



NEWSLETTER

November 2020

Our Place on the Internet
www.cornwallocalhistorians.co.uk

Email us at
calhnewsletter@gmail.com

Letter from the Chair

Since the August newsletter the ducks have all abandoned my pond in favour of the delights to be found in Looe and Polperro, but I am sure many of them will be back early next year ready to start the cycle again. For a while, with no ducks to Hoover up, I was having to sweep up the food thrown out by the wasteful sparrows from their feeders every day. Fortunately, that job has now been partly taken over by hedgehogs who visit every evening and not only eat the bird's leftovers but also like the feral cats, food that I put out.



Did you know hedgehogs are not only allergic to milk but also to fish? It is amazing how many fish flavoured packets of cat food I have in store. Now I have to make sure fishy food is only given to the cats during the day and at night the meat and biscuit are only meat flavoured!!! Apart from my two feral cats I now seem to be feeding at least three cats belonging to neighbours and spend quite a bit of time sitting on the bench outside the back door watching over my cats whilst they have a feed, whilst we are watched over, at a respectful distance, by the visiting cats. I am tempted to buy a water pistol to keep them away!!!

Have you found, like me, that time is going by much faster during this Covid Pandemic than it did during

what we all knew as 'Normal Life'. I get up between 6am and 7am and by the time I've had breakfast, done the fires, had my run in the water (I have now done nearly 350 miles since the end of March), spent time battling the bindweed and brambles in the garden and made something to eat for tea, it's time for the 6 o'clock evening news on the telly. Not long after 6pm I usually 'nod off' and before I know it, it's time to 'Go up the wooden hill' to bed. Notice how I haven't mentioned working on the computer, still a thing I find really hard to do for some reason. Nor have I mentioned 'Housework'. With no cleaner or gardener at present I had to prioritise and chose to concentrate on the garden and let the house take care of itself for present. I feel a bit like Dickens' *Miss Havisham*, as the layer of dust slowly builds up, as well as some really interestingly shaped cobwebs beginning to festoon themselves from the ceilings. Added to this I have found Covid a wonderful excuse for not going to the hairdressers so I am really looking the part of Miss H with my white hair growing longer and longer. (As a child I always wanted long hair but 'Mum said No' so maybe in 'second childhood', and thanks to lockdown, I will finally achieve my wish.

When the August newsletter was printed, we were still optimistic we would be able to hold next year's weekend conference but sadly we have now reached the conclusion this will not be possible. Marilyn will tell you, further on in this newsletter, what we plan to replace it with. It also looks likely some at least of next year's outings (already postponed from this year) will not be practical to hold.

Continued overleaf

The visit to Looe by train is one that will have to wait until a much later date. If anyone has ideas for outdoor meetings that they would be prepared to organise, and where it would be practical to maintain social distancing etc., maybe you could let us know.

In August I asked you to let Marion have short articles for the newsletter and I would like to thank those of you who have been in touch with her.

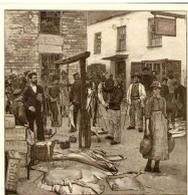
Needless to say she will be looking for things to put in the February newsletter, so thinking caps on again please. This Christmas looks like being a very strange celebration, unlike any other. Maybe with the extra time you will have between now and December, with very little Christmas shopping to do, you could write a short article on how Christmas was celebrated in the past.

Your Journal editor, Jeremy Rowett Johns, would also be most grateful for some longer articles for next years edition which will be printed in April. Of the 88 pages in the 2020 Journal, 45 were filled by articles related to the 2020 weekend conference and various outdoor events that took place in 2019. With no events taking place since March 2020 this means the 2021 Journal will be a very thin affair unless some more of you can submit articles for it in the next five months. Our editor is also looking for book reviews, snippets and queries to help make the 2021 Journal as good as previous ones, despite Covid.

Stay safe and stay positive.

Your chairperson,

Carole Vivian. Tel: (01503)272309



***Mouat Loudan's
Fish Sale, Polperro.*** This seminal painting is in need of repair. See next page for details.

CANCELLATION DUE TO COVID

AGM and Spring Conference

6/7 March 2021

Sadly, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, your conference organisers have reached the conclusion that the CALH Spring Conference and Annual General Meeting Cannot be considered a 'safe' event for Society members.

The principal considerations have been the age profile of members and the perceived ability of the hotel to keep us all Covid-free. We have concluded that, since early March still falls within the time when Covid is deemed to be prevalent, our paramount consideration must be your safety. Therefore, this event at the Kilbirnie Hotel, Newquay is now formally cancelled, for this year only.

Important News – AGM 6 March 2021 on ZOOM

We are about to investigate the feasibility of a March 2021 Zoom AGM. This may take the form of an AGM together with a lecture. These are early days and your committee will be focussing on whether this is a practicable solution to keeping in touch. In order to include as many members as possible in such an event **we need your current email address.** Please send this with your name to our treasurer Hugh Hedderley, as soon as possible using our special AGM email address which is calhagm1@gmail.com.

It is now even more important that we keep in touch with members efficiently. Thank you for your co-operation in these difficult times.

Ian and Marilyn Thompson

CALH 2021 Annual Subscription

The 1st January not only marks the end of the Christmas festivities and the start of a new year, it is also the date your annual subscription to CALH becomes due.

Why, you might be asking, should I continue with my membership when during 2020 with Covid-19, there were no Study Days held and the Autumn Conference was cancelled?

For your annual membership to CALH you receive a copy of our Journal, a copy of each of our Newsletters published in February, August and November, and the right to attend our Study Days and Conferences. Attending our conferences and study days however are “value added” for which an additional payment is made.

We must look forward to 2021 with some optimism and the committee is considering our options, and we assure you that activities will be reintroduced as soon as it is possible without placing the health of our members at risk.

We therefore look forward to receiving your annual subscription so we can all begin to enjoy “normal service” as soon as possible.

Our current rates are:

- Ordinary members £15
- Joint members £25
- Corporate members £25 (**Please note this has increased from £15.00 as agreed by the 2020 AGM**)

If you pay by standing order, please check with your bank that you are paying the correct amount. You can also pay by BACS through your internet bank account. Our account details are: Sort Code 30-12-74, Account number 07789383.

If you choose to pay by cheque, send it together with your membership number and address to - CALH Hon. Treasurer, October Hill, 2b Lambley Road, Lowdham, Notts, NG14 7AY.

Please note due to the introduction of automation by Lloyds Bank, cheques must be made payable to *Cornwall Association of Local Historians* **AND NOT** CALH.

Mouat Loudan's *Fish Sale*, *Polperro* - Restoration Appeal

A seminal, very large painting of Polperro from the 1880s - Mouat Loudan's *Fish Sale*, *Polperro* (RA 1888) (oil on canvas, 168cm x 169cm) - is in urgent need of considerable restoration. *The photo on the previous page shows how the painting should look when fully restored.* It is due to be donated shortly to the Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro, where it has been on loan since 1988, and the objective is to get it fully and professionally restored in time for it to be a central feature of the exhibition **Polperro - Cornwall's Forgotten Art Centre** at Falmouth Art Gallery, which will run from 28th March to 12th June 2021. The cost is estimated at over £9,500, and contributions, big or small, would be very welcome.

In 1920, shortly after the opening of the Rowett Institute in Polperro, the Trustees asked Loudan if he could supply a photograph of his *Fish Sale* painting, for it was still a highly regarded image. To their astonishment, the artist responded that he still had the original painting and that, as the Institute was to act as a War memorial, he would be happy to gift it. As the fortunes of the Rowett Institute declined, so did the state of the painting. When eventually loaned to the Royal Cornwall Museum in 1988, it was filthy, ravaged by damp and in appalling disrepair.

Donations can be made by making an online payment to: **Royal Institution of Cornwall Account No : 36210960 ; Sort Code : 30-98-76**, adding the reference '**Loudan Appeal**' or by sending a cheque made payable to '**Royal Institution of Cornwall - Loudan Appeal**' to Bryony Robins at the Royal Cornwall Museum, 25 River Street, Truro, TR1 2SJ. Gift aid will increase gifts to the Royal Institution of Cornwall by 25% and so please contact Bryony Robins by e-mail at Bryony.Robins@royalcornwallmuseum.org.uk or 01872 272205 to obtain a Gift Aid Declaration Form.

Contributions from CALH Members

Thank you to all who sent me short articles and stories for this issue of the newsletter. These have been such a pleasure to read; each with a different flavour. 300 words or less is the ideal length. The addition of a picture or two is welcome.

I look forward to receiving articles for the February Newsletter. (by January 30, 2021.)

Editor: Marion Stephens-Cockroft

calhnewsletter@gmail.com

Looe Through the Ages

Sat 28 Nov 2020 at 2.30pm.

A talk by Marian Cole, Cecil Varcoe, Kethryn Bartlett and Simon Cole, who are accredited Town Guides and members of the Cornish Riviera Guides.

This talk, organised by Fowey Harbour Heritage, takes us back to Looe's medieval beginnings as a fishing village and to its renaissance in the 19th century following finds of copper on Bodmin Moor. You will hear the story of Looe-Liskeard canal and Railway which transported the copper to ships in the port and learn about the contribution made by Joseph Thomas, one of Looe's most famous sons, to the town as it is today.

Under the current government guidelines, we are unable to hold meetings in person. Members will be able to attend the talk 'virtually'

via Zoom (free). Become a member of FHHS for £10 and enjoy this talk as one of the benefits.

Visit www.foweyharbourheritage.org.uk or contact andrew@garder.be for details.

Profiles of Launceston People

Lawrence House Museum Launceston, like so many small museums in Cornwall, has been closed this season but the Friends and Volunteers have been kept in touch by means of frequent Newsletters and Zoom meetings. The idea of '**Profiles of Launceston People**' has resulted from all these contacts.

We want to build an archive of biographies for the museum from which material can be used for an exhibition in 2022, later events and future research. This will be an undiscovered history project, covering the middle range of people who formed the backbone of the town, who achieved something locally in Launceston and whose achievements are not recorded elsewhere. So tradesmen, shopkeepers, professional people, and so on, who have served the town in some way.

The period covered should broadly be 1750-1950 and people have been asked to suggest those that interest them and whose biography they would like to research.

Already in the very early stages the project is producing some surprises. For instance, I have elected to research Thomas Pomeroy Trood, a Launceston merchant, elected Mayor in 1878 and a Launceston man if ever there was one I thought. Or was he? The 1851 census returns show him as a five year old, the elder of two sons born to a Morwenstow farmer, John B Trood and his wife Charity Ching of Holsworthy.

In 1871, he first appears in Launceston as a 25 year old merchant, married to Jane Webb, a Liskeard girl. By 1881 he had a family of seven children and employed ten men and a boy – a busy man! His younger brother, Edward, was by this time also a merchant, married to a Liskeard girl, Elizabeth Clymo Webb, living at Rose Cliff, Fore Street, Saltash.

Not a Launceston family through and through after all!

Carol Bunbury

Liskeard IronWorks

As you walk up Church Street and step over the iron rainwater channels across the pavement (*photo below*), then passed the iron kerb ramps outside the Barley Sheaf yard, did you notice the wording on them;



“Williams Liskeard”? More words are on drain covers (*photo below*) in Doctor’s Lane; “Williams Liskeard Iron Works”. Not forgetting the manufacturer’s plates on Cornish ranges discovered in recent years in No.1 Barn Street, No.3 Fore Street and Lamellion Farmhouse; “Z T Williams Liskeard”.



So who was Zacharias Tregonowen Williams?

Zach’ lived in Crow’s Nest in the 1840s and 1850s working as a Blacksmith, possibly at the nearby South Caradon Mine. By 1861 he was living in Church Street, married with 2 years old son Richard, his trade in the 1862 Directory is “Iron Founder of Church Street and Moorswater”

The site at Moorswater in 1809 was a “Paper Mill” and in the 1842 a “Corn Mill”. In the Cornish Times of 1st June 1861 it was reported that in “A destructive fire at Mr. Williams’ foundry the whole building and its contents were destroyed”, but in the 4th July 1861 issue “Mr. Z Williams respectfully” announced that he was back in business.

After Zach’s death in 1877 his son Richard H Williams successfully expanded the business and in May 1890 he purchased for £40, from the Borough of Liskeard, a “piece of land with the old building thereon commonly known by the name of the Lady Well”. Richard built an impressive showroom here at No.6 Church, it still exists, but much modernised.

Brian Oldham

400th Anniversary of the Mayflower’s Arrival in America

When the Mayflower arrived in the Wampanoag Tribal Area of North America in 1620, the new arrivals brought with them diseases that the local Tribes had no immunity against so caused a ‘great dying’ resulting in up to a 70% loss to the indigenous peoples.

The remaining Wampanoag peoples helped the settlers with food and shelter through their first winter in North America until tensions arose as more and more settlers arrived occupying their Tribal Regions and with the western culture, the greed of property and possessions, this erupting in violence and wars.

The Wampanoag Peoples recorded all this in a belt sewn with thousands of beads, similar to the Bayeaux Tapestry recording the invasion of England in 1066.

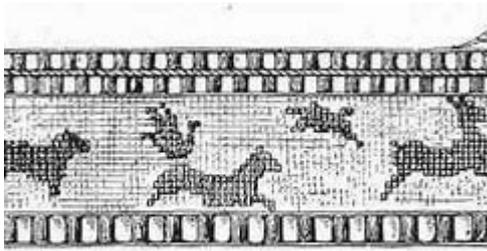
Parts of the Wampanoag Belt are held by the British Museum and so valued by the native or indigenous Indian peoples of North America that it is as prized as our Crown Jewels. The Wampanoag Peoples make annual requests to the British Museum for its return without avail.

The Native Indian Peoples of New England have crafted a 400th Anniversary ‘unfinished’ copy of the belt that is currently on exhibition at Southampton to commemorate the event, ‘unfinished’ as history is still in the making...

The belt contains over 5000 beads and was crafted by over 100 peoples of the Wampanoag community, it features symbols of animals, wolves, turtles and eagles and peoples from different clans united by holding hands.

Duncan Paul Matthews

The image below is not the actual replica but gives an idea of the style and intricacy of the handwork that goes into the belt. (editor)



Cuthbert Mayne (1544-1577)

On 30 Nov 1577 the Roman Catholic Priest 'Cuthbert Mayne', (born at Barnstaple), was hanged, drawn and quartered at Launceston for practicing his beliefs as a Roman Catholic during the reign of the Protestant Queen Elizabeth 1. The order for this execution was authorised by Sir Richard Grenville. He has since been beatified as a Saint and Martyr.

Ref; The Journey to the Mayflower by Stephen Tomkins (Page 86)

Duncan Paul Matthews

Childhood in the Hole In The Wall!

My parents bought the Hole in the Wall pub in Bodmin circa 1948 when I was four years old and we left in 1954. Latterly when they and I were at a loose end I used to play shove-halfpenny against National Servicemen and expanded my vocabulary (polite words only) greatly when listening to those learning Russian at the Joint Services School of Linguists at the barracks.

I can remember asking my father what 'propaganda' meant. My abiding memory is of the circus at the pub when there was a major trial of national interest at the Bodmin Assizes.

Pressmen, policemen and I seem to remember barristers and lawyers descending on the pub at lunch times and mixing together in the bar.

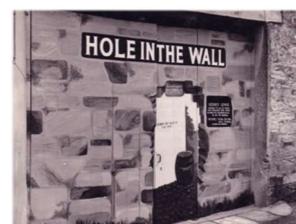
My father once obtained the autographs of what he described as the Scotland Yard Flying Squad. The most sensational trial during my time at the pub was that of Miles Giffard in February 1953.

He murdered his parents in their home at Porthpean and tipped the bodies over the cliff there. One of father's friends, the newspaper reporter Charles (Charlie) Dean, was always on the lookout for sensational stories to sell to the London papers and he kept in close contact with the police.

As told to me, he knew something was up, and was told by the police sergeant at Bodmin that he was unable to tell him anything about 'the Giffard do at St. Austell'.

Charlie duly arrived on the doorstep at St. Austell police station and was the first to break the story. Mrs. Dean was our Akela at the 3rd Bodmin Wolf Cubs. The father of a friend of mine attended every day of Giffard's trial and later said that, given his circumstances, he felt quite sorry for him.

Jim Lewis



History under Lockdown

The Penwith Local History Group usually meets once a month in the Morrab Library. We kept in touch by email but we really missed seeing each other. On a misty day in August we had a meeting here at Wicca in my Dutch barn with the chairs spaced out.

Three of us talked about four interesting local characters all born about 1900. Ros rushed around photographing the places where they had lived which she mounted on two display boards. She researched Ernest Berryman and the finding of the Towednack Gold Hoard.

My cousin did the washing up for D H Lawrence. We finished with croust served from two large baskets. With my gallon teapot there was no need to plug in the electric kettle to the socket on a hay bale.

In September we met in the Morrab Gardens bringing our chairs by wheelbarrow and car. It was wonderful to see some of our members again, to swop notes and hear what they had been doing.

Jean Nankervis

Penwith LHG in the gardens of the Morrab Library



Researching the 1918-1919 Influenza Epidemic

Having mentioned to Carole that my next Cornish project might be on the influenza epidemic of a century ago, I have now begun by looking at the general history texts which I have here at home; which tell me that the epidemic arrived in Britain in October 1918, and continued into 1920. About 150,000 people died (compared with 16 million in India). There is no mention of lockdown restrictions; certainly not during the wild Armistice celebrations in London.

I then turned to biographies I have of Edward Elgar the composer (1857-1934), knowing that he would today have been regarded as 'high risk'. In these detailed accounts, based on his voluminous correspondence, I found that musical life – concerts and rehearsals – were continuing as normal; and the epidemic was not mentioned at all.

I subscribe to the British Newspaper Archive; so that is where my online research is beginning. Using the widest search parameters ('influenza', October 1918), numerous pages were returned; but these have enabled me to quickly begin building up a bigger and more detailed picture of the course of the epidemic across Britain, and in the wider world still at war.

There was no NHS or antibiotics; and public health was the responsibility of local councils, each of which acted as they thought fit without central direction (at first). Some schools were closed; not as a preventative measure, but because of high absenteeism. The medical profession was under great strain; many doctors were away at the war.

It will be interesting to see how events unfolded, and eventually the situation in Cornwall will emerge from the reportage, set in its wider context. I find that there is a fuller understanding of local history when it is seen as part of the larger world.

John Durring