome, and the Samson Fountain at Peterhof Palace in St Petersburg. For those readers who have not visited them, armchair travelling on the internet will reveal all!



Novelty and changing fashions are an intricate part of human nature, and so gardeners of Mediaeval times, as well as being intrigued by the latest trends in fountains, topiary and knot gardens, avidly welcomed the collections of new plants being brought back aplenty from far and wide by global explorers. Dahlias, now much lauded again, were discovered in Mexico and were an immediate success when they appeared in Europe in the 1700's. Three species were introduced, and it was quickly found that they readily interbreed and hybridize: all the colours, shapes and forms we now have come from these. Dahlias were named after a Swedish botanist Andreas Dahl, and there are now tens of thousands of cultivars listed.



Two years ago I brought some plants of a beautiful yellow sort from my garden to grow at Stuart House. Those I placed in pots were soon massacred by snails (molluscs love dahlias), but the one in the lawn border close to the wall pond is left alone and grows well. Although the leaves are killed by the first frost, the roots of this cultivar easily survive our winter weather when left in the ground. I've included a photograph of one of the blooms: the camera was focused on the flower and a telephoto setting chosen to blur the shady background: this technique always works to produce a studio-looking shot.

As previously mentioned, newspaper garden journalists are very fond of the "Every garden should have one more...." sort of article. A recent one concerned Japanese anemones. Brought back from a far flung Eastern places in the 1800's, they have now taken to growing nearly everywhere in the world, including at Stuart House, providing welcome colour from August to October. The variety we have is called "Pamina", which grows less tall (60 – 80 cm) than the usual sorts. Japanese anemones are very drought resistant, they hold their own against competition, and slugs and snails stay well away. But beware, they can be very invasive: their roots go down a long way and the plant will regenerate from a broken piece, they also spread sideways, and the tiny seeds densely covering the surfaces of those fluffy seed heads will quickly cause plants to appear all over the garden, so it's best to cut them off as soon as they appear.

Topical tip: the first week of October is an ideal time to sow sweet pea seeds in pots in the greenhouse or coldframe. Salad crops, too, can be sown under a cloche or in greenhouse after clearing away tomatoes. Leaf beet, winter lettuce, rocket, mustard, and minuzza seed will all germinate quickly and provide leaves through until next Spring. No heat needed!

Malcolm Mort



STUART HOUSE GARDEN CLUB

- Organiser Val Moore intends to have at least one Meeting before Christmas, so watch this space or enquire in the House.
- Val also thanks all those who provided cuttings for sale at the time of her recent Art and Craft exhibition, especially Eileen.

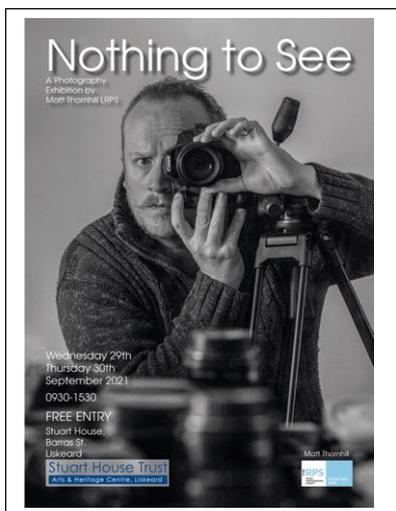
EVENTS IN THE PAST MONTH

THE KINGWELL FAMILY EXHIBITION



This ran from 23rd August to 4th September was well attended and had a great range of art and craft for sale and to admire. Alan has since held an exhibition at the Kaya Gallery in Plymouth which was also very successful. He writes that the “Stuart House exhibition is always so nice as it is our own family show where we can sell all our various art and crafts that we make all winter”. The family – Alan, Mags and Amber – are frequent visitors to the House and can be contacted via Reception. *(Thanks to Alan for the photos. ed.)*

VALERIE AND FRIENDS – This exhibition of oil paintings, stained glass, honey, watercolours, pastels, pencil drawings and photographs ran from 20th to 24th September. Val would like to thank everyone who helped, especially House Manager Sioux. *(Thanks to Val's daughter Laura for the photos. ed.)*



NOTHING TO SEE : 29th and 30th September – you may still just be in time to catch it!

We are pleased to welcome Matt Thornhill back to the House, this time for a two day exhibition called ‘Nothing to See.’ He writes: “the purpose of the 2 day exhibition is to say thank you to my sitters and friends who helped me through the process of achieving my Licentiate with the Royal Photographic Society hopefully provide inspiration to other photographers. By showcasing the photographs that were assessed by the RPS, plus some additional ones that I considered for presentation but didn't make the final cut, it will be a 2 day exhibition of some of my finest work to date”.

EVENTS COMING IN OCTOBER

'OUR WEDDING'

An exhibition of all things wedding, compiled by Friends of Stuart House

Monday 27th September to Thursday 7th October

TO BE CONFIRMED – please check with Sioux in the House

THE WAVE ACADEMY

will exhibit again in the Max Lock Gallery.

date t.b.c.

either
October 18th to 21st
or
November 1st to 4th

LISKEARD CAMERA CLUB



STUART HOUSE EXHIBITION



MON 25 – SAT 30 OCTOBER 2021

MON-FRI 1000-1500 AND SAT 1000-1200



SEE YOU THERE

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

Mayors and a Dung Pond

In 1782 a Joseph Fitze was Mayor of Liskeard but died during his term of office, his will was proven in 1783 and is held at Kresen Kernow in Redruth. During his term Fitze had laid out £19.10s for the entertainment of sailors passing through the Borough.

Another of Joseph's sons, James Fitze, was Mayor of Liskeard in 1787, 1793 and 1796. Also held at Kresen Kernow is a 99 year lease date 17th November 1745 signed by James for the 'tan-house, stable, water pool, lime pools and orchard' at Pondbridge Hill, Liskeard. His deposit was £31 10s and the yearly rent of 1s was payable to Nicholas Connock Esquire, of Treworgey Manor.

The Fitze properties in Liskeard were sold in November 1929 at an Auction in the Kings Arms, Tavern Hill (the site now occupied by Liskeard & District Museum). As well as properties in Well Lane, Pondbridge Hill, New Road and Bovey Lane, there was

a 'large and commodious dwelling house containing 2 parlours, kitchen, pantry, back kitchen and dairy on the ground floor, large dining room and 3 bedrooms on the second floor, and 4 bedrooms on the upper floor, together with a large courtlage, office, stable, drying loft, piggery and a valuable dung pond, situated in Church Street and extending backwards to Well Lane'.

(Stuart House had been home to several mayors in the first half of the eighteenth century. ed.)



Diary of Events

October 2021



Continuing to Thursday Oct 7 th (t.b.c.)	'Our Wedding' - an exhibition of all things wedding – compiled from the Friends of Stuart House (see p.3)
Monday 4 th	Fake or Fortune – antiques valuation with Richard Hamm of Bearnese, Hampton & Littlewood. 10am. to 12 noon
Tuesdays 5 th & 19 th	Writers' Group 2 - 4.30pm
Every Thursday	Craft Club: all welcome 12 noon to 3pm.
Monday 11 th	Liskeard Poetry Group meet 4pm to 6.30pm.
Monday 18 th to Thursday 21 st (t.b.c.)	Wave Academy Students' Work Exhibition
Monday 25 th to Saturday 30 th	Liskeard Camera Club Exhibition (see p.7)
Coming in November	<p>Mon. 1st – Fake or Fortune Mon 1st – Thurs 4th – Wave Academy (if not in October) Mon 8th – Sat 13th – Hannah Whale - Cornish Abstract Art Sun 14th – Fri 19th – Art Exhibition by Marina Higgs Mon 29th – start of the Christmas Fair!</p> 

In the current circumstances, the House, Garden and Old Kitchen Café are open 9.30am – 3.30pm Monday to Thursday. There may be longer opening hours to coincide with particular exhibitions and events. Please check.

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