The Poly

Featuring the Arts and our Heritage

2005/06

The Magazine of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society

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Dawyth Agar
Zeeba Ansari
Caroline Carver
Anne Kelley
Eleanor Maxted
Bill Mycock
Vivienne Neale
Andrew Robinson
Bob Rogers
Penelope Shuttle
Jane Tozer

Editor — Michael Carver
Graphic Design — Steve Collinson
Printed by — Rowe the Printers, Hayle

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Cover photograph: Jack Rowling by H S Tuke

THE ROYAL CORNWALL POLYTECHNIC SOCIETY - 2005/2006

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

May I welcome this revived edition of The Poly, which owes its existence to a generous grant from the Tanner Trust. I thank all those who have worked on it to make it a worthy successor of its predecessors.

In three years time, the Polytechnic Society will be celebrating its 175th Anniversary. Co-incidentally, 2008 also marks the 150th Anniversary of the birth of Henry Scott Tuke. Thanks largely to the generosity of Brian Price, the Society possesses a unique collection of Tuke's paintings ranging from his days at the Slade to his last ill-fated journey to the West Indies. I plan that 2008 should be a year in which the Polytechnic celebrates its heritage of Cornish arts and sciences, for the upholding of which it was founded.

This makes the time leading up to 2008 of crucial importance in ensuring the stability of our institution both financially and culturally. In 2004-5, we not only balanced our budget for the first time in years, but made a small but significant surplus. This is almost unique for an Arts Centre which receives virtually no public funding (£10,200 in 2004-5 from a turnover of £210,000).

But the capital picture is by no means as rosy. Renewal of the theatre seating and the forthcoming installation of disabled access to meet statutory requirements have dug deep into our capital reserves, which now stand at an unacceptably low figure. And all the time there are calls to fund necessary repairs and improvements required for the safe management of our starred Grade II listed building.

All this has led the Board to approach fundraisers. Discussions are at an early stage, but it is clear that if we are to ensure the future of the Polytechnic, we must achieve a far more secure financial base, for which we shall need expert help.

However there are things which we can do immediately. Whatever actions we take in the future, members are vital. Although this year to date we have enrolled 108 new members, a total membership of 402 is a tiny fraction of the population of Falmouth and Penryn and the adjacent villages. As our potential fundraisers have pointed out, although the Arts Centre is passed daily by hundreds of people, it remains almost unknown to too many of the population. Yet if it is to serve its purpose effectively, it must be fully supported by the people of Falmouth and district.

There is then a real evangelistic task ahead to double, and then double again, our membership. For it is from our membership that our volunteers come whom I cannot thank enough: without them the Polytechnic could never hope to balance its books. Without them, there is no future for the Arts Centre. Can you help?

The Board is already engaged in working out ways of making the entrance to the building more enticing, though inevitably in our chicken and egg situation, these plans depend on sufficient capital funding.

But it is not only the building which is hidden, but its most precious asset, the Tuke Collection. Here the Board have taken action, and with the aid of a consultant are raising funds for the complete restoration and cataloguing of the pictures, the majority of which have never been seen in public. At the recent exhibition of 27 paintings from our Collection at the Falmouth Art Gallery as part of their *Passing Ships* exhibition, members saw the first two restored watercolours. We hope that well before 2008, the whole Collection will be put in order and form part of county and national exhibitions to mark the Anniversary of Tuke's birth.

To achieve our purpose of both making our building and the Collection better known, we need a Tuke Gallery to house the permanent Collection and host other exhibitions of artists contemporary with Tuke. Our potential fundraisers are enthusiastic about such an enterprise which could be achieved by adding the back of our present building on to our newly restored property at the top of Well Lane. Such a project makes for an exciting future that once more could restore the Polytechnic to the centre of both the life of Falmouth and the county at large.

We are also mindful of our scientific heritage and are actively considering ways in which we could honour this. It was a great sadness that Bishop Hugh Montefiore died days before he was due to deliver his lecture on nuclear energy.

Finally, besides our stalwart volunteers, we rely on our staff. Some are new to their jobs, but their enthusiasm and expertise bid well for the future. We are fortunate to have such a talented team which makes it all the more important that each of us gives them all the support we can.

I believe that by 2008 we could, if we all work together, not only secure the future of the Polytechnic, but provide a Society no longer hidden, the envy of other towns in Cornwall and beyond. Have courage: we can do it.

Anthony Phillips

THE CINEMAS OF FALMOUTH

The Poly

A decade ago, Monday night was Film Night at the Poly – always on a Monday. It was felt that people liked a regular pattern, and that there was no demand for more than one showing a week. Eventually we realised that we were missing an opportunity, and the schedule expanded to what it is now – a most important and valuable part of our programme.

In those days, films were shown on a twin pair of rather cheap Chinese projectors, set up side by side, once a week and with great effort, in the present lighting booth. The films arrived (they still do) on a number of 20 minute reels, the first and second of which were threaded onto the two projectors.

At 8 o'clock, Number 1 projector was fired up, and after twenty minutes the watchful operator saw a small black dot appear in the top right hand corner of the screen. Ten seconds later that reel ended, at which precise instant the projectionist pressed a button, Number 1 stopped, and Number 2 leapt into action. If he got it right, the change-over was almost seamless; usually, however, there was a loud crack in the sound system, causing the audience to jump in alarm, perhaps a moment or two of black screen, and the next reel took over for another 20 minutes – all of which rather tended to break the filmic illusion.

Meanwhile the projectionist had to rewind reel 1, replace it with reel 3, lace that up and cue it to the first frame, and wait for the next black dot. And so on, for a couple of hours of hard, hot, work – and every 20 minutes came the crack and the jump and that uneasy giggle from the nervous members of the audience. Watching a film in the old days was sometimes edge-of-the-seat stuff.

In due course we realised that we must upgrade our equipment, as well as expand our programme. What we needed was a single high quality projector, and a high speed 'tower' to spool all the small 20 minute reels onto one large one, allowing the whole film to be shown without a break. But the lighting booth was much too small for all this new kit – where could we install it?

Miraculously, the place already existed. When the new ceiling was hung in the auditorium in 1961, creating the Gallery above it, the new construction cut off the old projection booth which was no longer used at all, and more or less forgotten about. When, forty years later, the Administrator ventured up through the trap door into the long disused booth, he found a black hole full of spiders, dust, bricks, peeling paint, rubble, and a huge mass of cinders, provenance unknown. All this was cleared out via a chute into a skip on Church Street (people wondered why Falmouth seemed to be in permanent fog for ten days), the place was opened up with a new staircase from what is now the office, and an access passage and projection aperture were knocked through 32 inches of solid cob, into the theatre. Lo – our new projection booth!

We put in a good second hand Italian projector and a 'tower', and a first class Dolby surround sound system, with four big speakers on the stage, and six more on the walls all around the auditorium. In 2004 we installed new seating, losing 16 seats in the process, but providing much more comfort and leg room. A huge improvement, in line with a much wider film programme which often now runs five nights a week, drawing larger and larger audiences.

Back.... (from the records of the RCPS Local History and Research Group)

You've probably seen the plaque beside the Box Office door stating that in 1910 the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society was given the first Cinema Licence in Falmouth. The Cinematograph Act had only been passed in 1909, to control this new form of entertainment, since the extremely flammable nitrate film made the experience potentially highly dangerous. (It's a nice coincidence that the first film projection in Britain took place in 1896 at the London Polytechnic Institution.)

With its new licence, the Polytechnic Hall "was hired to Mr G.S. King for one month from 26th December 1910 for a Cinematograph Entertainment, at £5 10/- per week (to include caretaker) and £25 towards the special alterations required." Mr King advertised shows *"Twice nightly at 7 and 9. Prices: Pit 3d, Pit Stalls 6d, Balcony 9d. At every performance will be shown the CORONATION PROCESSION and the ROYAL PROGRESS THROUGH LONDON. Smoking allowed."*

It seems to have proved popular at the start. *"The electric light fittings are of the most modern description, there being little or no flicking of the light to tire the eyes, whilst the pictures themselves are the best that can be obtained, and comprise studies which give no offence, and of a variety to please the most fastidious."* An early programme included B*etween Love and Honour, Sorrows of Unfaithful, Trust Those you Love, Tweedledum Loses his Train, and The Cheat.* Good, worthy stuff.

The Polytechnic Picture Hall

It also provided a good weekend babysitting service. *"The Manager announced from the stage that, owing to the large number of children attending the Saturday matinee, 765 being present that afternoon, Mr King would throw open the entire hall to the children on payment of 1 penny"*. It hardly bears thinking about. The author read an article recently about an Edwardian cinema manager who used to patrol the children's matinee cracking a whip!

So we were the first, but others soon followed. In February 1911 the **Kozey Picture Palace** (also known as The Flea Pit) opened for business just off High Street, in the waste area behind the corner of High Street and Webber Street. The remains of the Kozey were only discovered in 1994 when the owner of the property realised what this wrecked building must have been. The floor sloped, the eastern end wall was whitewashed, and the other wall still had the holes through which the projector pointed. It probably seated between 80 and 90 (not 765!), and showed *"All the World's Latest Events Vividly Portrayed, Marvellous Mechanical Effects"* and claimed to be "The Best Seated and Equipped Picture Theatre in Cornwall". A flyer in 1913 advertised *"SHANGHAIED – a magnificent picture of the sea, thrilling adventures BRONCHO BILLY OUTWITTED – splendid cowboy drama THEIR HERO SON - a pathetic subject SORRENTO - travel, and HOW HOPKINS RAISED THE RENT - comic etc etc."*

Meanwhile back at the Poly, Mr King had failed to make a success of the **Polytechnic Picture Hall**, partly because the hall was also rented out for other events, and partly because the caretaker objected to cleaning up after the shows. *"Hale demurred to washing the lino each day, but he DOES IT."* The lease was taken over by the three famous Harris brothers, who would dominate the film business in Falmouth for many years.

During the period between the wars, the popularity of films grew at an astonishing rate. By 1921 there were 4,000 large cinemas in Britain, with an average auditorium size that grew to an amazing 2,400. Screenings ran throughout the day, with intervals filled with music and music-hall acts. The great early classics – *Intolerance, The Birth of a Nation* - drew huge audiences, with *Queen Christina* at the Empire, Leicester Square, selling 70,000 tickets in its first week.

In Falmouth, films continued to be shown at the **Polytechnic Hall** until 1931, although in 1912 the Harris brothers opened a new purpose-built auditorium at **St George's Hall**, which became the favoured cinema. This has become a shopping arcade, but the façade is unchanged - *"scrolls, clusters of fruit, a cartouche and a dolphin placed at the apex of the gable – the whole being a marvellous exhibition of clever design and skilled workmanship."* It really sounds a very grand place indeed, with seats on the ground floor for 850, and a further 250 in the balcony. *"The finely moulded, elliptical ceiling is supported by fluted, Doric columns with Doric block cornices, and in the panels round the sides of the hall are rich French tapestries representing various scenes."*

Exterior of the Kozey Picture Palace today

Inside with projection windows still visible

St George's Hall

The new building was opened by the Mayor, Cllr F.J. Bowles, who affirmed that in Falmouth *"they aspired to be a place where people could come not only for their health but also to spend their holidays"*. He warned of the dangers of *"the English people becoming more and more, as time went on, a pleasure loving people, and there was danger to fear when people gave more time to amusements than to the more serious duties of life"*. However, he declared that *"they now had one of the finest erections in the West, and one which would meet the wants of Falmouth"*.

The chief projectionist was Jimmy Cattell, previously of the Polytechnic. Apparently he enjoyed a drink, and knowing their man, the managers forbade him to leave the cinema until the last show had ended. However, they did not know him quite well enough. Not to be outdone, he would climb onto the roof and lower a quart bottle on a string down the chimney of the neighbouring *Ship and Castle*. This would be filled with Jimmy's favourite beverage and drawn up again. However there seem to have been no complaints, so clearly the programmes ran smoothly enough. Perhaps this was because the managers ensured that *"the greatest care will be taken that all elements of vulgar sensationalism or creepiness are eliminated"*. Mayor Bowles would have approved.

In March 1916 The Falmouth Pavilion Syndicate opened their *"new kinema and variety entertainment at the **Princess Pavilion**. A new fit up has been erected and pretty scenery painted which gives the hall quite an attractive appearance."* The programme included *"The Dop Doctor", a film that has created a sensation in the kinema world, Rider Haggard's "She", and "Mrs Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch"*.

However the Pavilion did not prove to be popular, the chief complaint being that it was too far from the centre of town.

Then came **The Grand,** for which plans were drawn up in 1922, but which was not actually built and opened until February 1928, with seats for 800 patrons. Once again the enterprising Harris brothers were the owners of this new venture, which, like **St George's Hall,** was built by Mr Frank Wilkins of Bristol, the architect being Mr C.R. Corfield – of Falmouth. It was built at the rear of the Royal Hotel on Market Street, where a theatre had existed in 1806.

The opening ceremony was performed by the Mayor, Cllr T.A. Webber. *"I am hopeful that the Grand Theatre will be true to its title; that pure and wholesome entertainment will at all times be provided." (applause). "I do not anticipate for a moment my services as the Chairman of the Licensing Bench will ever be required." (laughter)*.

The new theatre was dual purpose, being fully equipped for live acts as well as the movies, with raked floors, and all scenery being 'flown'. The first live performance was in the Grand's first week, being a Revue – *TREASURES OF 1928 – a feast of Comedy, Colour, Thrills, Music, Dancing and Laughter*. Presumably, all very wholesome.

The Grand, Market Street

The big difference between **The Grand** and its predecessors was that 'the talkies' had arrived! The first film was **Ben Hur**, with the 'knightly' Ramon Navarro, and the villainous Francis X. Bushman as the evil Messala. While the whole building had been put up for £15,000, the sound system alone cost about £3,000. Not Dolby, but remarkable for 1928. With its marble-lined walls, painted friezes and ceilings, painted panels of Dutch scenes and carpeting of rose du Barri velvet, it must have seemed very grand indeed.

Prices had, of course, gone up since 1910. For live shows, seat prices ranged from 9d in the Pit, to 2s/4d in the Front Circle; and even for films, seats now cost from 6d up to 1s/6d. Children only got reduced prices if accompanied by an adult, precluding the need for whips.

The Odeon, Lower Killigrew Street

Finally, in October 1936, came **The Odeon**, built on the site of Carne's Brewery on the Moor, and felt by many to be the finest of them all. Seating capacity, like **St George's Hall,** was 1,100, with all the latest refinements such as improved sound, lighting, heating, ventilation, an organ, and even B.T.H. earphones for the 'slightly hard of hearing' – free of charge. This cinema was, of course, part of the Odeon Theatres chain, run by the famous Oscar Deutsch, and cost some £35,000.

The grand opening ceremony was performed by the Mayor, Cllr C.A. Chard, while the band of the D.C.L.I. played selections. The first film showed Clark Gable and Myrna Loy in *Wife v. Secretary*. Were standards dropping from their old high moral tone?

In January of the same year, the Harris brothers sold **St George's Hall** and **The Grand** to Union Cinemas Ltd. So, although the **Polytechnic Hall** had stopped showing films in 1931, there were still these three large cinemas operating together in Falmouth during those great days before the War. The third projectionist at **The Odeon** remembered patrons queueing round the Town Hall to the old Fire Station for the dearer seats, and to the Prince of Wales Pier for the cheaper ones. Competition was fierce, with special displays and receptions in the foyers, and bands playing to draw the crowds.

Interior of the former St George's Cinema

During the War, **The Grand** and **The Odeon** were used as assembly centres for refugees from Europe, the actual screening being done at the **Princess Pavilion.** Dances were held in the **Polytechnic Hall**, earning the old place a rather unsavoury reputation, apparently. Sunday films were shown in **The Odeon**, but they were old and in a terrible state, some having only half the film on the reel. A piano was brought in and an appeal made to the audience for anyone who could play and lead the community singing. The wartime spirit alive and well in Falmouth.

Then after the War came television and the slow disappearance of the popular and cheap custom of 'going to the flicks'. In March 1948 fire destroyed the roof of **St George's Hall** (which had inherited the Kozey's nickname of 'the Flea Pit'), which

The Classic, formerly The Odeon

Demolition of The Classic to make way for Tesco's, Summer 1970

Exterior of The Grand cinema just before closure in 1986

closed, and reopened as a shopping arcade in 1960. The **Odeon** became **The Classic** in 1967, then was demolished in 1970 to make way for Tesco's .

Late in 1985 the proprietor of **The Grand**, Mr Whale, commenting on the suggestion that the people of Falmouth would be dismayed to lose their sole remaining cinema, said, "I don't see why they should be – hardly any of them go to it." It kept going into 1986, although it was not a particularly pleasant experience by then - the damp, the fleas, chewing gum underfoot, and the smell of popcorn everywhere. Now it's a parking lot behind H.S.B.C. Not much remains of the **Flea Pit** – which may not be a bad thing.

...TO THE FUTURE

And now there's the on-again off-again saga of the 'Multiplex' on Discovery Quay. Whenever and wherever the new cinema opens, **The Poly** will continue to show its own broad programme of films from all over the world.

Perhaps the whole cinema-going audience in Falmouth will grow, to everyone's benefit. After all, before the War, **The Grand, The Odeon** and **St George's Hall** provided livelihoods for large staffs, and profits for the owners, with a capacity of almost 3,000 for Falmouth's population of about 15,000. Nowadays, with a population only slightly larger, there are just 182 seats – and very comfortable ones they are, too!

Michael Carver

TUKE'S FALMOUTH MODELS

HENRY Scott Tuke RA, RWS (1858-1929) is probably best known for his paintings of ships and nude boys, but this does Falmouth's most famous artist no favours – and the belief is not factually correct.

In 2004, for the purpose of achieving funding for restoration, cataloguing, framing etc, the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society's collection of Tuke paintings was divided into categories. There are 80 topographical, 72 marine, 35 portraits and 27 bathing/nude studies, together with works in other categories.

Tuke's formal training commenced on 25th January 1875 when he entered the Slade School of Art to study under Edward J. Poynter. In 1877 he was awarded a Slade Scholarship at £50 a year for three years. He was now studying under the French artist Alphonse Legros, and the scholarship would allow him to travel. In July of that year he visited Antwerp, Bruges, Brussels and Paris. It was at the Slade in 1878 that Tuke first met Thomas Cooper Gotch (1854 –1931). They were to become lifelong friends.

It was this long period of study, both at the Slade and during his early visits abroad, which gave Tuke the foundation for becoming such a versatile artist.

In the main, Tuke's time in the summer was spent at Pennance Cottage, situated between Pennance Point and Swanpool Beach, painting, bathing and sailing in one of his numerous boats. During the winter months he undertook lucrative portrait commissions (sometimes arranged by the London dealer Dowdeswell and Dowdeswell), visited friends, enjoyed the London theatres and cinemas, and travelled widely.

Tuke's bachelor lifestyle allowed him to indulge himself in what he probably enjoyed most – sailing. His boats – *Cornish Girl, Firefly, Flame, Flamingo, Julie of Nantes, Lily, Nada, Piebox* and *Red Heart* - were variously used for racing and cruising, or as painting studios.

Before returning from London to Falmouth, Tuke worked on a number of portraits, and it is possible that throughout his lifetime, portraits provided him with much of his income. Further research on this subject has yet to be undertaken.

Tuke knew Falmouth well, of course, having previously lived there for some 13 years, and now he felt it necessary to leave London and revisit the town with a view to finding a place to live.

May 10th 1885 *"Off to Falmouth in the evening to look for new pastures. Walked out to Pennance and Newport (sic) and found some possible lodgings."*

June 8th. *"A very thick haze was on land and sea from about Newton Abbot, and when we arrived at Falmouth a fine drizzle was filling the air. However Shilling was so elate and gay at the novelty of the situation that I felt so too."*

Walter Shilling had arrived with Tuke on the overnight train from Paddington. Shilling, from Kentish town, London, was a regular boy model at the Slade School of Art and was Tuke's first model in Falmouth, appearing in a number of early works, the last being *Foc's'l Companions*. Shilling was painted on the *Julie of Nantes'* forecastle (the crew's quarters forward of the mast) with 'a borrowed dog'. This work was shown at the 1887 Polytechnic Exhibition, and sold for 15 guineas.

Arguably Tuke's first 'Falmouth work' is *A Morning Gossip* (Private Collection), painted outside the cottage at Pennance, with **Mrs Andrews** and **Mrs Fouracre** and her very young son Richard. **Richard Fouracre**, the first of Tuke's Falmouth boy models, can be seen in *The Message* (Falmouth Art Gallery) aged about six.

Maria Tuke Sainsbury records the 'chief works' by her brother, of which approximately one third are portrait commissions. From these there are ten with Cornish connections, including the portrait of Alderman F.C. Bowles receiving the Freedom of the Borough of Falmouth (Falmouth Art Gallery). Falmouth's first art gallery was established privately in 1894 in Grove Place,

The Run Home *Courtesy of the Royal Institution of Cornwall*

William John Martin *RCPS*

next to Arwenack House, by John Eva Henry Downing, W. Ayerst Ingram, and H.S. Tuke to promote the sale of paintings; the gallery continued until at least 1911.

Tuke painted many important portraits, including Alfred Aaron de Pass, who was a benefactor to both Falmouth Art Gallery and the Royal Institution of Cornwall, Truro. Both galleries were given important works by Tuke, as well as works by 'Old Masters' and contemporary British artists. De Pass built Cliff House, Falmouth in 1897, and lived there for a number of years.

During the summer of 1897 Tuke worked on the portrait of Anna Maria Fox, joint founder in 1833 of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society. This work was not exhibited at the RA, going directly from the studio to Mrs Robert Fox at Grove Hill, Falmouth. Anna Maria died in November of the same year.

Art historians, auction houses, collectors and dealers are greatly indebted to Brian D. Price who not only gave the Tuke Collection to the Society in 1965, but continued for many years with research which was privately published by him in 1983. Further research since that date has been undertaken by the author of this article.

Thanks to this research, we can now put names to works within the Tuke Collection; the identified Falmouth models are **Ginger Carne, Harry Cleave, Georgie Fouracre, Harry Giles, Mr [Neddy] Hall, Johnny Jacket, William J. Martin, Charlie Mitchell, Denny Morrison, Jack Rowling (Rolling), T.C. Tiddy, Tom Tregenza** and **Bert White.**

A number of Tuke's most important works contain Falmouth models:

'All Hands to the Pumps!' (Tate Gallery, London), was painted on the Julie of Nantes from September 1888 to March 1889, and exhibited at the R.A. in 1889. **Neddy Hall, Sam Hingston, William Hodge, Jack Rowling, Jimmy Nicholls** and **Denny Morrison** were the models.

'August Blue' (Tate Gallery, London), R.A. 1894, Birmingham 1894, Bristol 1895, RCPS 1957 was painted in the fine summer of 1893. **Tonkin, Creba, Georgy Rowling, Freddy Hall, Hamley** and **Ruffy Harris** all sat for this work.

These two works were sold by Tuke for £420 and £525, and purchased by the Chantrey Bequest Fund for the nation. Maria Tuke Sainsbury writes in her biography of her brother: *"Even Harry must have been excited by the news [of the sale], and no wonder, as it was then an almost unprecedented compliment for an artist to have two pictures bought by the Chantrey."*

We are fortunate to have four important works in Cornwall, two of which were bought from Tuke by his collector friend Alfred de Pass.

'The Message' (Falmouth Art Gallery), Dowdeswells 1890, Plymouth 1891, Bradford 1893, was painted in Tuke's kitchen at Pennance between April

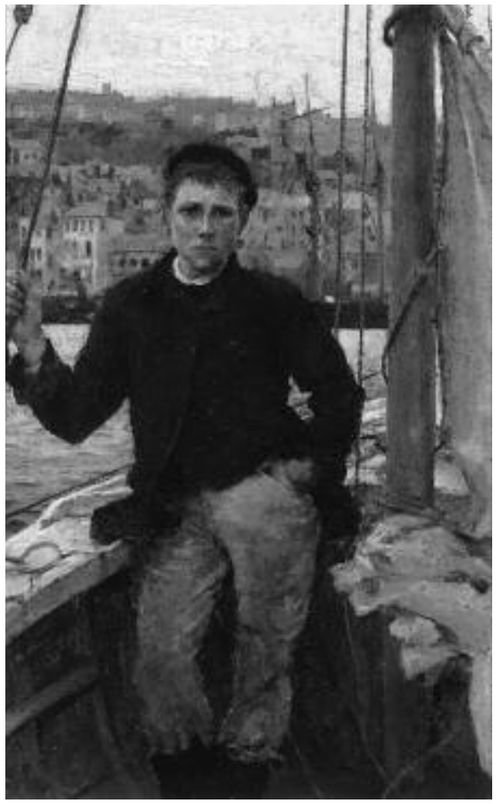
Study for 'The Message' *Falmouth Art Gallery*

and November 1890. The models are well known both to those who visit our municipal gallery, and to others who have viewed this often-lent work at other galleries.

Mrs Elizabeth Jane Fouracre (nee Vandersluys 1857 – 1916), Tuke's housekeeper from 1885 until her death, sits quietly contemplating 'the message'. Her son **Georgie** sits at the kitchen table, with **Richard Fouracre** standing half concealed. The Post Office messenger boy **William J. Martin** leans against the doorway.

'The Run Home' (Royal Institution of Cornwall), R.A. 1902, Falmouth Art Gallery 1903, was painted during the Autumn and Spring of 1901/2, with **Sam Hingston,**

The Message *Courtesy of Falmouth Art Gallery*



Our Jack *RCPS*

'Our Jack' (Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society), Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool 1886, the earliest of these four important Cornish works, was begun in April 1886, and was painted on Tuke's Quay Punt Lily. **Jack Rowling** is seen standing on the port side, with the familiar backcloth of one of Falmouth's parish churches: King Charles the Martyr stands above Jack's shoulder, with the terraces rising behind.

This work was given by Tuke as a late wedding present to Thomas Cooper Gotch and his wife Caroline Burland (nee Yates). Both had been art students with Tuke, and had settled in Newlyn, the small fishing port tucked into the corner of Mounts Bay, known as Gwavas Lake, and much loved and appreciated by those artists who became known as the 'Newlyn School'. Tom Gotch and 'Carry' Yates were married at St Peter's Church, Newlyn on 31st August 1881.

Bert White and **Harry Cleave** as the principal models. *'The Run Home'* is an important marine work, showing much activity on the water with Tuke's racing boat turning for home. This activity picture measures almost 4 feet by 5 feet.

Noonday Heat *RCPS*

'Noonday Heat' (Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society), R.A. 1903, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool 1903, was painted in the summer of 1902. The models were **Georgie Fouracre** and **Bert White**. It was bought by Col. Sydney Lomer for £300 in 1922.

Brian Price writes in *The Registers: "Jack Hone recounted to me in 1962 how Lomer's pictures came up for auction in 1926 during the strikes, and were bought out of auction to prevent Tuke's current pictures from being devalued.... We kept them off the market for £100.... We do know that if we let them go, the big picture [Noonday Heat] would have gone for £50".* On Tuke's death in 1929 it became Hone's property absolutely. Lomer had owned at least eight works by Tuke, maybe more.

Noonday Heat was for many years on loan to Birmingham Art Gallery. It was presented by John Alfred (Jack) Hone to the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society in November 1965.

© John Tonkin

Recommended reading on recently published works would include:

Falmouth Tukes
John Tonkin/Brian Stewart
(Falmouth Arts Centre)

The Golden Dream
Pamela Lomax
(Falmouth Art Gallery)

Every corner was a picture
George Bednar
(Falmouth Art Gallery)

In addition, all six previous issues of **The Poly Magazine** contain articles on Tuke, for those interested. Back issues are still available from the Falmouth Arts Centre.

THE BOULTON/ WATT LETTERS

THE 1909 Annual Report of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society included a paper written by Howard Fox, F.G.S., under the heading "Boulton and Watt". Howard Fox was then a member of the General Committee of the RCPS, along with nine other members of the Fox family; in addition, R. Barclay Fox was a Vice-President of the Society, and Wilson L. Fox held the position of Observatory Hon. Secretary.

These were remarkable days for the Society. The Annual Report ran to 374 pages, containing papers ranging from the life and work of the sculptor Neville Northey Burnard, to Cornish Sawflies, to the Mineral Wealth of Katanga. Membership numbered over 300, and chapters of the General Committee existed in Helston, Bodmin, Penzance, Redruth, Camborne, Truro, Hayle, St Austell, Plymouth, London and Barry. The Annual Meeting was heavily attended, and papers, reports, lectures, obituaries, Presents to the Library, the Annual Exhibition, prizes and awards were all reported in detail; the Observatory Report occupied a further 30 pages. The Society still possesses copies of all these Annual Reports, many in their original uncut condition.

Howard Fox's paper described a collection of "*some 1500 letters, all neatly endorsed and arranged, dating from 1783 onwards*" (up to 1800) from James Watt and his partner Matthew Boulton, from their Soho manufactory near Birmingham, to their agent Thomas Wilson in Cornwall, and their London lawyer Ambrose Weston.

James Watt, the Father of the Industrial Revolution, had invented a much improved pumping engine which was of great value to Cornish mine owners, allowing work to proceed at much deeper levels than ever before. The key to this improvement lay in the development of a separate condenser, which increased threefold the efficiency of the old atmospheric engines – possibly the single most important invention of the 18th century. Without Watt's engine the Industrial Revolution would not have happened when it did, and industry would have advanced at the rate of waterwheels and windmills.

This remarkable collection of correspondence charts the firm's dealings with the Cornish mine owners and rival engineers, who, in defiance of Watt's patents, did their best to avoid payment of the premiums required by contract. These premiums were to be based on the savings in fuel costs of running the new pumping engines, compared to the old inefficient models.

In 1798 Thomas Wilson sent to Soho the details of fuel saved amd premiums received from the Cornish mines for the previous 20 years. The figures are enlightening:

Obverse and reverse, RCPS Silver Medal 1833

Total amount of fuel saved
.....£803,869 19 8

1/3 part due for premiums
.....£267,956 13 0

Amount received by Boulton & Watt
.....£105,904 9 5

Short.....£162,052 3 7

Boulton and Watt were determined to have their reward, even at the cost of arresting further developments by other inventors, whom they saw as interlopers and pirates, including Richard Trevithick. One letter to their lawyer, Ambrose Weston, says
"Trevithick must be personally served with the injunction. Cost what it will, a few guineas to the officer will make this certain."

Boulton describes how the injunction was served:
"Woodward found Trevithick and his Friends at a publick (sic) House facing my Manufactory and delivered to him ye injunction which he received with much surprise as he thought nobody knew him."

Boulton and Watt's suspicions of their rivals were deep-seated. In one letter Watt warns that *"two French spies are on their way to inspect the engine at Wheal Crane, and must be prevented from doing so."* He suggests precautions to stop possible sabotage:
"Give a drink to all necessary persons, and knock any man down that touches the coals or the fire during the trial."

This merely served to excite their rivals to greater feats of inventiveness and ingenuity, combined with a cunning and skulduggery which gave the patentees almost as much grief and vexation as their success gave them joy.

In the end it was Watt's caution that delayed the development of the steam locomotive by perhaps fifteen years. He did not believe that man was capable of handling high pressure steam. He thought boilers were not strong enough to stand it, and that engineers were not smart enough to stop accidents. If he had been braver, the railway could have been opened before the battle of Waterloo. As it was, Watt's 25 year patent prevented younger inventors from exploring the possibilities of high pressure steam.

Finally, a lawsuit which had lasted six years was decided in favour of the patentees on the very eve of the expiry of the patent. Boulton and Watt's legal expenses amounted to some £10,000, of which they recovered only about £2,000.

Howard Fox's original 1909 paper concerning this correspondence was followed in the following year by a second, again written for the Society's Annual Report, extending the range of the correspondence to the year 1805. This unique collection, comprising some 2000 handwritten sheets, remained in the Library of the Society from then on.

Clearly there was considerable interest in the subject, since in 1920 E.W. Newton wrote on the **"Watt Centenary Commemoration in Birmingham"**, and in 1926 A.K. Hamilton Jenkin wrote a paper on the subject of **"Boulton and Watt in Cornwall"**. The letters were examined by a number of researchers, and in 1951 there was a request from the Library of Birmingham University for the loan of the papers, which was refused on the grounds of risk of loss.

One researcher pointed out that the correspondence might be of considerable interest to a medical historian, since "*both Boulton and Watt were obvious hypochondriacs and scarcely ever sent off a letter without complaining about their state of health, but that, being the polymaths they both were, they occasionally go to great lengths describing symptoms and cures, and these are not common for the 18th century*".

In 1969 the papers, which the Society had previously sent to London for binding into 11 volumes, were placed for safekeeping and study in the County Record Office in Truro. While recognising their obvious importance, the Society may not have realised that by this time they must have acquired considerable intrinsic value.

This came to light when Mr David Park, Head of the Book Department at Bonhams, came down to Falmouth to examine the Society's library. Mr Park, an authority on the industrial development of Cornwall, was greatly interested to hear of the existence of the Boulton/Watt correspondence, and requested the chance to examine it. He duly reported that it was clearly of great value, and suggested a closer examination in company with an expert colleague in order to estimate its value.

The suggested figure placed the Society in a quandary. The organisation had struggled to keep its head above water since its founding in 1833, and only continued to exist thanks to two generous legacies in the recent past. Funding from public bodies was meagre and certainly came nowhere near covering the costs of running the Arts Centre and the programme of theatrical and musical events, which attract over 50,000 visitors a year.

While the Falmouth Arts Centre has received grant aid from various bodies, the scale of public subsidy is remarkably small, over 90% of its revenue coming from earned income at the box office, as well as its own reserves. These reserves were being depleted, and the Society was strenuously seeking some way to continue its role and that of the Arts Centre as valuable assets to Falmouth and Cornwall.

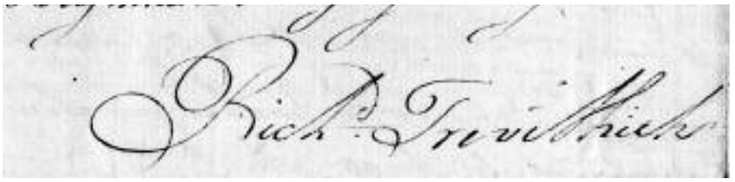
A decision now had to be made concerning the Boulton/Watt papers. A satisfactory sale would help to secure the future of the Society. However the Committee recognised their value as a Cornish treasure, and determined to seek a way by which they might remain in the County. The obvious and best way would be for Cornwall County Council to purchase the papers; however their value was so great that this would be impossible without outside funding.

Another possible purchaser might be Birmingham University, which already held the other half of the correspondence, from Thomas Wilson in Cornwall back to Boulton and Watt in Soho.

Boulton and Watt's Soho Manufactory

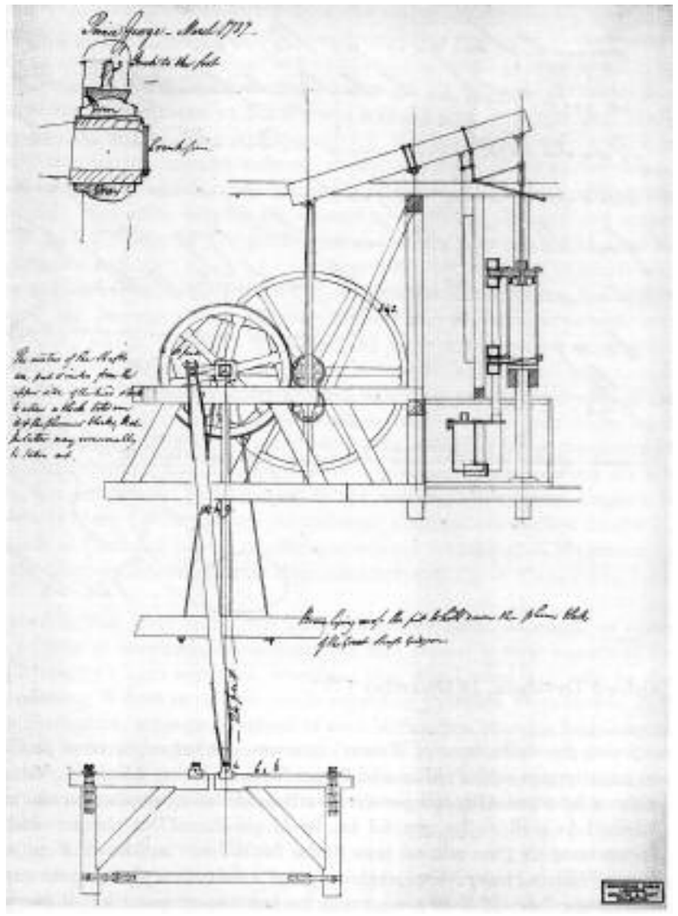
In November 2001 Bonhams were instructed to offer the archive to Cornwall County Council by private treaty sale, and to help in any way in the Council's efforts to secure funding. If this proved unsuccessful, Birmingham University would be approached, which would at least allow the papers to remain in the UK. If neither organisation were in a position to purchase, attempts would be made to discover other interested parties in the UK. If all these efforts proved fruitless, the papers would be placed at auction.

Time passed, and the County Council requested and were granted a six month period of grace, which lengthened to something like a year. However in due course the Society decided that, considering the urgent need for funds to install some form of disabled access to the building, as well as other badly needed improvements, the time had come to put the papers up for auction. Birmingham University had retired from the picture.



Richard Trevithick, 16 December 1797

Cornwall County Council were still seeking funding, and requested another extension; however Bonhams were eager to place the papers at a particular auction which they were organising, and this latest request was declined. If the sale were to be further delayed, the Society stood in danger of missing the tide altogether.



Original drawing for the Prince George engine, 1797

Bonhams prepared for the auction a beautifully produced catalogue of over 100 illustrated pages, devoted entirely to the Boulton/Watt papers, including a Bibliography which would be of value to anyone wishing to research the industrial history of Cornwall. Copies of this catalogue are still available from the Society.

Fortunately, Cornwall County Council, by urgent appeals to the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Cornwall Heritage Trust, found themselves in a position to compete at the auction, which took place at Bonhams' New Bond Street salerooms in June 2003. The reserve was set at £500,000.

The bidding started at £350,000 and moved rapidly through £400,000 to £450,000... to £480,000... to £500,000. And there it stopped. Cornwall County council had succeeded.

The outcome of this long process turned out to be exactly what the Society had wished from the beginning. The capital has been placed in a Trust, the income from which helps enormously in securing the future of the Society and the Falmouth Arts Centre. Improvements can be made to the building, and support given to the programme of events.

And the Boulton/Watt papers remain secure within the County Record Office, available for research, and a priceless part of Cornwall's industrial heritage.

Michael Carver

A BEGGAR
BY JOHN OPIE (1761-1807)

IN 2004 Falmouth Art Gallery acquired an important painting by the Cornish artist John Opie. *A Beggar* had been saved for the nation by a combination of leading art funders

Its purchase was made possible by the generosity of The Heritage Lottery Fund, MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, National Art Collections Fund, The Beecroft Bequest, Cornwall Heritage Trust, Falmouth Town Council, The Canterbury Auction Galleries and individual donations. Although Philip Mould OBE of Historical Portraits was offered the full asking price for the painting from America, he generously allowed the time for Cornwall to raise the necessary funding. The campaign captured the imagination of the local and national media, who added their support.

The picture features a young boy seated in front of foliage, hoping to receive alms. Opie cleverly paints the shadow of the viewer cast over the boy's left hand and arm. The artist made some changes to the original composition. Viv Hendra (an expert on Opie's work) considers that the head has been re-worked and that the splash of brilliant colour in the top right hand corner may be a later addition by the artist.

The painting was purchased by Opie's chief patron, the Earl of Sutherland, before being sold by Historical Portraits Ltd to Falmouth Art Gallery. It remained at Dunrobin Castle for well over 200 years and as it has not suffered the usual wear and tear of the art market it is in rare pristine condition.

The picture is considered by many experts to be among his finest works, so together with its excellent condition and unusually good provenance it commanded a world record sum for a work by Opie.

John Opie was Cornwall's first famous painter, and the only Cornish artist to be honoured with a burial at St Paul's cathedral, where he lies close to the tombs of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir Thomas Lawrence and Sir Anthony Van Dyck. His pioneering understanding of light and shade has had a profound influence on artists that followed him.

***A Beggar**, by John Opie RA (1761-1807)*
oil on canvas 36 x 28 ins, 91.3 x 71.2 cms
Falmouth Art Gallery Collection

Opie was born near St Agnes May 1761, the son of Edward Opie, a carpenter. He was apprenticed to a sawyer, but Dr John Wolcot, a poet and well-known connoisseur, encouraged him in portraiture. Between 1776 and 1779 Opie travelled around Cornwall and Devon as an itinerant portrait painter.

The painting dates from the 1780s at a time when John Opie, as a young man, burst onto the London art scene, where he was known as 'The Cornish Wonder'. He was presented to George III and Queen Charlotte, and the King purchased *'Beggar and Dog'*. Sir Joshua Reynolds was so impressed that he considered him to be *'like Caravaggio and Velasquez in one'*.

In a letter of spring 1782, Wolcot describes Sir Joshua's exposure to Opie's work: '*I have called again on Reynolds with a pair of John Opie's pictures, the portrait of a Jew and a Cornish Beggar, on which he expressed surprise at performances by a boy in a country village containing excellences that would not disgrace the pencil of Caravaggio. Opie's knowledge of chiaro scuro without ever having seen a painting of the dark masters, drew from his eye a sort of wonder.'*

Horace Walpole wrote: *'There is a new genius, one Opy [sic], a Cornish lad of nineteen, who has taught himself to colour in a strong, bold, masterly style by studying nature, and painting beggars and poor children'.*

Opie was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy, London in 1786, a full Academician in 1787, and Professor of Painting at the Royal Academy Schools between 1805 to 1807. It was calculated that he painted 508 portraits, counting each head in family groups.

This picture is a fine example of why his reputation became so high from the early 1780s, and adds weight to J.W.Scobell Armstrong's view that *'none of his maturer works as a portrait painter surpassed the best of his achievements during those years'.*

Brian Stewart
Curator, Falmouth Art Gallery

STARLINGS

Open-mouthed among grasses
sociable
sharp-faced
square-tailed
they've spent the day
teeuwing and gurgling

poking about on
the finicky business
of finding food

fast-walking the tussocks
rollicking bow-legged sailors
prickled by points of light

now
all squabbles of the day forgotten
they are into synchronisation
starmanship
sky-writing

wheeling and gliding and thinking as one
drifts of smoke
turning on sixpence

Caroline Carver

MY MOTHER'S GARDEN

is said by the sun

and the words it makes
turn snowdrop and oak
in simple light
to tender and strong

is said by the moon

and the words it makes
lay descants of white
on the plainsong
of night

is spoken each day

and the tales it makes
grow a green book
ripe with the print
of her hand

Zeeba Ansari

RESURRECTION IN ST IVES

Across the road from
the beach,
blocks are
struck by the metallic
click of stilettos,
rasping sand inside
a stone circle
where the sea
breaks on the ear
not the eye.

The stained glass of this
secular church
filters sunburst light and
leaches colour
from littoral scenes,
exerting a calming force
on surfers and beach combers
who, like *Alice*, have tumbled
into another world where
outside appears transposed;
where a tropical sea is flattened
behind glass

Vivienne Neale

FILM IN CORNWALL

LOOKING back over the history of filming in Cornwall, I counted 145 film and television productions made in the county. The first was a silent film made in 1929, directed by Paul Czinner and called *Street of Abandoned Children*, and the latest in 2004 was *Wuthering Heights* directed by Fabrizio Costa – we seem to have come full circle!

But there are some wonderful highlights in there as well as some dodos. *Love Story,* also known as *A Lady Surrenders* starring Stewart Granger and Margaret Lockwood, has to take the first accolade; filmed at the Minack Theatre, Porthcurno it encapsulated a fairy tale time and place that is gone forever but it set the scene for Cornwall as a must be location film set. 1945 was a rich year, with Rex Harrison and Lilli Palmer in *The Rake's Progress* filmed at Smugglers Cottage, Portreath, and *Johnny Frenchman* from Ealing Studios starring Patricia Roc and filmed in Mevagissey. Ealing Films had got the bit between their teeth as they came back 3 years later in 1948 with *Scott of the Antarctic* with John Mills and James Robertson Justice filmed at Falmouth Docks, and then bingo, the year after, 1949 Walt Disney rode into Carrick Roads and the Helford River with *Treasure Island* starring Robert Newton and Bobby Driscoll. Cornwall was now firmly on the international film map. Hollywood stars Ray Milland, Marius Goring, Ava Gardner, Robert Taylor, Mel Ferrer, Clark Gable, Gene Tierney, Susan Hayward, Ralph Richardson and of course the Beatles all filmed here between 1949 and 1971, the year Sam Peckinpah stopped us all in our tracks with Dustin Hoffman and Susan George in *Straw Dogs* putting sleepy St. Buryan on the international scene and parodying the Cornish population.

But did that stop the advance? Not a bit of it; 6 others followed that same year including *Rebecca* and the *Onedin Line*. Doctor Who dug himself into the St. Austell claypits in 1972 and was quickly followed by the *Poldark* series. Not a lot of people know that Michael Caine popped down in '76 for *The Eagle has Landed*. Dracula surfaced with Sir Laurence Olivier in 1978 and we pottered on, highlight after highlight, until Peter Hall's *Camomile Lawn* starring our homegrown talent, and then Disney returned with *The Three Musketeers* in 1993 starring Charlie Sheen and Kiefer Sutherland. I suppose I can't avoid it, Catherine Zeta Jones would wish I did but, ok here it is – *Blue Juice* in 1994 also starring Sean Pertwee. *Poldark* flirted with *Moll Flanders* and sidestepped *Wycliffe*, Ken Russell came and went, *Saving Grace* and *Doc Martin* entertained us and restored our parody set out in *Straw Dogs, Ladies In Lavender* revived us until the biggest groan ever heard on our filmic shores welcomed Dawn French's *Wild West* – what an epitaph! Luckily it won't be needed as the horizon is looking prolific and shiny. But is it?

It's often said that history is a good indicator of future performance – if that's so in this case, we could be in for a very long location ride. Compared to the rest of the country we're a deprived area, a low wage economy highlighted by low inward investment. Cornwall's a pretty place, tourism and agriculture our twin

A scene from 'Prime Fillet'

industries, no motorway, the beginnings of a university, just the scenario for another three decades of homespun film location. But, and it's a very big but, the future's in our hands, noone else's and it could just change – we need to seize the initiative and some people out there are doing just that.

The Cornwall Film Fund – Cornwall Film Festival – Celtic Film Festival - University College Falmouth – O-Region – DPN - Creative Kernow – Creative Skills – Media Focus – South West Film Studios – Chilli Media – ThreeS Films – The Small Axe - RKA – Deco Films – Triple Echo – Wild West Films – A38 Films – A39 Films - Spyder Eye – Brainstorm and of course all the writers, producers and directors out there too.

The Cornwall Film Fund is back again now with a much wider remit towards media as a whole. £1.8m to be spent before the end of 2006, and in the capable hands of Pippa Best the Project Director who was also the 2003 Cornwall Film Festival Director, and Jeremy Mills of Lion Television the Chairman. They aim to generate inward investment of nearly £8m, help over 50 SME's (fundspeak for small and medium enterprises) and create 174 full time jobs. Not only do they provide investment in feature films, TV dramas and animation, they also support the development of a wide range of media productions together with mentoring and loan facilities. They also act as a resource for finding locations, experienced crew, transport, accommodation and production facilities. If they are successful it is just possible that they could continue riding on the success they create – time will tell. Alongside them is Cornwall Media Focus, a membership organization aimed at developing knowledge, contacts and skills to help filmmaking businesses compete more effectively. They organize regular e-bulletins, monthly events, and a series of 'How to.....' guides. Their website homepage reminds us that there are over 800 people working in the industry here, but that over half of them are freelance or self employed!

'The Carpenter, the Virgin and the Wardrobe

South West Film Studio is no longer with us. Despite the bad press they received, they did host the making of two films before they went into administration, *Cold and Dark* and *Irish Jazz*, both of which brought much needed employment and on-the-job training into our fragile industry. They may well make a comeback, but are the productions out there? Looking at the London studios around the M25 as well as the much hoped for Welsh studio venture, I'd say not. You never know which figures to believe, but one reported that there were over 60 films made in the UK four years ago, some 40 films two years ago and then just 19 last year. Whatever the real figures are, there's no disputing the downward spiral, and that won't change until the Chancellor reviews and revives the tax incentives.

The Celtic Film and Television Festival travels round the Celtic countries and returns to Cornwall next year. It's a curious mix of mainly television production and networking, and really has little to offer us at our present level of film production infrastructure. One of its highlights though is the Frank Copplestone First Time Director's Award. Bill Scott of Wild West Films in Falmouth won it in 1997 with *Splatt Dhe Wertha* (Plot for Sale) in the Cornish language, then came Mark Jenkin with *Golden Burn* in 2002, and then this year Jane Darke with *The Wrecking Season* which is due to be shown on television later in the year. An interesting indicator of emerging talent recognized at a more national level.

Cooperation, cooperatives, co-funding, co-hosting all drive filmmaking in Cornwall. Mark Jenkin's budget for *Rabbit,* a story of disappearing tourists, consisted of petrol and occasional food. Both he and Paul Farmer of A39 Films have launched a cooperative called War-rag to harness the various talents required in filmmaking, their steering group already consists of well known local talent, and they are currently making a 'short short'; there's a 'watch this space' feeling to the venture. Carl Grose of O-region says that Mark Jenkin has led the way with no-budget Cornish filmmaking but there's a veritable army right behind him. For the past couple of years O-region, a production company run by Carl Grose, Simon Harvey and Olly Berry, has provided a monthly showcase of screenings under the title 'Roughcut' at Bar 2000 in Truro. Last year they issued a challenge to local filmmakers to produce 90 second films – they got 44 and the best of them were shown in the Cornwall Film Festival. This year they issued another challenge, 'Two Minutes Silence' and promptly got 48 – hopefully they'll be shown at the Film Festival. They're also hosting 'Futureshorts', an international selection of brilliant and eclectic short films at the Acorn in Penzance. The Falmouth Arts Centre is turning its Chellew Room into a 'Digital Lounge' in early October with a 6 week pilot showing films on DVD to an audience of up to 50. Kate Rogers of the Falmouth Arts Centre responsible for programming films said that it would enable her to screen films that she felt unable to show in the main auditorium and so attract a wider audience – if the pilot's a success, it could well become a twice a week feature.

The Cornish language, Kernewek, features strongly on film in Cornwall. Examples include Bill Scott's *Splatt Dhe Wertha* in 1997, Antal Kovac's feature film *Hwerow Hweg* in 2001, Pol Hodge's *Pymp Gwel* in 2003, Carl Grose's *Kernow's Kick-Ass Kung Fu Kweens* in 2004, and this year *De Sul* from Mathy Tremewan and Fran Broadhurst. Making films in Kernewek has special problems for actors who are not fluent in the language, but Pol Hodge has developed a number of ways to surmount the difficulties. Armed with funding from The Cornwall Film Fund, the First Film Foundation and the Sci-Fi Channel, Bill Scott shot *Cheap Rate Gravity* in 2003 on 35mm film stock rather than video, giving work to a host of local talent and invaluable training to others. He followed it a year later with *Blight* and *A Proper Job* starring Carl Grose. Looking at O-region's Roughcut screenings, those at the Festival, CMR's, Golowan, the Acorn you realize just how much film is being made down here.

Our best known playwright, Nick Darke sadly died this year. His work was produced by The Royal Shakespeare Company, the National and the Royal Court, but he was also a filmmaker. His gritty, near political film work, often intended to correct external impressions of Cornwall, also had a mad and eccentric side to it. *Koyt* (still to be made as a feature film) is a case in point. Collaboration with his wife Jane Darke as director produced *The Wrecking Season*. He had an extremely strong sense of humour – I remember filming him in his home and trying to get a 20 second statement from

'Flight', a film from Kneehigh Theatre

him on something – it took well over an hour punctuated by giggles, then gales of laughter. I finally got the clip I came for, serious, informed and witty.

The Cornwall Film Festival started like many similar ideas, in a pub waiting for the next act. There was a sense of exasperation that the Celtic Film Festival only came along every 5 years and when it did, it didn't really apply to us. So what the hell, the idea was punted, noone had any money but everyone had time and support to give, and suddenly it became a reality, exactly like no-budget filmmaking. George Greene, the 2002 Festival Director, had to start it from scratch and it became immediately apparent that there was a very strong appeal. There were master-classes, lectures, screenings, discussion groups and the showing of *Straw Dogs* that had just been re-released, and Lynne Ramsay's *Morvern Callar* recently feted at the Edinburgh Film Festival that hadn't yet been released. Held at the Falmouth Arts Centre and also at the Falmouth College of Arts and the Tremough campus, it was a success with 165 attending. The following year Pippa Best was appointed Festival Director and the success was repeated – the National Maritime Museum was included as a venue, children's films were shown, *Love Actually* was premiered, and Tim Hubbard interviewed Stephen Frears on stage in front of an audience. The Govynn Kernewek award was set up to help finance a local filmmaker to make their film, but it had to be in the Cornish language, and the Festival attendees numbered over 400. Laura Hardman was Festival Director in 2004 and brought a new generation of children into the Film Festival mix, a repeat of the now successful Govynn Kernewek award and the almost premiere of *Vera Drake* with the director Mike Leigh giving a 'question and answer' session immediately after the film. Another success now with 738 people attending. This year's Festival Director is Lucy Frears who will be building on the strengths of previous Festivals

Thanks to Creative Partnership, funding has been made available to get the skills of writers, artists and filmmakers into the primary and secondary schools. Denzil Monk, a local filmmaker, was instrumental in helping children from Cape Cornwall school in St. Just make the award winning short *The Freak*. It won the Best Silent Film of the Film Council's First Light Awards. Helped by Denzil the film was written, filmed and edited by the children and shown at the Festival and on BBC2. They and children from other schools are now trying to set up their own Children's Film Festival alongside the main Festival because they need to stretch themselves and need more space. Denzil hopes to produce a feature with young people later this year.

There's an incredible amount of talent here, a stubbornness to make even no-budget films, funding agencies targeting that talent, screening showcases galore and kids insisting on making films – how can we fail?

Andrew Edmonds

From the Cliff House

The beach empty except for a man
whose dog runs ahead, turning
to check the man is still there

walking the edge of the sand.
The terrier is trotting, paws
wet and sandy, muzzle lifted to the sea.

They're below my line of sight now
under the cliff's shadow.
It's taken a long time

to cross the broad beach, the dog's paw-
prints blurring, the feet
of the man sinking into soft sand.

Now they've turned and are heading back
along the early morning beach,
the dog in front as before, chasing

a small group of oystercatchers
that rise and settle always out of reach,
always a little way ahead.

Man and dog are hidden
for a moment,
hidden by a tree at the edge of the cliff.

The beach empty again
except for the birds,
their incessant searching,

shallow footprints gone,
low waves like mercury sliding,
sliding.

Now the dog appears, then the man
barefoot in the shallows, holding his shoes.
He wears a white hat

and he's loving his solitary walk
the yell of sea in his head,
low sun warming his face,

his dog turning and waiting for him,
turning, waiting.

Ann Kelley

Summer

I'm giving summer away
to anyone who wants it,

anyone
who can make better use of it
than me

Someone will take it halfway round the world,
I expect

Someone else's summer won't be quick-tempered,
or wear itself out with longing

My given-away-free summer
has waterfall ideals,
the goodwill of mountains,

has the correct amount of lilies,
a kinship of roses

That's summer sorted

But who wants my autumn,
my novice September,
my barefoot October,

the last judgement of my November?

Penelope Shuttle

NEVILLE NORTHEY BURNARD

THREE years ago, letters written to the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society by the sculptor Neville Northey Burnard (with one addressed to Sir Charles Lemon MP, the Society's first President) were returned to us. They had been borrowed by a member for research purposes many years previously and were discovered in the course of winding up his estate.

These letters cover a ten year period from the 29 September 1843. Burnard writes from Pimlico, London where, owing to Sir Charles Lemon's patronage and encouragement, he worked for two eminent sculptors - first Henry Weeks, and then Sir Francis Chantrey. Sir Francis, famous for his generous bequest to the Royal Academy, would have been particularly interested in the young Burnard, being himself from a humble background, starting life as a grocer's boy.

Burnard was born in the Parish of Altarnun in 1818, the son of a stonemason. His long association with the Society began in 1833 when he submitted a carving of the head of Homer for that year's inaugural exhibition. In 1835 aged only 16 he won the first Silver Medal at the Society's exhibition for his carving on Delabole slate of *'Laocöon'*.

During his years in London, Burnard regularly exhibited at the Royal Academy, the last time being in 1873. Shortly after this, in some part due to the early death of his two youngest children, he left his wife, lost interest in his work and returned to a wandering life in Cornwall, where he finally died penniless in a Redruth workhouse. Those interested in the full account of his life should read F Hamilton Davey's biography which appeared in the Society's report of 1910, and Mary Martin's *'A Wayward Genius'*.

'Laocöon'

But this article refers only to what is contained in this correspondence, written during the period when his reputation was being established, important commissions were being received and he had every reason to believe in himself and what lay ahead. For a man with little formal education his letters have style; here is a man proud of his association with men of eminence and of the friendship he has formed with the Society's Secretary, Mr W W Rundell; they also reveal a robust personality, bearing out Miss Caroline Fox's description of him as *"a great powerful pugilistic-looking fellow"*.

The letters demonstrate that while building his reputation in the City he took every opportunity to exploit his Cornish connections. The correspondence refers to busts he makes or proposes to make of Davies Gilbert (Vice President of the Society and author of the *'Parochial History of Cornwall'*) Admiral Boscawen, the Earl of Falmouth, Mr Treffry of Fowey (where he was employed as a mason before moving to London), Dr Carlyon, Mrs Enys, members of the Fox family, Dr Borlase, Mr Le Grice, John Couch Adams and his patron Sir Charles Lemon.

One of his successes was to persuade Sir Charles Lemon that he should be commissioned to make a bust of the young Duke of Cornwall, later Edward VII. The one letter we have addressed to Sir Charles concludes:
"I need not tell you Sir Charles that these are considerations of great importance to the artist and naturally tend to make him anxious to embrace so favourable an opportunity of coming before the public."

He writes to Rundell on the 29th May 1847 that he has been taken by Sir Charles to Buckingham Palace and been introduced to Mr Anson, the Queen's Private Secretary . On 9th June he reports that he has had the first sitting with the Prince who asked, *"Is this a secret?"* The bust was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1848 and then at the Polytechnic Hall at Falmouth.

Plaster medallion by himself.

Mrs Enys of Enys

The correspondence also indicates that it was Burnard who initiated the idea that a statue of Richard Lander should be placed on the existing column at the top of Lemon Street, Truro, which had been erected in honour of the famous African explorer. This was completed in 1852.

King Eward VII when six years old

While furthering his Cornish connections, Burnard was enjoying the society of very eminent people. He writes in March 1849: *"I am invited out to tea on Monday next with Elihu Burritt 'the learned blacksmith' so you will see that I am rather coming out in the literary line."*

Burritt was an American from Connecticut who, while an apprentice blacksmith, taught himself mathematics and developed a lifelong interest in linguistics. He was a leading advocate for the abolition of slavery who attracted the attention of President Abraham Lincoln, and was appointed by him to be American Consul in Birmingham. Burritt addressed over 150 large meetings in England on behalf of the League of Universal Brotherhood. In 1847 he visited Ireland and wrote a pamphlet *'Four Months in Skibbereen'*, making Americans aware of the plight of the Irish.

In the same letter Burnard says:
"I have the pleasure of seeing Alfred Tennyson who is much pleased with the pipes, I remained about 3 hours with him and found a very agreeable person, very much pleased with the tour he made in Cornwall last summer. He speaks very highly of Cornish people and says that civilisation is farther advanced in Cornwall than in any County he has been to. He spoke in particularly warm terms of Peach whom he called a 'sweet fellow'. I have also seen Carlisle, or rather he has been here to see me, he is a noble man and one whom I am rather proud at having seen. He has promised to sit to me for his bust and I think it will be the most favourable opportunity of making a good bust that I have yet met with."

A word about Charles William Peach whose career was described in the Society's 1911 report. He was a self taught man who made important fossil and marine life discoveries while serving as the Coastguard at Gorran Haven and Fowey, later making a major contribution to the understanding of Scottish geology. In the year 2000 a commemorative plaque was placed on the old Custom House at Gorran Haven where he began his scientific activities.

In September 1852 Burnard writes:
"By the steamer 'Shannon' which leaves London today I have sent to you for the exhibition one case containing a cast of my bust of Beethoven and a cabinet style bust of Kossuth. Kossuth's friends think my bust extremely like him and Behnes the sculptor who made a sketch of him from the life says my bust is the best likeness he has ever seen of him."

Louis Kossuth was a leader of the Hungarian Independence Party who fled Hungary in 1847 and arrived in England in 1851, where he was much admired. Burnard is justifiably proud in referring to Behnes' compliment, for William Behnes was one of the most distinguished British sculptors of the time, having been appointed Sculptor in Ordinary to the Queen in 1837.

In October 1852 Burnard writes to Rundell with a suggestion for an addition to the collection of busts of famous of Cornish men placed in the Gallery at the Polytechnic Hall:
"You know I suppose the renowned Sam Foote the comedian and wit was a Truro man. Do you think a man of his stamp would be considered in character or out of place in the Gallery now forming at your hall?"

He goes on to say that Foote was born at The Red Lion Hotel, Truro, and he had suggested to the hotel keeper, without success, that his bust should be displayed there. He continues:
"If Foote had been a man of science or of high moral character even I should have waived all consideration of the Red Lion at once and fixed upon your Hall but as he was what he was I thought he would be more at home at the Red Lion."

The Gallery of the Polytechnic Hall, 1882 with busts

A fortnight later he writes:
"I shall be glad to know the decision of the Committee respecting the bust of Foote. I think all things considered he ought to be there, the world would alter very much for the worse if all wits and comedians (I mean the natural ones not the actors) were to be excluded from it, drab does very well but 'so much of it' (as Jan Moyle said) 'is enough'."

It is interesting that Sam Foote who died in 1777 was still a significant figure at the time Burnard is writing. Foote was a comedian only in the sense that he was a writer of comedies and other plays (twenty two in number), many of them highly provocative. *'The Minor'* (1760) attacked Methodists and *'The Nabob'* (1772) was aimed at the directors of the East Indian Company. His birth at the Red Lion is misleading as to his social status, for he was educated at Worcester College, Oxford, where he squandered a fortune. Abandoning the law for the stage, he became an actor and theatrical manager, the first manager of the Theatre Royal, Haymarket which was built in 1767. There is no record that a bust of Foote was ever made.

While enjoying the company of the great

Sir Charles Lemon

and the good, Burnard was not very keen about any other Cornishman taking his place. He writes to Russell:
"I have not heard of the arrival of Alfred Harry in London otherwise than through you. I offered Mr Kinsman when he wrote to me about Harry to do all I could to bring him forward which between ourselves would not be much. Coke is of the same substance as the diamond but amazingly unlike in appearance and I feel that Harry's patrons will find out they have discovered a piece of coke or in more intelligible phrase 'a very dull diamond'. There may be something more in his work this year than was last, I saw nothing in those to warrant anything favourable in the future."

In September 1850 rather condescendingly he writes:
"I see by the paper that Alfred Harry got a medal again and a silver one this time. Well he seemed a good sort of fellow from the little I know of him and I wish him success with regard to competing for prizes. I think it would not be giving him a fair chance for an old hand (compared to him) to contend with him for the Society's prize ... some would think me too proud to compete with Harry and some strangers to me might think me afraid, neither of which I hope you will consider me capable of."

His last reference to Harry (whose name unlike Burnard's does not appear in Rupert Gunnis' *Dictionary of British Sculptors*) is in December 1851 when he writes about some clay which is still at the Polytechnic Hall:
"I shall be glad to present the clay to the Society for the benefit of 'whom it may concern' but you are at liberty to give it to Alfred Harry when you happen to see him, I know of no one in the West of Cornwall who is more likely to make good use of it. He called on me when he was in London and seemed to wish to improve but I had no means of assisting him."

Burnard's first letter to Rundell in September 1846 addresses him as *"Honoured Sir"*, then *"Dear Sir"* and *"My Dear Sir"*. In 1848 he is writing to *"My Dear Rundell"*, showing that a more intimate relationship has been established between them; he ends one letter *"hoping to see you soon, with best respects to Mrs Rundell"* and refers to personal matters: *"I think I shall go down to Devonport and take the Missus with me to see the Country."*

But then comes a sudden freeze; his first two letters of 0ctober 1850 are more formally addressed to *"Dear Sir"*, and by 0ctober 7th Rundell is coldly addressed as *"Sir"*.

The reason for this change of tone has not been written about before (Hamilton Davey who saw the correspondence chose to ignore it), but it is worth recording as it illustrates Burnard's sturdy character. The first intimation of the impending disagreement is in September 1850 when he points out that he has not been paid for the busts he has made of Sir Charles Lemon and Couch Adams, the celebrated mathematician and discoverer of the planet Uranus. He says:
"I think it is to be regretted that there should be any difficulty in raising the small sum for Sir Charles to whom the County owes so much, seeing that there was no difficulty in getting the money for the Prince of Wales to whom the County owes nothing. Again £4 was but a small sum to raise as a tribute of respect to the man whom all Englishmen are proud to honour as being one of the greatest discoverers in his own walk of science that the World has seen."

Ten days later he is writing:
"As you have not answered my note respecting the money due to me on the bust and as I know it is a troublesome matter to you and one which you ought not to have left on your hands and as I want the money and ought to have it, would it be advisable for me to apply to Sir Charles or Mr Fox on the subject?"

His letter of 0ctober 3rd says:
"As you have not answered my last two letters I conclude that you wish me to write to Sir Charles on the subject. I have accordingly done so stating the exact sum of money due."

This letter evidently upset Rundell who must have replied at once, because on 0ctober 5th Burnard writes that if he interprets Rundell's letter rightly it means:
"That certain gentlemen gave a poor devil of an artist a definite order to execute a bust of a most worthy man whom they knew it was a duty to honour and the order having been executed in a satisfactory manner and the said bust having been presented at several meetings of the Royal Society accompanied by speeches "suited to the occasion" and thanks having been returned by the recipient of the honour and all having got fairly into print, the World thought that the demonstrators had shown a vast amount of respect to the excellent President of the said Royal Society and bestowed a vast amount of patronage on the sculptor who was selected to execute the commission and of course the World not knowing anything further about the matter thinks what a lucky fellow the artist and the sitter must be but what would it say if it knew all? I have done my part as cheap and as well as the getters up of the concern could have wished and after two years because I happen to be "anxious for the cash" I am coolly told that one of the principal men, the man who in a set speech presented the bust to Sir Charles at Truro, 'is in no way responsible for it and will have nothing to do with it'. There is but one name whereby properly to designate such things as these."

Burnard's letter of 7th 0ctober addressing Rundell for the first time as *"Sir"* gets straight to the point:
"For I suppose after the receipt of yours of this morning 'Dear Sir' or any other forms in common use would be out of place, what is the matter, why are you out of temper, what have I done that I am now considered 'impertinent'... You must not suppose that I am one of those inflammable gentlemen who cannot speak on a painful subject without losing my temper. I had done the work and I certainly thought I had the right to look for my money and when I found the matter was painful and troublesome to you I took the matter into my own hands not in the spirit of 'impertinence' quite the reverse, I only did what I did because I was tired of waiting to get the matter settled and did not wish to trouble you any further on the subject."

Earl of Falmouth

Burnard then makes a nice distinction, and points out to Rundell that although he was bound to write to him as Secretary, and in clear terms, there was no reason for Rundell to take the view that their personal relationship should be affected:
"The matter of the bust is between me and the Society of which you are the Secretary and I have a right to look to you for such information as I require... when you come to London in 1851 there is no one whom I would rather meet than yourself, I can only say

Now if your catalogue be full I'll not insist
But if you want a friend that is true I am on your list."

Burnard has clearly been hurt by the tone of Rundell's correspondence and concludes by saying:
"I shall think of you with respect and shall always speak of you as you have always deserved and shall look back with regret on the eventful 3rd 0ctober when my friend of sixteen years standing was taken from me in a whirlwind and a chariot of fire."

One cannot help concluding that Rundell and the gentlemen of the Committee were of the opinion that a man of Burnard's background should be more respectful and was clearly getting 'above himself'. They might have shown him more sympathy, for he had informed Russell in a second letter of 0ctober 7th why he was so anxious to be paid:
"*I was tired of waiting any longer for an answer. When I wrote on the 3rd my wife was ill in bed, the Doctors were calling three or four times a day, in addition to which one of the children was ill."*

In fairness to the Society, this dispute did not affect its professional relationship with Burnard, for in 0ctober 1851 he writes to say that he has sent the cast of Peach as requested by Sir Charles Lemon, and refers to another object *"which I think will be interesting namely a life size alto relievo of Mary Calenack who walked from Penzance to the Great Exhibition."*

But he cannot resist harking back to his grievance when he writes of the cast :
"It is in the same style as I did of Bonallack years ago which some of the Truro lawyers ordered and wouldn't pay for by way of patronizing a Cornish artist."

He ends this letter:
"Now with reference to your last letter I have thought the matter over and have 'slept upon it' and have come to this resolution that as I am not conscious of having given you just cause for your late conduct towards me I shall follow the advice of my excellent mother 'when people will be offended let them take their own time to come round'."

In 0ctober 1852 he asked Rundell to thank the Committee *"or rather the judges"* for the award of the first Silver Medal for that year. The last letter is dated 20th April 1853 when he reports that the medallion of Sir Charles Lemon has been completed and includes detailed instructions and drawings of how it should be installed.

Apart from the letters, the Society retains some of Burnard's works; the head of Homer, the *'Laocöon'*, the medallion of Sir Charles Lemon and the busts of the Earl of Falmouth and the young Duke of Cornwall. There are other pieces in the County including some of his drawings; it is hoped that before long the Society will find an opportunity to arrange an exhibition to celebrate this extraordinary man.

David Peters

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MIRACLE THEATRE

Since 1980, Miracle Theatre has presented many of its shows at the Falmouth Arts Centre. We welcome them back year after year, and almost feel that they've come home whenever a new production fills the house again. We congratulate Bill and the company on their growing success and constant popularity.

1979 -1988

FOR as long as I can remember there'd always been this irrational and unshakeable desire to 'go on the stage'. I wrote a play at the age of 8, acted my way through school, went to watch endless West End shows, worked in rep for two years, studied drama at University. But it wasn't until I saw a performance in a Cornish field in the early 70's that I finally understood what theatre was all about: here was a shared experience, something rough and ready, powerful, funny, 'in-your-face' and alive!

The show was *Midsummer Madness* by Footsbarn, Cornwall's touring company formed in 1972 and shortly to move lock, stock and barrel to France, having realised they were more appreciated and better supported outside their own country. They have since become internationally renowned and taken their unique brand of communal theatre to Australia, Russia, India, South America and all over Europe.

About the same time, I came across the *Ordinalia*, (the Cornish Miracle Plays), one of the earliest pieces of British Drama and written in Penryn. Its only revival in recent times had been in 1969 by students from Bristol University at Pirran Round. It was written in Kernewek (which I didn't speak) and there was a Victorian translation by Norris (which was rather turgid). So I embarked on an adaptation that would capture the spirit of the original, which surely had many of the elements that had so mesmerised me at that Footsbarn show. It had to be irreverent, funny, spectacular, musical and *alive!* It has to be said that this was a very free adaptation: when God created the universe he spoke, as we're used to hearing him, in the language of the Old Testament, whereas the devils teased and terrified in contemporary jargon. When hearing the name that God had given to the Earth, Lucifer complained: *"Typical! Why can't he call it something normal like Fraddon or Redruth?"* So, no brownie points for authenticity or scholarship, but as a piece of theatre it worked. Played in pub gardens, parks, school yards, none of which had hosted theatre before, it connected absolutely with the audiences of all ages.

Dr Livingstone I presume, 1989

That was 1979 and Miracle Theatre was born. The composition of the company was a mixture of professional actors and musicians trying to create their own employment in Cornwall, together with some enthusiastic friends. Qualifications weren't important. In those days drama school didn't seem to prepare a young actor for performing in a field, in all weather conditions, one metre from the front row of the audience, with nowhere to look except into their eyes! This calls for a style of performance that is large, confident and particularly honest.

Tristan and Iseult followed the next summer, an epic in every sense – not least its length of over three hours. An experiment to try and build an audience by performing the show every Wednesday for several weeks at the W.I. Hall in Truro did not really pay off, but whenever we

Beginning of the World, 1979

took the show into the open air to a new venue (such as Castledore, near Fowey) it was a different story. Outdoor touring was obviously the way forward.

However, having lost several performances to bad weather, with the next production, *The Fables of Faust*, we toured in a marquee, provided by the National Trust. Unfortunately in the middle of a performance at a North Devon festival it was set alight by a troupe of Hell's Angels. The actors managed to put out the blaze without interrupting the performance or alarming the audience, who assumed this was a very special effect on Faust's inevitable progress to hell.

Traditional marquees do not make very good theatres since they require central posts that are always in the wrong place. So in 1984 Miracle designed its own tent, bright yellow and pyramid shaped. A perfect solution, with unimpeded views and a water-tight 20 square meter performance space. The only drawback was that it took about four hours to erect. Equipped with this distinctive structure, a company of twelve performers embarked on a national tour in an old London Transport bus powered entirely by youthful idealism. We'd put on street theatre in the morning to drum up an audience, perform *The Joke Machine* for kids in the afternoon and *McBeth* in the evening, and then move on. *McBeth* was the first of Shakespeare's plays to receive the Miracle treatment: ruthless cutting, a bit of re-writing and the seamless addition of entirely new material! This mammoth tour stretched right across Southern Britain and included a week on Clapham Common, but audiences were often tiny

Midsummer Night's Dream, 1997

Waiting for Godot, 1985.

and by the end everyone had lost money, enthusiasm and their good humour. If this crazy exercise had any value it was as a lesson in the value of marketing. It's one thing to produce a masterpiece and quite another to persuade people to come and see it. This was the first of Steve Clarke's twenty-two productions as an actor and co-writer with Miracle.

1985 saw a small local tour of *Waiting for Godot*, performed in the round inside the pyramid. Sadly, most of the world missed this classy show, which managed to be very funny, without compromising any of the pathos of Beckett's great play. There followed an adaptation of *The Little Prince*, with a dozen original songs that survive on a cassette – a rare collector's item that has become something of a cult classic in at least one household! This hotchpotch of productions shows the extent to which Miracle was suffering from a lack of any direction or identity. As a result it came very close to folding.

1988-1999

But in 1988, with still no whiff of funding in the air, Miracle re-grouped. Bill and Steve were joined by Keri Jessiman and began to write and perform a series of 3-handed shows with the clear purpose of 'bringing history to life'. In a witty and highly irreverent way, *The Great Enterprise* - a Spanish view of the Armada, *A Grand Catastrophe* - a Cornish view of the Civil War, and *A Pig in a Poke* - a warts-and-all biography of Henry VIII, took carefully researched material and turned it into accessible and entertaining outdoor theatre. *Cabbages and Kings* was a site specific show about Pendennis Castle performed every weekend throughout the summer of 1990 to large crowds. By this time the company had a fourth member, Jim Elliot, whose designs gave the productions and posters a distinctive, comic style. Jim had to make a little go a long way, not simply because of non-existent budgets but because the entire company, costumes, props and scenery had to fit into a Vauxhall Astra.

Miracle was now enjoying a small measure of stability as a result of a contract with English Heritage to take these history-based shows to castles all over the UK. A production process was evolving that is now central to the company's work, beginning with a script (more or less complete) which is then subjected to a very free period of devising. Much of Miracle's comedy is physical and found through fooling around in rehearsal. The shape of the play can change radically. More often than not the ending only falls into place in the final days before opening – occasionally, it has to be said, not until some way into the run!

In 1993 the Foundation for Sport and the Arts awarded Miracle a one-off grant that provided a relatively new ex-BT van and enough resources to pay performers a small wage. This support was a huge psychological boost, and that winter we felt confident enough to produce an indoor show. Looking for an alternative to the commercial panto formula of pop songs and soap stars, we decided to explore the story of *Aladdin* from a 'new' perspective. The show was based on an early Victorian script which we found in the British Library and staged in mid-nineteenth century music hall style. There was plenty of spectacle, adventure and silliness for the kids while their parents appreciated the authenticity, innuendo, and the timeless wit of the old songs.

The following year we presented *The Revenge of Rumplestiltskin*, an original 'Georgian' extravaganza based on the fairy tale, *The Yellow Dwarf* - with new lyrics set to music by Purcell.

With *The Tempest* in 1994 Miracle continued its collaboration with William Shakespeare. Some may like to think he turns in his grave at the ruthless cutting and pasting to which we subject his plays. But audiences respond positively. The front row of a Miracle show is often composed of small children, wide-eyed and chuckling, hopefully Shakespeare fans for life.

Poster by Jim Elliot

Hunchback of Notre Dame at The Minack

2000 – 2005

The new Millennium brought a major upheaval to Miracle. After 16 years, Steve decided to move on. At the same time Jim went to London and Keri left to have a baby. Fortunately by this time the core company had expanded to include Kyla Goodey, Angus Brown and Rosie Hughes, all skilled at devising and well suited to carry on the company's ensemble approach to its work. Jim Carey composed and produced a musical score for *Twelfth Night,* the start of a fruitful collaboration with the company.

Then in 2002, when we had finally given up hope of receiving anything other than occasional project grants, a phone call came out of the blue to say that, as part of the Arts Council's *Theatre Review*, Miracle was to become a regularly funded client. There were to be no strings attached to this funding: this money was to enable Miracle to continue and develop the work it was doing, i.e. small scale touring, primarily in the South West. But now we would be able to increase production values, to improve marketing and – most importantly – to pay everyone appropriately. With the help of an Objective One grant we set up an office in Truro and employed a full-time administrator and began to prepare for what would be an overnight fivefold increase in turnover.

Twelfth Night, 2000

Miracle's process of putting a play together is very free and collaborative and encourages the whole company, writer, performers, designer, composer and makers, to really push the boat out, experimenting up to the last minute (and beyond!). It's a hugely rewarding process, but the stakes are high and that moment when the work is first exposed to an audience is particularly uncertain: a kind of alchemy takes place and, if the right choices have been made along the way, the director can sit back and marvel as the production rises like a perfect sponge.

On the other hand it can turn out more like a biscuit. In 1998 the rehearsal process for *Cleopatra*, an entirely devised show about a group of Victorian archaeologists who excavate Cleopatra's mummy, had been so tortuous that by the opening night we had still not resolved an ending. We sketched out a final scene during the interval and died painfully in front of an audience of six, in thick drizzle. Those six people probably never came back to watch another Miracle show, but by the third week of the tour we had one of the most original and polished shows we have produced. One of the blessings to come with revenue funding has been adequate rehearsal periods.

But a raised profile also raises expectations. The choice of Victor Hugo's rambling epic *Hunchback of Notre Dame* as a basis for our first properly funded show was ambitious, given that we could only have one set and six actors; but Alan Munden's ingenious, multi-storied structure of gleaming aluminium served as cathedral, pub, courtroom, gypsy camp and square. After a tour of over 50 venues the show finished with a week's run at a packed Minack.

Over the years Miracle has built up a core audience who make a habit of turning out to watch our shows. For them our role is similar to that of a rep company and we aim to offer a varied programme, while maintaining our particular style. So last year's oriental *Hamlet,* performed in front of a mirror maze, with koto and shakuhatchi soundtrack and martial arts battles, was followed this summer by *The Case of the Frightened Lady*, a 1930s who-dunnit with drawing-room comedy set and Cole Porteresque songs. And yet both shows had an unmistakable 'Miracle' quality.

What next? That's the unsettling question that looms twice a year, when it's time to select a random seed, pop it in the ground, let the Miracle cultivation team loose and wait to see what sort of exotic plant (or scary triffid) emerges.

Bill Scott

Fluent

Most of the time he's off with the fairies.
He's mislaid the name of his home
and forgets who his wife is
and like a faded dream
several languages have gone.
He's lost the trick of spreading cut halves
of a scone with jam and cream.
He's a man who forgets he has a nose
that needs blowing and wiping,
but when the jazz starts playing
he gets up and bebops,
fluent feet remembering.

Ann Kelley

Mantis Mantra

Small green insect crawls sticky
and staccato across my hand,
weaves paths through sun bleached hair.
The mechanics of its walk
its prayer, remain mystery
like air, as claws rekindle
your copper plated plaque
of overlapping hands, tattooing
faith; faith I was unable to inhale.
Ritual readings, texts, propelling
you through life and lost on me.
But now I find they linger
on my skin as I perfect the art;
the art of praying backwards.

Dawyth Agar

No Common Language

September 2001 Cairo 1972

Four equal arms of the cross
meet at a fountain. Worshippers bathe
under the vast cool dome. These ancient vaults
are Hospital, Library, University, Holy-place.
Care. Study. Teach. Pray.
This is the great Mosque in Cairo.
I am my student self, barefoot in scarf
and sleeves, looking through filtered sunlight
at the gifts, the abstract names
of God. Wondering at the interlocking
black and white keystones, the muezzin's
noon call. Arabesques in three dimensions.
Between the tourists, worshippers,
touts and pedlars, shepherded
by their guardians from the hospital wing,
a ragged crocodile of mental patients
makes the daily crossing of the court to pray. Unsedated,
like a frieze of mediaeval lunatics, they caper,
shuffle, freeze in odd postures, mutter. Their fellow Muslims
don't look away or tut, as we might. It is God's will.
One young madwoman has picked me out,
comes face to face. Takes from her robe
something to show and share with me.
Her most precious treasure; strips of cloth,
a doll's head worn half bald. It's easy
enough to respond to her smile.
I've never seen anything so
whole-hearted. I say in English
- Oh, she's a beautiful baby! -
really meaning it. The girl answers
in her own invented babble. We warm
to each other, chat until a nurse comes, gently
guides her away, with a nod of apology.
Estranged by guilt and loss
I say - Go in peace -
my likeness, my innocent sister.
Our only shared words are
- Ma'a salaam

Jane Tozer

FALMOUTH'S WAYWARDENS

Local government in the early and mid-nineteenth century was truly 'local', and apart from a professional Town Clerk, administrative and practical responsibilities were shouldered by elected members of the Borough Council. An important yet not very popular appointment was that of Waywarden whose main function was to supervise the maintenance of roads, paths and other routeways; and being indirectly associated with the roads – albeit by accident of association or because nobody else was prepared to look after them – the Waywardens were closely involved with such public utilities as street cleaning, sewers, drains, gas and water supply.

(Other names used in various parts of the country for this official were Boonmaster, Overseer of the Highways, Stoneman, Surveyor of the Highways, Stonewarden, Waymaker and Wayman.)

The scope of the Falmouth Waywardens became apparent to me when I was fortunate enough to acquire their correspondence for the years 1845 to 1863, consisting mainly of receipted bills from the local tradesmen who had carried out work on their behalf; these records had lain undisturbed in an oak chest for well over a century, and study of these valuable documents has enabled me to gain a close understanding of life in the town during the middle years of the nineteenth century. This collection of records is now kept at the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society as part of the material available for reference in the Falmouth Local History Research Project.

Keeping the roads in as good condition as possible was the Waywardens' main task, and for this purpose local hauliers were employed to transport a variety of materials around the town. In 1846 Richard Eva was most often used, and his bills, written in a hesitant hand on odd scraps of paper, show these movements:

October 12/13 – Carting 11½ load of spar from the Moor to High Street at 8d per load 7s 8d

do. (ditto) for 9 loads of spar stone from Kilegrew (sic) Street to Moor 3s 0d

(Spar was a word used frequently to denote the local stone or 'killas', a Devonian clay-shale underlying the whole town.)

December 21 1846 to January 13, 1847 – For carting 50 loads of spar from the Moor and the Strand to High Street, Lower Road and other places as per agreement £1 2s 0d

Eva's journeys on behalf of the Waywardens in 1854 took him all over the town, and other receipted bills give some idea of his movements:

February 16 – *New Burial Ground to the Moor*

February 22 – *Bar to Yard*

April 21 – *sand to Garrison Hill*

June 17 – *cart hier (sic) carting Bar gravel*

June 27 – *Prison to Webber Street*

November 20 – *day's work carting Bar gravel*

There are frequent references to 'yard' or 'stone yard', but its exact location is uncertain; however there are annual payments to Lord Wodehouse for the rental of several plots of land, one of which occurs regularly: *"To one year's acknowledgement of leave to break stone on Arwenack Green",* the location of which is likely to be the patch of land on the seaward side of Arwenack House, occupied by the semaphore station until the Falmouth Packet service came to an end in 1850. This was left empty until 1873, when it became the third site of the Killigrew Monument, a pyramidal obelisk built to the orders of Martin Lister Killigrew in 1737 in the grove of elm trees on the north side of Arwenack House, the present site of Grove Place.

Other hauliers used included James May, whose work in August 1857 consisted of:

Carriage of 7½ tons of stone from Carnon Mine to Falmouth at 1s 0d per ton 7s 6d

10 tons of limestone for Macadamizeing (sic) at 2s per ton £1 0s 0d

Throughout these records there are references to this new 'macadam' road surface, invented by John Loudon MacAdam who for a short period up to 1802 lived in Flushing as Prizemaster and Victualler to the Post Office Packets, before moving to Bristol and devoting his energies to road engineering.

In 1859 James Eva was frequently employed *'carrying 45 loads of shingle'* for £4.0.0, and *'carting more stone to yard: do. rubbidge (sic) for 4s 6d'*.

Some of the stone came from the excavation of 'platforms' for buildings on the steep slopes of the town, but much came from established quarries, 14 of which have been identified in various parts of the town. Two of these, at the

Porhan Street (now New Street). Note the pump and entrance to the Beehive Beer Cellar

Beacon and Berkeley Place (today known as the Town Quarry, and used as a car park) were operated on behalf of Lord Wodehouse, and printed bills were issued and receipted by his agent at the time, John S. Skinner.

The Wodehouse family of Kimberley Hall in Norfolk had succeeded to the Killigrew estates after the extinction of the Killigrew name in Falmouth with the death of Martin Lister Killigrew in 1745.

While roads were surfaced with beach material, broken stone or, occasionally, 'macadamized', pavements and gutters along the main streets were surfaced with granite, often referred to as 'moorstone'.

In 1850 and 1852, handbills were circulated and estimates invited for paving part of the town. At the former date, Joseph Timmins and John Datson tendered jointly:
"We will agree to provide granite paving as specified on the handbills and set it and carry it to any part of the town as may be required and to do it in a workmanshiplike manner for the sum of 6½d per foot and will rework the old and set it as may be required in a workmanshiplike manner for the sum of 2½d per foot."

In 1852 seven tenders for paving the Market Strand were submitted by Abraham Prior and John Datson (jointly), James Ackerley (a Budock stonemason), Thomas Spargo, Nicholas Cloak, Thomas Pardon, J. Barnicoat and James Kessell. There is no record of which of these was successful.

Gratings to carry away storm water, and railings for the many paths rising up the steep hills of the town, both figure prominently in the Waywardens' expenditure. In May 1849 Thomas Courtenay supplied:

New grating for Upton Slip, 37 lbs at 3½d
.....10s 9½d
4 lbs of lead 8d
Time fixing 9d

Other jobs carried out for the Waywardens included *'framing, fixing and painting railings (Prince Street)', 'repairing the grating by Mr Fox's back door',* and *'mending the handrail of the steps near the Synagogue'*.

In the mid-nineteenth century, sewers were new! Up to then, disposal of sewage had been on an ad hoc basis, and as Falmouth spread up the steep hillside west of the town, much of the effluent gravitated into the wells lower down, causing epidemics of cholera and 'enteric fever' (probably what we would call gastro-enteritis today). An official enquiry was carried out in 1854 into *'the sewerage, drainage and supply of water and sanitary conditions of the inhabitants of.....Falmouth'* by Robert Rawlinson, a Government Inspector. A copy of the whole report is available for study in the Local History Research Project.

Submitted to the General Board of Health in Whitehall, this revealed alarming conditions. James Earle, a former Waywarden, described the lack of any form of organised sewage disposal, those installations which did exist discharging into the main street, or into the sea. Local doctors reported the outbreaks of disease, ascribing them to sewage disposal facilities. Appalling housing conditions were described: ten people living in one room,... babies being born in such rooms *'amidst a stench most sickening'*... having to knock out a pane of glass to obtain ventilation... twelve persons in one room with cats, dogs and parrots... *'overcrowding lowers the standard of morality'*... accumulations of filth, dirty stagnant pools and foul privies.

Naturally the expense of installing sewers – such as it was – fell upon the Waywardens, and tenders were required at several times for the construction of short lengths of pipe to attempt to relieve the situation. In 1852 seven tenders were received for making a common sewer in Killigrew Street, varying between £43 and £56. But progress was slow, and even at the end of the century, when Falmouth was being widely advertised as a holiday resort and eminent medical men were advocating it for invalids, further health reports of 1899 and 1902 were critical of water supply and sewage disposal.

From 1848 piped water was available, on the ground floors, for those who could afford it, and by 1854 there were *'490 customers with taps in their houses and 180 supplied from external taps'*. The Borough paid for the pumps, and later, taps to supply the poorer areas on a communal basis, although some still relied on their unhealthy wells. Repairs to the pumps were regularly paid for by the Waywardens. In 1850 John Dinnis charged 6d. for *'2 new pins and bearings, new hoop and leather and time for repairing Town Hall pump'*, while repairs were also needed to Fish Strand pump and those on Porhan Street and Wynn's Hill.

'Light transport'

Sixpence a dose (for the donkey)

Rubbish of all kinds was removed from the streets at the Waywardens' expense, and various carters were employed to carry it off. The hard-working Richard Eva was paid 9s 0d for *'day's work carting rubbish for the town'*.

One constituent of the 'street sweepings' was horse manure, and because of its value as fertilizer , farmers were invited to submit tenders and pay the Waywardens for the privilege of removing it. Variously referred to as 'town dung', 'street manure' or 'street dung', this commodity was collected from the streets in a wheelbarrow or the dung cart by the 'scavenger' and taken to a dump on the Moor, whence it was collected by the cart-load by the successful farmer.

And this was most often E.A. Bullmore of Trescobeas Farm who spread it on his fields with all the other street sweepings; which explains why the gardens of all the houses in my neighbourhood are still turning up fragments of glass and pottery after 40 years of cultivation. Bullmore paid the sum of £8 for the street manure of the town for the year 1851 to 1852; but Richard Dunstan of Gillanvase Cottage was unsuccessful with his offer: *"Hearing that the sweepings of the streets is about to be let by tender I should feel inclined to give (if accepted) three pounds..."*.

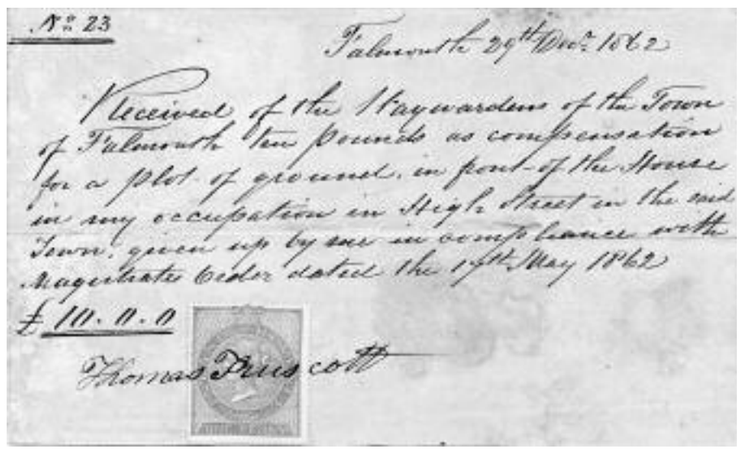
Aftermath of the High Street Fire

Transport was often hired by the Waywardens, and Robert Lake submitted regular bills for Cart and Horse; but they had some 'light' transport of their own in the form of wheelbarrows and a donkey cart, both of which needed regular repair.

But it was on the donkey itself that most care seems to have been lavished. Charles Lukey repaired the harness and saddle, Thomas Webber supplied oats, and at frequent intervals John Dinnis charged for '*4 shoes for donkey....1s 0d*'. Every year between 1854 and 1863 Mr Bullmore of Trescobeas Farm supplied grazing in the summer months and accommodation and fodder in winter. And to keep the animal fit for its arduous duties, I.A. Michell, Chemist and Druggist of Market Strand, regularly supplied *'Condition powders for donkey'* at sixpence a dose.

Falmouth's narrow main street was even narrower in the mid-nineteenth century than it is today, and the Waywardens were at times involved in street widening. In 1849 the narrow Church corner end of Arwenack Street was the subject of a Magistrates' Order authorising them to effect the compulsory purchase of land from Messrs Carne and Tweedy. The biggest street-widening project, however, took place in 1862 after the disastrous fire in High Street. The Waywardens paid between £6 and £10 to property owners such as William Olver as compensation for the value of the land *'given up by me so as to widen the street in front of the house now in the occupation of Mr Symons, Baker, in High Street'*.

Parking problems in the main street are, apparently, not a recent phenomenon. In


No. 23
Falmouth 29th Dec. 1862
Received of the Waywardens of the Town of Falmouth ten pounds as compensation for a plot of ground in front of the House in my occupation in High Street in the said Town, given up by me in compliance with a Magistrates Order dated the 14th May 1862
£10. 0. 0
Thomas Priscott

Receipt for compensation after the High Street fire

1846, for instance, the Waywardens settled an account with Edward Bennett, Constable of Falmouth, *'to several attendances on Mr J. Downing in assisting in removing carts &c &c &c'*, for which he was paid 8s 6d.

Digging up the roads for the various public utilities seems to have been almost as frequent an occurrence 150 years ago as it is today. At intervals the Waywardens were in correspondence with gas, water and electric telegraph companies on this thorny issue, by far the worst offender being the Gas Company and its owner, Mr Wynn. In a letter from the gasworks in 1852, the Manager informed the Waywardens that a larger gas pipe was to be laid and asking *'if you would prefer that the repairing should be done under your immediate control and supervision'*, and asking the price of such work.

The immediacy of the Waywardens' reply seems to suggest that this question had reared its head before as, after giving the price for carrying out the work themselves, they added: *'We take this opportunity to again notify that an arrangement must be come to before you open up any part of the streets within our jurisdiction, or we shall be under the necessity of bringing the question to an issue before the Magistrates'*.

In July 1857 an official-looking letter arrived from the Electric Telegraph Company announcing that the Board of Highways in the town of Falmouth should *'take notice that the Electric Telegraph Company ...at and after the expiration of three days from the service hereof, to break up and open the pavement and soil of certain streets called Ludgate Hill, Beacon Street, Church Street, Arwenack Street, Prince Street and such other streets...for the purpose of laying down, under and along such streets certain pipes or tubes as they are empowered to do for conveying the conducting and other wires of a certain Electric Telegraph along or across such streets in conformity with the powers in that behalf given by the said Act.'*

This revolutionary means of communication successfully connected Falmouth to London from an office near the main Quay, and meant that business and shipping contracts with the Capital were now a matter of hours rather than days.

These examples of Municipal activity in the middle years of the nineteenth century portray the ways in which one branch of small-town local government worked. Towards the end of the century, as the tasks became more onerous and technical, a professional man known as the Borough Surveyor was appointed to carry out the duties previously dealt with by the Waywardens.

Falmouth was well served by a succession of competent men until the reorganisation of local government took most powers away from Borough authorities, and most of Falmouth's affairs have since been dictated by Truro.

Peter Gilson

Waywardens, where are you now?
Beehive Beer Cellar now closed down

Last Rites

Your skin sees what is coming
before you do: you can feel
your face becoming more remote.
There is a man approaching
just about your age -
one single sliding raking glance
allows him into your head:
you like the look of him.
Grey haired. And thin.
He walks. You walk.
The space between condenses,
becomes warm. It is so vital
to appear indifferent,

> as your hips begin to move
> with just the slightest swing,
> the merest lift of breast,
> the faintly-pouting lip,
> as your feet take up the beat
> of Woman. Woman. Now.

When did all this happen
before? Was it so familiar
it was taken for granted
and absorbed? So it seems
your body cannot forget,
and faithfully presents
a reconstruction
of something blurred and beautiful
from long ago.

Eleanor Maxted

Buzzard

Spiralling
slowly

with hardly
a wing flap.

So casual.
So lethal.

An indolent
assassin

with an eye
like a razor.

Bob Rogers

Bluebell Time

is not so much a when as a where
the woods are, in slanting sunlight
floored with, not so much a carpet
as a throw, a blue net, a diaphanous
(that the light comes through) suggestion,
touch, most subtle of washes, blue.
It is distance come within reach,
recessional touchingly present.
It might look like it starts in the eye,
but the fact is, more in the mind.

I never go there now. Passing by
serendipitously, my thought is, This year
I must walk in the Bluebell Woods
as when a child I did. But now,
there's no-one safely to go with, whose hand
I could hold, or who would want without
embarrassment to hold mine; or whose tread
with mine would not bruise them into
recalcitrance, refusing next year to
- bloom, regenerate, blow and blue the light.

If there are children there in those woods
now they are ghosts, whose imprint is not light
enough to catch this blue bell present light.
It is like the brain in an autopsy,
only at which can it for certain be
known what the mumbling diagnosis is,
what the loss was and is that caused such
(even in sunshine still in shadow) absence.

Andrew Robinson

Ucello at Falmouth

When the masts
of sailing boats
moored in the harbour

are set bobbing
and swaying
by a sudden breeze

it's as if
the pick-a-stick lances
of Ucello's cavalry

at *San Romano*
are coming to life.

Bob Rogers

Feral

He's the size of a close-up rat
with the legs of forty frogs,

sports a belly of speckled green,
ears of a tail-flicking horse.

I keep him under my coat in a cardboard box
complete with exercise machines.

He's fitter than more than one flea,
going over the top on his swings

and spinning his treadwheel endlessly.
But sometimes he sits in a corner

devouring all he comes across,
and getting fat as fat can be -

his box expands and has no handles,
it's difficult to get through doors.

Other times he breaks out, goes wild,
taking months to find and catch.

I shouldn't worry for his welfare,
he's terrifyingly self-sufficient,

but I try to groom and stroke him
and cut his sharp little claws.

So who'd want a dog or a cat,
canary or an anaconda

when you can keep one of these
in the dark of a cardboard box.

Bill Mycock

Haiku

Time for good reading
kettle's waiting to be filled
- yes, Poly's coming

Paintings by H.S. Tuke in the possession of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society

The Missionary Boat

White Ship at anchor in Falmouth Bay

Jack Rowling

Just arrived - The Bellas

Noonday Heat

Our Jack

Giclée prints of these paintings from the RCPS Tuke Collection are available from the Falmouth Arts Centre on Church Street, Falmouth Art Gallery and the Penlee Art Gallery (Penzance).

Prices are either £40 or £50 each, depending on the size. A number of postcards of Tuke paintings are also available from these sources – and very handsome they are, too.