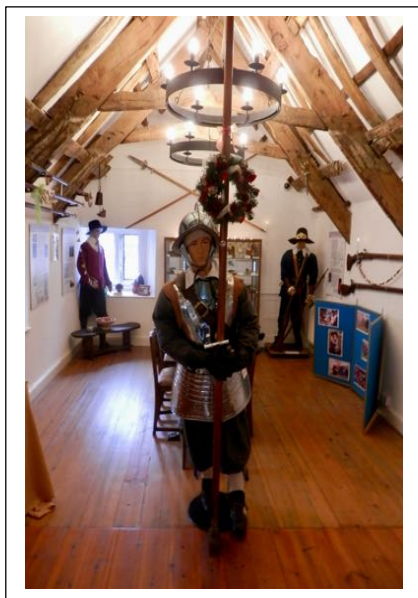


# Newsletter

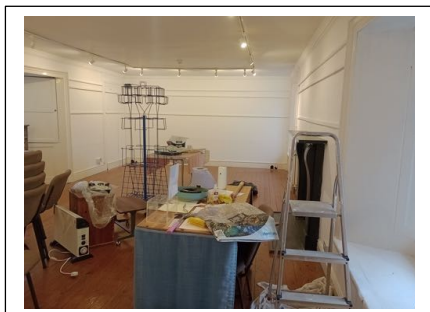
February 2023



*A festive pikeman, one of the beautifully made 'Twelve Days of Christmas' panels throughout the House, and the knitted crib in Reception. See also p.3.*

**The Trustees wish to record their thanks** and admiration to in-house representatives Sioux and Gaby and crafters Jackie Jenkins, Mags Kingwell and Lily Robins for their creativity in decorating the House for Christmas. A sight to behold and so imaginatively and professionally carried out. Each year it does not seem possible to improve on what has been undertaken in previous years but clearly it is!

**Get-Together postponed until the Spring.** In the last Newsletter of 2022, it had been hoped that a Friends get-together could be arranged for January. In view of the various infectious diseases which are still 'doing the rounds' and considering the dreadful weather conditions of late, it has been decided to postpone that event for the time being. We do want to make it an event which is well attended and we feel that a get-together in Spring would be more worthwhile than at this time of the year.



Maintenance work and decoration has been carried out during the Christmas close-down. The kitchen plaster has been tackled (yet again). Sioux and Gaby have painted some rooms including the Gallery and we all extend our thanks to them for that

*See also pp. 2 and 3. (ed.)*



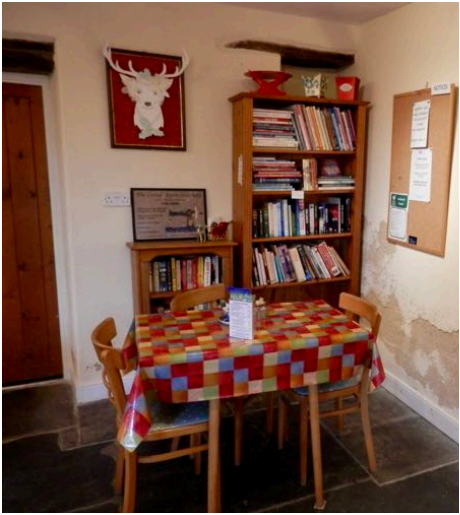
**Leaflet Sponsored by Coodes**  
Honorary Solicitors to Stuart House Trust

## UPDATE from House-Manager SIOUX

### recent events – plans – Friends' donations – volunteers needed

Happy New Year everyone. I hope you all had a Happy Christmas and all that it entailed.

On Saturday 3rd December we played host to "The Cornish Christmas Trail" with maps being handed out from Reception taking participants around the town on a trail with stamps being collected and Cornish words being learnt at each point, followed by a Cakey tea at the Public Hall. It was great to see the House so full of visitors, many of them for the first time, with some coming back for a good look around and visiting both the Christmas Fair and Shop.



During our closedown this year we managed to get several jobs done. The plaster in the cafe was redone and painted, giving a lovely fresh look.



Gaby and I have repainted the Gallery. Over the course of a year the walls take a bit of a bashing, with knocks and bits of blu-tac and sellotape etc., so it too is clean and bright now (see pp.1&3). We are going to be very firm from this point on and there is to be NO use of the said items!

Several floorboards were replaced. We had a general sort-out of rooms and contents, which hopefully gives a 'spring clean' air.

It was lovely to open the doors to the public again on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January and we have really enjoyed seeing our regulars returning.

Our regular events started up again in January. The Writers' group began their 2023 meetings in the Rowse Room on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup>. 'Fake or Fortune?' was in for their first visit of the year on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup>, and Richard Hamm has booked 21<sup>st</sup> February for his next valuation day.

Our Crafters are back in action in the Rowse Room on Thursday afternoons.

We are putting together a craft programme for the year: Craft Fairs and the Arts, Craft and Gift Shop in the Surgery. Watch this space for more details.

A big thank you to those who have popped in to pay the subscription/donation. This is one of our main sources of income and is vital to the upkeep of the House.

Our volunteers are also crucial to our day to day running. For various reasons we have lost a couple of our regular Cafe volunteers and we desperately need to replace these slots, the main times being Monday and Friday afternoons. PLEASE, if you feel able to assist with serving tea, coffee, and cake come into Reception and have a chat with me. (*Or to the café, which Sioux might be needing to cover herself. ed.*) If you know someone who has time to spare and would enjoy helping us, please do send them our way.

I look forward to seeing you all over the coming weeks.



## EVENTS in DECEMBER and JANUARY

### Christmas Sale in the Gallery

This continued until the House closed and was tremendously successful, with its range of beautiful and very original arts and crafts for sale. Meanwhile, the Arts, Crafts and Gifts Shop ran in the downstairs surgery, also attracting many visitors and good sales. We thank all the volunteers – including some of the crafters - who helped to steward.



On re-opening in January, the Old Cornwall Society exhibited a fascinating collection of their **photographs of Liskeard in the past**, in the Max Lock Gallery, newly redecorated by Sioux and Gaby.

The Old Cornwall Society plan a special exhibition in March on Passmore Edwards, who funded the building of Liskeard Library (on a site which was once part of the garden of Stuart House), and many public buildings in other places too. Details in the next Newsletter.



Just booked!  
Monday 6<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> February  
**Art Exhibition by Matt Thomas, a local artist using various mediums**



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



I dedicate this first garden article of 2023 to my vibrant, valued sister-in-law, J. who recently, very sadly and very suddenly left this world. J. lived at Castle Acre, a wonderfully peaceful little village with an old abbey and castle, near Swaffham (a town very similar to Liskeard) in Norfolk. J. loved her little cottage garden, even though the narrow bed under the front window was completely overrun by

ground elder. This plant was brought to Britain by the Romans and cultivated by Medieval monks who grew it for adding the Vitamin C rich young leaves ("a hint of lemon", it is said) to the cooking pot, and as an early Spring salad vegetable. In Ukraine, it is still used as an ingredient in Borsch, a soup of green vegetables. In earlier times it was also made into poultices for treating rheumatism and gout, and modern herbals still recommend it to treat pain and swelling.

Ground elder, however, is considered a highly pernicious pest, spreading effortlessly by wiry, brittle underground stems, just like bindweed, and just as impossible to control. Attempts to dig it out invariably meet with failure, as it regrows from small fragments. But J. accepted it, and planted tough, towering competitors in amongst it - hollyhocks, aquilegia, foxgloves, ox-eyed daisies, and bluebells. In mid-summer, the ground elder produced a white cloud of cow-parsley type umbels which looked magnificent. All so easy to look after. No watering ever needed even in such a dry part of the country. I'm not suggesting that anyone deliberately gives over their garden to ground elder, but I thought J's approach was excellent. Just grow what is reliable and not too much trouble and try to make the best of overwhelming odds.

*Malcolm assures us that the Stuart House garden is free of ground elder, although it does harbour other pernicious weeds! (ed.)*



For the most part, the Stuart House Garden looks after itself, just needing clipping and pruning to keep in order. The many pots in the garden last year contained primroses and violas in the Spring, and then white and soft pink begonias through summer and autumn. The large containers along the dividing wall were also planted with these, together with wallflowers, foxgloves, sweet williams and white campion (all disliked by slugs and snails). We plan to do much the same this year. Regarding violas, of all the sorts I've grown in recent years, the old

Johnny Jump-up variety which dates from Tudor times has proved the most reliable. It does grow taller than other sorts, so is good in mixed pots. It is quite hardy throughout Liskeard winters, continuing to produce blue, white and yellow whiskered flowers for months on end. Sow in Spring for summer flowers, or in July for winter flowering. It also seems immune to black-spot fungi that often attacks leaves of modern varieties of pansies and violas.



In the front gardens at Stuart House, silver leaf Cineraria, which we are told is best grown as a half-hardy annual, grows well alongside its dwarf cordyline companion in a large tub, shrugging off the wet and cold of its third winter. These don't need much watering in summer either and are just the sort of elegant plants that Elizabethan gardeners would have favoured. The roses in the front right bed suffered in last summer's heat, and one suggestion is to add white Agapanthus. These would probably do well there in the dry rather poor soil. They'd be determined enough, too, to hold their own if ever finding themselves surrounded by ground elder. I'm sure J. would approve!

*Malcolm Mort*

The photograph on the right is the twisted willow standing out against the wall in January.

This, and the photographs of the garden, violas and cineraria as well as the wood pigeons on one of the arches in the garden are by Malcolm.





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

The October 2001 Minutes recorded that the Trust's bank accounts stood at £147 in the current a/c and £7,444 on deposit. A minimum of £5,000 was to be set aside as a reserve for House maintenance and any funds then held over and above that sum to be held for running costs. The purchase of lightweight folding tables was discussed. Tony Wood expressed concern at the fact that he continued to take up to 2 gallons of water out of the Surgery every five to six days (*an ongoing problem in that part of the House!*) Professional advice would be sought. A window cleaner had quoted £15 and would be asked to clean the windows that month and in May.

Eileen Crouch chaired the meeting and was looking forward to knowing whether HRH (the then) Prince Charles would be visiting the House in 2002. Limited bookings were being taken for May/beginning of June so that the House could look at its best – no jumble sales!

Jean Wills reported that during the past five months she had 531 visitors to the House. The downside was moving furniture, boxes and other things in readiness for events. The History Group would start the following week. Work had been undertaken in relation to the 50s Exhibition. Jean was thanked for all her hard work and dedication. 15<sup>th</sup> November would see the Supper Club re-commence after the

summer break. Christmas drinks would be served on 5<sup>th</sup> January.

Income and expenditure was a topic for discussion at the November meeting. Even taking into account the 10 months covered, room donations and membership subscriptions were lower than previous years. It was agreed that an attempt to raise the profile of the House would be planned for 2002. The Chairman suggested a 'red hat association' of female members!! It was hoped to encourage more arts/crafts/heritage exhibitions and workshops. A children's art competition had been suggested and events were booked into the diary for August – i.e. during summer holidays. The committee hoped to appoint an administrator. Terry Currell was standing by to mount an exhibition to coincide with a possible visit by HRH.

There was a problem with water in the wooden noticeboards at the front of the House and they were difficult to attach notices to. Filter coffees would be offered at the forthcoming Supper Club – to be paid for if required! Instant coffee to be included as hitherto!!! (ugh!). (*fortunately, the coffee making facilities have improved substantially since those days and a complete coffee menu is now available!*)

*to be continued ....*



Kitchen cupboards and coffee making equipment under wraps in January 2023.  
However, there is still a jar of instant coffee to the fore!

**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. It is open to the public on Tuesdays.**



I'm sure that supporters are aware of the devout Quaker John Allen, of Trehawke House, who wrote the 1856 'History of the Borough of Liskeard'. He had five daughters: two remained single and three married according to Quaker tradition in the Friends Meeting House which was destroyed by fire in 1899.

The first of John Allen's daughters to marry was Frances at the age of 31. Her husband was Nathaniel Tregelles, 13 years her elder, and the ceremony took place in the Friends Meeting House, off Pound Street, Liskeard, on June 24<sup>th</sup> 1847. After several years of living and

working in London, Nathaniel, Frances and their five children settled in Dean Terrace, Liskeard. Nathaniel was an Elder in the Quaker community and established the Cheesewring Granite Co. Ltd. in 1853 with Edward Crouch, Purser of nine different mines in the Caradon and Menheniot districts in the 1850s.

On September 5<sup>th</sup> 1851, the Cornish Telegraph announced under Marriages, 'On Thursday last at the Friends Meeting House, Liskeard, William Southall, Jun. Esquire of Birmingham to Miss Elizabeth Allen, third daughter of John Allen Esquire of Liskeard'. Sadly, Elizabeth died after an illness of just a few days, less than six weeks after her wedding, aged only 27. William became a 'Pharmaceutical Chemist' in Birmingham employing a staff of fifteen. He married again in 1859 and had four children, but his new wife, Margaret, also died young, at 37, after only ten years of marriage.



The last of John Allen's daughters to marry was Rebecca. When she was 36, she married William Matthews, a farmer 17 years her elder, and they settled in Earl's Colne, Essex. Once again, the wedding took place in the Liskeard Friends Meeting House, on July 11<sup>th</sup> 1861. William was a widower having been married for twenty years but having no children. But Rebecca gave birth to three children in quick succession, although no more after her husband's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. At 73 he was a 'Farmer of 106 acres employing 8 men and 3 boys' and ten years later was a 'Retired Farmer and Minister in the Society of Friends'.

*The photographs from Brian show (top) the back of Trehawke House and gardens. It was demolished in 1909 and the cattle market built on the garden site. The photograph below shows the ruins of the Friends Meeting House after the fire of 1899. The site can still be seen, on Friends' Place, off Pound Street.*

*Trehawke House was where the old Nat. West. building is now. It could be seen easily from the front and south windows of Stuart House, whose gardens and outbuildings then extended to the corner opposite. Susan Carthew, who lived in Stuart House from before 1841 to her death in 1876, would have known John Allen and his family. In 1899, when the Quaker Meeting House burnt down, the doctor John Hammond was living in Stuart House with his family and running his surgery from it. He had sold part of the garden for the building of the Library four years before. (ed.)*

# Diary of Events

February 2023



Tuesdays 7 <sup>th</sup> & 21 <sup>st</sup>	Liskeard Writers' Group meet 2 to 4.30 pm.
Every Thursday	Craft Club: all welcome 12 noon to 3pm.
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> to Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Art Exhibition by Mark Thomas (see p.3)
Monday 13 <sup>th</sup>	Liskeard Poetry Group meet 4 to 6.30pm.
Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup>	Fake or Fortune – antiques valuation with Richard Hamm of Bearnas, Hampton & Littlewood. 10am. to 12 noon
t.b.c.	Shop in the Surgery
<b>Coming in March</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular events</li> <li>• 20<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> - Exhibition on Passmore Edwards by the Old Cornwall Society</li> <li>• MORE EVENTS TO BE CONFIRMED</li> </ul>



Pond reflections, January 2022. Photograph by Malcolm

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

*9.30am – 3.30pm on Monday Tuesday, Thursday and Friday  
(other days too 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)