

# Newsletter

*July 2023*



The Duchess of Cornwall roses through the front railings in June – always a joy (see p.4)

The Stuart House display at the Grand Family History Day in June (see p.2)



## EVENTS LAST MONTH



### **Ilow Splann concert on Sunday afternoon, June 4<sup>th</sup>.**

Duo Carlton Crouch and Maggie Wilmott played recorders, spinet, violin and guitar, with some of the tunes being written by Carlton and others being from books of Elizabethan dances and the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book. The concert began with two simple 13<sup>th</sup> Century dances, separated by a more sophisticated 16<sup>th</sup> century one. Helpful programme notes and Carlton's introductions helped us to listen out for sound patterns. It was a joy: lively, contemplative, evocative and more – and the tea afterwards was appreciated too. (*ed.*)

Ilow Splann are on Facebook, on [www.ilowsplann.co.uk](http://www.ilowsplann.co.uk), and Carlton's Music on Youtube



The Coronation Exhibitions continued for longer than originally intended in the Gallery as couple of later exhibitions which had been booked in had to cancel. Comments in the Visitors' Book and some generous donations too showed that this was welcomed.



The South East Cornwall Museums Forum (of which Stuart House is an active member) ran its 6<sup>th</sup> 'Family and Local History Day' on June 17<sup>th</sup>, in Liskeard's Public Hall. Our table (*see p.1*) was at the back on the left in this photograph. There was considerable interest including, as always, from a few locals who had never actually called in. It was a good opportunity not only to liaise with other museums and Heritage Centres, but also to enthuse about the House and its permanent displays on the top floor.



The Surgery was used in June for a **Sewing Stash Sale**, with a range of craft materials and other things for sale. The Surgery is usually used as a ground-floor craft shop, and occasionally for special sales and exhibitions. Here, steward and volunteer Norma welcomes a young visitor!

## EVENTS IN JULY

continuing to July 15<sup>th</sup>

### SUMMER ARTS & CRAFTS SALE

in the Max Lock Gallery

Another of the art and craft sales featuring the work of local crafters, organised by House Manger Sioux with Gaby Johns of the Coved Room Stitchery on the top floor – themselves both talented craftspeople.

July 17<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>

### LISKEARD ADULT EDUCATION ARTS AND CRAFTS

in the Gallery and the Jane Room

This promises to be an exhibition of quality crafting with some very original ideas and an insight into the preparatory process.

From July 24<sup>th</sup>  
in the Max Lock Gallery

### HERBS REVISITED

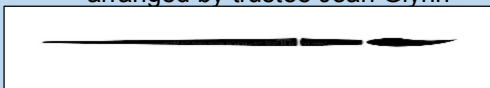
An exhibition in the Gallery focussing on the wonderful range of herbs by our Chairman, Bob Hollingdale



### UP and COMING LOCAL ARTISTS' EXHIBITION

from 24<sup>th</sup> July in the Jane Room

an exhibition of the artwork of exciting new young artists  
arranged by trustee Jean Glynn



### FAKE or FORTUNE?

notice that Richard Hamm of Bearnese, Hampton & Littlewood is making an afternoon visit this month on

**Monday 10<sup>th</sup> July**

for his antiques valuation session. Why not bring something along?



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



The Stuart House garden roses this June have looked quite magnificent, both in the back and the front gardens. Several times I've seen passers-by stopping to sniff the Duchess of Cornwall roses through the front railings (see p.1. *The photograph left is*



*of the Birthday Girl roses in the back garden*). I was asked by a recent visitor what plant food we give them. The answer is nothing except for the fallen leaves from the twisted willow and magnolia which, in the autumn, are raked up and spread under the bushes. The soil in the rear garden is deep, rich, and stays quite moist. That at the front is quite the opposite: shallow, poor and dries out quickly, therefore in warm dry weather (most of May and June this year) the occasional bucket of water is given.

Gardeners have recently been asked not to mow lawns so often and to find space for weeds. Now we are advised to avoid digging. Digging ruins soil structure we are told, and disturbs vital fungal webs and microbial balances. Digging upsets worms and the plethora of (mostly beneficial) little creatures that burrow and scurry underground. At Stuart House we never dig anywhere, except when planting. We replicate nature by spreading as much green "waste" as possible under the trees and shrubs. Grass cuttings are left where they fall - they usually disappear in a few days. As previously mentioned, problems arise with bindweed and the roots of other silently spreading garden horrors. Dig them and they'll break, only to spring up with renewed abundance, so it's an ongoing, unwinnable battle with these. In general, the only place I can see the no-dig approach working is if one already has a weed-free plot; then the recommend 75mm/3" layer of compost can be spread on top. However, where to get all that compost from is another matter.

At Stuart House, we don't have a compost heap – there's nowhere to put it, and it is quite an effort to look after one in any case. To work properly, a heap should heat up quickly to break down the material and kill weed seeds. This means they need to be quite large to retain heat, and should be turned once or twice; tiresome work indeed. In my own garden, I have a compost heap in summer; turning it out in the autumn and covering it with tarpaulin for it to carry on breaking down. In the Spring I spread it on the garden or add to a potting mix. In winter I make compost in situ by digging (yes digging, sorry) trenches in the raised vegetable beds a spade deep and wide and burying leafy kitchen waste and shredded cardboard (nothing that rats would fancy). This material is mostly rotted down by late Spring. The crops like it, especially runner beans and peas.

Mediaeval gardeners maintained garden fertility by spreading animal manure, and made "hot beds" using horse manure for raising early spring crops. Deeper digging and ploughing probably did not happen until the Industrial Revolution when tough steel tools became plentiful. It's difficult to find out what cultivation methods were used prior to that time. Research tells us *what*, not *how*, plants were grown. Monastery gardens were productive, therefore tried and tested methods were used. Does anyone know what these were?



Recently, on a sunny day, I left a bucket of water in the garden. When I returned to it a few hours later I was amazed to see floating on the surface a large number of little creatures (probably aphids), together with a plethora of small-feathered seeds, all brought on the breeze. How invisibly and boldly they spread into vegetable beds and flower borders. Just before writing this, I read that in the Scottish Highlands, trees (rowan, goat willow, spruce) have begun to re-establish themselves, even on the highest peaks, when livestock and deer are restricted. No need to plant saplings or scatter seeds – they just come. Nature is reassuringly determined! *Malcolm Mort*

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**Another snippet from Brian Oldham, President of Liskeard's Old Cornwall Society who have their base in the Trecarrel Room on the top floor of Stuart House, open to the public on Tuesdays.**



### Oak Apple Day

On May 29<sup>th</sup> this year the Liskeard OCS banner was once again on parade for Oak Apple Day in St Neot. The date of this centuries-old event was chosen to mark the Restoration of King Charles II to the English throne in 1660 and was initially declared a Public Holiday. The lowering of the previous year's oak bough from the top of the Church tower to ground level and the raising of a fresh replacement for it is also significant. At

the Battle of Worcester, the last of the English Civil War, in 1651, Charles was able to avoid capture by the victorious Parliamentary army by concealing himself in a leafy oak tree.

In the 1662/63 accounts of the Mayor of Liskeard, an entry for May 29<sup>th</sup> is 'our rejoicing day for the King, spent at the bonfire and tavern 4s 8d. drinks for soldiers 5s. and to the drum-major 2s 6d'. In 1663 the Mayor and Corporation passed the following resolution, 'the capital burgesses shall, on the feasts of Christmas, Easter, Whitsunday and on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May, before the morning service, forever hereafter wait on the Mayor in their gowns, in decent manner, and from thence to the church. Defaulters will be fined'.



*Loveday, the widow of Joseph Jane who had entertained Charles I in Stuart House during the Civil War, returned to Liskeard with her children after the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 but died that year. The family seems to have regained some property including Stuart House, her son Thomas Jane esquire was buried in Liskeard in 1663. (ed.)*



## More Memories from the Minutes by Hon. Sec. Sue Glencross

Continued .....The next meeting was held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2002 and Treasurer Kate Theophilus had been investigating the Charity Commission's Rules on Accounting. It was necessary in future to make a decision as to what House Stewards should pay out of petty cash and to keep a separate account of income coming in for the House. A new petty cash float would be provided with a separate record book. The House Stewards should be given guidance as to what constitutes petty cash items. Kate's recommendations were that sundry items for the coffee room; odd stationery and stamps should be paid out of petty cash with committee



*The kitchen is very different now from 21 years ago and is open to everyone when the House is. House-manager Sioux co-ordinates the team of volunteers (more would be welcome) and makes cakes and soup. The café does provide essential income for the Trust.*

members' expenses and, for example, window cleaner's charges, should be addressed to the Treasurer and not the House Stewards. Any income received (for example from concerts) should be paid into the bank gross with performers being paid by cheque. Kate recommended that tickets for events should be sold in advance of events. She also recommended a Business Plan be prepared. *(We started working on a new business plan immediately pre-Covid but much of the content is not now applicable and this needs to be re-addressed – at the moment we are still trying to maintain the status quo which existed pre-Covid, and trying to achieve it with the added complication of rising costs).*

On 14<sup>th</sup> June we had a visitation from the Environmental Health Officer. The uses to which the kitchen had been put in the past were explained to him – ie. supper clubs, afternoon teas, Saturday coffee mornings, and other random events. We wanted to use the kitchen to provide more income for the Trust, but in nothing like a commercial manner. Maybe a soup kitchen in winter and ploughman's lunches in summer. We had to register and the application was made. The EHO made certain recommendations which were subsequently carried out. It was mildly amusing to him to note that the Vent Axia had been set to blow inwards instead of outwards.

to be continued.....

**The café , garden and House are much appreciated by visitors, as the Visitors' Book in the cross-passage outside the Reception Hall shows. In June, visitors came from a wide area with eight from Australia, and comments included:**

- Great place, staff are wonderful.
- Best cream tea I've had!! Wonderful place, thank you
- Beautiful, thank you.
- Lovely.
- Beautiful garden.
- A great exhibition and good food too. I will be back.
- Lovely. Interesting display.
- Beautiful garden. Loved the sewing room.
- Lovely staff. Beautiful place.
- Very nice (old fashioned).
- Very nicely served, presentation lovely, cake and tea delicious
- Wonderful hidden gem. Cake absolutely gorgeous, deff. worth the visit!
- Lovely spot with lovely cakes!!
- What a little gem.
- Loved watching the birds.

# Diary of Events

## July 2023



Continuing to July 15 <sup>th</sup>	Art and Craft summer sale in the Max Lock Gallery ( <i>see p.3</i> )
Tuesdays 4 <sup>th</sup> & 18 <sup>th</sup>	Liskeard Writers' Group meet 2 – 4.30 pm
every Thursday	Craft Club: all welcome 12 noon to 3pm
Monday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Fake or Fortune – antiques valuation with Richard Hamm of Bearnese, Hampton & Littlewood. 1.30pm to 3.30pm (note the afternoon time)
Monday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Liskeard Poetry Group meet 4pm to 6.30pm
Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> to Saturday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Adult Education Arts and Crafts in the Gallery and the Jane Room
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> into August	Herbs Revisited – exhibition and more ( <i>see p.3</i> )
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> onwards	Young Artists' Exhibition in the Jane Room ( <i>see p.3</i> )
<b>Coming in August</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Herbs Exhibition continues</li> <li>• we hope for other exhibitions to be confirmed.</li> </ul>

*The House, Garden, Old Kitchen Café and (check first) Computer Research Facility are open*  
*9.30am – 3.30pm on Monday Tuesday, Thursday and Friday*  
*9.30am – 12.30pm on Saturday when possible*  
*(occasional Wednesdays if there is a special exhibition on)*

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)