ROYAL CORNWALL
POLYTECHNIC SOCIETY

thepolymagazine

ART & SCIENCE

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ROYAL CORNWALL
POLYTECHNIC SOCIETY

Contents

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The Falmouth Invincible
William Pennington Cocks

Our Website

www.thepoly.org highlights the activities of the Society, with its programme of talks, lectures and exhibitions, and the wide schedule of film and live events organised by its trading arm, Poly Trading.

From the Chairman

Keith Hambly-Staite - Chairman RCPS
Richard Lambert - Director General CBI
Anthony Phillips - President RCPS

Keith Hambly-Staite

It was in the year that the great Cornish inventor Richard Trevithick died that the Cornwall Polytechnic Society was born. The aim was to promote the ideas of the men who worked at Perran Foundry near Falmouth, some of whom would have been known to Trevithick. There has to be a certain piquancy in the fact that the 18th century papers of Trevithick's adversaries, Boulton and Watt, are now providing income for some of the Society's work in the 21st century.

Cornwall always responds vigorously to its economic and social challenges with imagination, inventiveness and ingenuity. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century the county was pre-eminent in mining and agriculture, and although this greatness has passed, it continues to be inventive - not least in the new model of higher education introduced in the Combined Universities in Cornwall, and the work on renewable energy and environmental technology by local businesses.

The Society's original work was reflected in the exhibitions and prize-giving events held in the Polytechnic Hall. Built in 1835, this soon became the place to be seen, with many inventions and products including dynamite, photography, meteorology, and the development of Cornish mining, fishing and agriculture on show to the curious public.

The 2008/9 Poly Magazine illustrates once again the wide range of interests of the Society, both past and present. Alison Bevan's review of our new Tuke Catalogue emphasises our commitment and determination to bring the work of this important artist into public view. Tom Barnicoat's article on W.P. Cocks reminds us, in Charles Darwin's bi-centenary year, of the passionate interest Victorians took in science, which is balanced by Jason Birt's article on marine biology today. Tim Light highlights the importance of ferries, in the past and in present times, to those living beside the sea, and emphasises the economic and environmental importance of our rivers and the sea.

Because the Society continues to be multi-disciplinary and remains politically independent, members have a unique opportunity to undertake activities of benefit to the general public throughout the county. From the beginning, the Society has been interested in the arts, sciences and literature, and promoting the talent of those who live and work in Cornwall. At its home in Falmouth the art galleries display the sometimes sizzling new work of young artists, both those at University College Falmouth, and others seeking to explore their commercial potential. In its arts cinema the public enjoy a mixture of popular, arts and foreign language films and live events in an intimate environment.

The Society has always had a county focus and has provided encouragement and support for artistic expression, innovation and enterprise in the arts and sciences. It puts this into practice through lectures, book readings, exhibitions and awards. *Café Sci,* a programme of informal lectures and discussion groups, together with more formal lectures, highlights important topics of the day. For this reason in the past few months we have also invited the Director General of the CBI, Richard Lambert, to talk about the economy, and Sir David Dain, former High Commissioner to Pakistan, who reflected on the history and implications of the current wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The importance of our relationship with the environment will be the focus of the Annual Lecture to be given at the Hall for Cornwall in Truro on 30th November by Professor Michael Depledge, a world leader in the field of the environment and human health. Free to members of the Society, the invited audience will be able to enjoy informal performing arts and musical events before the lecture, given by young people in the theatre foyers.

We are re-establishing awards to promote the achievements of young people today with prizes and certificates of achievement named after the founders, and in partnership with the Cornwall Education Business Partnership, the Fox Awards will showcase the talents of young people and encourage the development of new ideas and an entrepreneurial approach to learning. Award winners will be presented with their prizes at the Annual Lecture when their work will be displayed.

Rejuvenation was the theme for the Poly in its 175th year. Even the Magazine is being affected; this year we go online! In June, this and the two previous issues will be available on our interactive website: www.thepoly.org

Our continued success depends on the support of our members and the general public. In this issue we include an invitation for more people to join us as members.
I hope many of you will.

About the President

Anthony Phillips

Anthony was born in Falmouth, but at the outbreak of war the family moved to Mawnan Smith where he was brought up. He was sent away to board aged seven at St. Peter's School, Exmouth, and then moved on to Kelly College, Tavistock, where he was a scholar. School was not a happy experience, though later he was to claim that it was the best training he could have had for his later and very unexpected change of profession.

Anthony was only too happy to leave school, and entered the solicitors firm Reginald Rogers and Son, Falmouth, where he was articled to Oliver Price (known as Tin Ribs). The only money he ever earned was petrol money for his motorbike which he used to serve writs for the firm – once cornering the reluctant recipient in a chicken battery barn. In 1958, Anthony qualified as a solicitor.

The firm hoped he would stay, but Anthony decided it was time to leave Cornwall and he joined the well known equity firm Rowcliffe and Company, whose offices were in Bedford Row backing on to Gray's Inn. Anthony dates his love of art from his frequent attendance at Sotheby's and Christies, when valuable paintings were being sold off for death duties.

During his two years at Rowcliffes he became convinced that he was being called to the ministry in the Church of England, as much a surprise to him as to his friends. He entered King's College, London for three supremely happy years. Anthony, who had to learn Hebrew and Greek from scratch, particularly enjoyed his Old Testament Studies, and when he obtained a first class degree, went on to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge to do a doctorate. He decided to combine his legal and theological knowledge. The result was his first book, *Ancient Israel's Criminal Law.*

Anthony was ordained deacon in 1966 and priest the following year, serving his title at the Good Shepherd, Arbury, a new housing estate on the edge of Cambridge. In 1969 he became Dean of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. The following year he married Vicky, and their two sons, Christopher and James, were born there.

It was at this time that he also undertook a considerable amount of television and radio work. The former was done in conjunction with Mike Raven, a former Radio One disc jockey. Together they did a series of discussion programmes on the ten commandments, which ended with an eleventh episode when they went round London asking interviewees for their eleventh commandment. The answers are not suitable for this Journal and in large part were never broadcast!

In 1975 Anthony moved to Oxford to become Chaplain of St. John's College. Here Anthony and Vicky's daughter, Lucy, was born.

After seventeen years of tutorial work, Anthony wanted something different. Mrs. Thatcher offered him a Deanery, but he turned her down. Instead, out of the blue, he was invited to apply for the post of Headmaster of The King's School, Canterbury, a large mainly boarding school set in the Precincts of Canterbury Cathedral. At first he declined, but in the end put his hat in the ring. There were ten candidates on the short list, of whom Anthony was the only one who had no experience at all of teaching in a school. To his amazement he was appointed. Vicky had at one time been Secretary to a distinguished Headmaster who, on writing to Anthony to congratulate him, said, 'Your wife is your only qualification'.

The ten years that followed were to be the happiest years of Anthony's life. When he arrived, there were girls in the sixth form. He turned it fully co-educational. The school is the oldest in the UK, tracing its history back to St. Augustine. In the war it had been evacuated to the Carlyon Bay Hotel. After these ten hectic years Anthony retired to his native Cornwall.

As Chairman of the Society, Anthony was responsible for overseeing the restoration of the Tuke Collection and its Catalogue, for which he raised over £90,000. He also master-minded the 175th celebrations, raising a further £28,000 to mount the *Chasing Clouds* exhibition, and culminating in the Anniversary Lecture by Richard Lambert, Director-General of the CBI. He looks forward to further involvement with the Society as President – no longer a merely honorary post.

ROYAL CORNWALL POLYTECHNIC LECTURE

MONDAY NOVEMBER 30 2009
HALL FOR CORNWALL

ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE: CHALLENGE and OPPORTUNITY

Professor Michael Depledge D Sc, Chair of Environmental and Human Health at the Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry, believes that changes in climate, environmental pollution, human demographics and food security are transforming the world.

Informed by his experience with organisations throughout the world, he will propose that the environment of Cornwall is unique, and is a place for exploring new ways of improving the health and well-being of people, business, and sustainable communities.

17.30 Entertainment
19.00 Lecture

Ripple
Newlyn Artists Photograph Album, 1880s
Penlee House Gallery & Museum and
Cornwall Studies Centre, Redruth

Henry Scott Tuke's Boats

David Crabb

Henry Scott Tuke RA, RWS (1858-1929) is acclaimed as one of the great *plein air* artists of the 19th/20th centuries, and although best known as the painter of bathing boys, his repertoire is a good deal broader. He is now renowned as an accomplished portrait painter as well as one of Britain's finest marine artists. It is no surprise that Tuke had a great love of the sea and sailing ships, yet his skills as a yachtsman are less well documented.

EARLY DAYS

Tuke's interest in boats, and sailing in particular, was undoubtedly kindled while living in Falmouth as a boy. It was here that young Harry developed a love for the sea, for the big sailing ships in Falmouth Harbour, and for drawing. His first sketch of a square-rigger was done at the age of 10, and his fascination with these ships continued throughout his life.

Tuke's first experience of sailing occurred in the summer of 1881. Staying in Bournemouth for a month, the 23 year-old sailed on the River Avon near Christchurch with his friend from the Slade, Joseph Benwell Clark. The following summer, at the suggestion of his friend Jacomb-Hood, he decided to spend two months in Torcross at his friend's summer house. Tuke spent most days swimming in the mornings and sailing or sketching in the afternoons. This was a way of life that he was to prefer for almost fifty years.

RIPPLE

When Tuke arrived in Newlyn in 1883 he wrote to his sister and said he '*was not much struck with the place*'. Soon, however, he made friends with the locals and artists in Newlyn and Penzance, and as usual developed a most congenial social life.

While in Newlyn Tuke had the use of a 26 ft. fishing boat named *Ripple*. She was rigged as a dandy, having a loose-footed mainsail and a jib-headed mizzen, and was sometimes simply referred to as a dandy. *Ripple* was used by Tuke to paint his boat subjects, and one of his first great oil paintings to feature boys in a rowing boat was executed from this craft.

In July 1884 he went on a sailing excursion with his lifelong friend, William Ayerst Ingram. It has been suggested that it was on this voyage that Tuke set his mind on moving to Falmouth, because the following spring he set off from London to find a new home in the area about a mile west of Falmouth called Swanpool.

LUG AND MIZZEN PUNTS AND DINGHIES

The visit to Falmouth was successful. Tuke found the house he had been looking for, and a month later moved into the property. It was located between Swanpool and Pennance Point, perched on the edge of the cliff amongst the ruins of an old silver smelting works.

Tuke's House, Friths Postcard 1908. Private Collection

Our Jack on Lily. RCPS Tuke Collection

It was not long before he bought a number of small boats, and one of the first was a clinker-built punt, about 12 ft. in length, with a lug mainsail and small mizzen sail. The masts on this boat could easily be removed and she could therefore be adapted either for sailing, sculling or rowing

Tuke owned several such punts and kept them either at the foot of the cliffs below the cottage at Pennance or in the harbour. The little beach below Tuke's cottage was not an ideal place to keep a boat as it was exposed to the south-easterly storms, and on at least two occasions his boats were smashed against the rocks at the base of the cliff, and his little flotilla had to be replaced.

Sketch of Julie of Nantes, showing panel cut out for sketching. Windsor Magazine.

Tuke was always on the lookout for the square-riggers which would come into Falmouth Bay. He used his little brown sailing punt to convey him out to where they were lying and commented in a letter to his sister, '*it is nice exciting work doing them, one has to work at high pressure for an hour or so and then they are gone for ever*'.

LILY

Tuke's first real experience of yacht racing came with the acquisition of *Lily*. He travelled down to Falmouth in March 1886 to see his new boat and described her as, '*the joy of his life*'. She was rigged as a cutter with a waterline length of 18 feet, and appears to have been a very competitive boat in the local yacht races.

The team comprising Tuke, John H. E. Downing and Jack Rolling achieved excellent results over the next few years. Their first major success came at The Royal Cornwall Yacht Club (R.C.Y.C.) Regatta on 27th July 1886, with Tuke taking first prize.

Racing continued into the winter of 1886 and on one occasion, Tuke recalls in a letter to his sister, *'disaster struck'*. Tuke was preparing for a start in a race opposite the Yacht Club against Lt. Pugh's boat, *Moina*. The other boats had dropped out so they had two or three races to themselves. With the start imminent, a heavy squall came off the land and *Lily* broached. Water flooded in and down she went, leaving Downing, Tuke and Jack Rolling looking for the nearest boat to swim to. Young Jack struggled to make the 30 yards to the nearest boat but, with a good shove or two from Tuke and Downing, they managed to get him to the safety of a moored boat.

JULIE OF NANTES

Since the early 1880s Tuke's reputation as a portrait painter had been growing, and this provided him with a reasonable source of funds to indulge in his love of boats and yachting; but in order to paint marine subjects, Tuke needed a larger boat which would act as a floating studio. So in June 1886, when an old French brigantine *Julie of Nantes* came up for auction, Tuke asked his friends Downing and Lean to bid for her. They were successful and he acquired the rather dilapidated boat for £41, less than the price of one of his portrait commissions. A lot of work needed to be done to make her seaworthy. At the same time a large oblong hole was cut in her hull on the starboard side, allowing Tuke to sketch from just above the waterline.

Tuke found *Julie* not only the perfect backdrop for his painting, but also a convenient place to live. She was 77 ft. in length, had a displacement of 118 tons, and with her hold cleared out, provided Tuke with a studio some 60 ft. long in which he installed a stove, table and hammocks. She had a certain romantic beauty, retaining her long bowsprit, complete with martingale, and old masts and rigging.

Sadly *Julie* became a liability and in 1892 he sold her for £13-10s. She was later laid-up on the shore of Penryn River where she remained for a long time decaying in the mud.

CORNISH GIRL

In the spring of 1888 Tuke acquired *Cornish Girl,* a powerful 28 ft. boat of the local quay punt type. She was typical in size of the quay punts operating out of Falmouth in the 1880s. With no engine she relied on a foresail, mainsail and a small mizzen sail for power and manoeuvrability.

Cornish Girl was not raced by Tuke but was an ideal cruising boat on which he painted a number of pictures, the first of which was entitled '*Jack Steering*'. In 1891, some three years after acquiring *Cornish Girl*, a tremendous storm hit the south-west peninsular. *Cornish Girl* broke free of her mooring and was reduced to matchwood, crushed between the counter of an old coal hulk and Mrs Downing's fish yard.

PIEBOX

With the loss of *Cornish Girl* and the sale of *Julie of Nantes*, Tuke needed another boat that would provide him with a floating studio. Unlike *Julie,* which always stayed on a mooring, he wanted a boat that he could sail out of the inner harbour to meet the square-rigged ships in the bay. So in November 1892 Tuke found an old yacht that would be suitable for conversion. She had no official name but the local fishermen called her *Piebox*. One assumes the name reflected her looks, since the old yacht had had her insides stripped out and her decks raised to create a glass roofed studio. She was fast enough to catch up with the barques in the bay, and provided Tuke with sufficient accommodation from which to sketch.

FIREFLY - A HALF-RATER

In 1893 Tuke decided to order two racing boats, a half-rater named *Firefly*, and a one-rater which he named *Red Heart*.

Firefly was a small lugger, 22 ft. in length, built and designed by Thomas Jackett in 1893. She was the smallest of his racing boats, normally crewed by two people, and would have been a very wet boat in any strong breeze. There is little mention of *Firefly* in Tuke's diaries, and with the acquisition of a rater in 1894, it is likely that she took second place to his first love, *Red Heart*.

RED HEART - A ONE-RATER

A few months after the acquisition of *Firefly*, Tuke took delivery of a new yacht from Thomas Jackett named *Red Heart*. She was 30 ft. in length with a sail area of 295 sq. ft. Although Tuke does not disclose in his diary how much he paid for her, a new rater cost about £100 to £150 in the late 19th century. Today such a boat would cost £70,000!

One of *Red Heart's* first races was at the Falmouth Sailing Club Regatta in 1895, the three raters competing being *Fal* owned by Mr. Nalder, *Pixie* owned by Dr. Harden, and *Red Heart*. *The Yachtsman* magazine of 1895 describes the race: '*On the first rounding between the Vilt and Governor buoys the leading yacht Pixie was run into by Fal. The former had her rudder-head damaged and the latter smashed a plank in her bow. This mishap gave the Red Heart a walkover. Mr. Tuke however, in a sportsmanlike spirit, decided not to accept the prize and the race was re-sailed on another day in a very strong E.S.E. wind. Red Heart crossed the line first, followed by Pixie 30 seconds later. Mr. Tuke became the winner of both cups presented for raters and half-raters'.*

Top: Tuke's Racing Flag in Lloyds Register of Yachts 1901
Above: Sketch of Firefly. *Windsor Magazine*

He competed in all the local regattas and even ventured up to Plymouth for their annual regatta. This was no mean feat since the trip to Plymouth involved sailing some forty-five miles along a coastline exposed to the prevailing south-westerlies. The freeboard on *Red Heart* was no more than 2 feet, so it was inevitable that the journey would have been very wet and involved some vigorous baling.

Tuke's skill as a helmsman was well recognized by the sailing community and was reflected in the many cups that he won. He treasured these as much as the medals he received from the art world. At the end of the 1902 season Tuke began to think about buying a new boat, and on October 3rd decided to go out on H.S. Norton's 5-ton sloop *Daphne* to see how she performed.

FLAMINGO

Tuke must have been impressed with Norton's boat, *Daphne*, because he contacted Thomas Jackett in the winter of 1902 to place an order for a similar boat. He travelled down to Falmouth on Saturday 21st February 1903 and went straight up to Jackett's boatyard on the Monday morning. His diary reads: '*Up to the yard and saw my new boat for the first time and like her well.*' *Flamingo* was a 6 ton cutter, 32 ft. in length and with a sail area of 700 sq. ft.

By 24th June 1903 she was ready for her first sail. William and John Jackett helped fit the boom and gaff and bent on the sails, and on a glorious summer's day Tuke, Kinnaird Jenkins, Neddy Hall and the Jackett brothers went out for *Flamingo's* '*first spin*'. Tuke commented in his diary: '*Appeared to go very well*'.

For twenty years he raced *Flamingo*, winning many trophies, but by the winter of 1923 Tuke, together with others in the R.C.Y.C., was beginning to look for a new one-design boat in which to compete.

However he also needed a replacement to *Piebox*, and so he acquired another quay punt named *Nada*.

NADA

The first mention of *Nada* is in Tuke's diary on 26th May, 1924. We know that she had an engine because his sister Maria commented in her book: '*He had another boat, the Nada, with sail and motor, that he used for fishing and sketching in the bay, but she seems to have lacked the romance that was attached to all his other boats, perhaps because of the motor*'. *Nada* was built by Thomas Jackett in 1912 and remarkably is still afloat, lying in St. Mawes, and renamed *Curlew*.

Tuke loved fishing and *Nada* was an ideal boat for him to get out to his favourite fishing spots, but her prime purpose was to convey the artist out into the bay to sketch the square-riggers. However, sketching from a small boat was rarely an easy operation, since frequently wind and tide would cause his own boat and the subject to swing round in opposite directions, making sketching impossible.

FLAME – A FALMOUTH SUNBEAM

Tuke entered his 65th year with renewed energy. He arrived back in England from the Caribbean on 20th April 1924, and spent only five days in London before setting off for Falmouth for a few days. He travelled down to Cornwall on the 23rd May 1924 and four days later visited the Royal Cornwall Yacht Club to see his new boat *Flame*. His diary just comments: '*After lunch went up to the Yacht Club and aboard the Flame, my new Solent Sunbeam. Got the sails bent and went for a good spin. Think I shall like her.*'

Flamingo in the Bay. *Courtesy of Lia Beldam*

Sunbeams at Falmouth. *Kingsway Postcard, Private Collection*

The Sunbeam is a 26 ft, Bermuda-rigged, open cockpit, day racing yacht. A crew of three is usually carried for racing. Costing about £270, the Sunbeam was a relatively expensive boat to buy and at that time it would have cost about £100 per annum to run and maintain. Bearing in mind that this was more than a labourer would earn in a year, this was clearly a sport for the wealthy.

Seven Sunbeams were launched in Falmouth in 1924, racing three times a week during the summer season. In his first year with *Flame,* Tuke won the coveted Trevissome Trophy and was regularly one of the top three boats. Over the next three years however, his racing results deteriorated although his enthusiasm never waned. Perhaps the exertion of sailing a small craft, often in unfavourable conditions, had become too much for this veteran sailor who was now in his sixty-ninth year. Tuke's health began to worsen during the winter of 1927 and when he returned to London he was far from well.

In 1928 Tuke's health failed and he spent the best part of the year recovering from a heart attack. The miserable cold and wet days in January prevented Tuke from leaving his cottage, and in February his sister had to return to Pennance to nurse him. He died peacefully on March 13th 1929. His sister remarks in her memoir: '*He was going beyond, to some other Paradise, where perhaps the West Wind blew and the Sun shone always*'.

EPILOGUE

Tuke was buried at the highest point of Falmouth Cemetery, overlooking his cottage at Pennance and the bay where he had enjoyed so much sailing. His funeral was a simple affair attended by his sister's family and a small number of friends.

His obituary simply read: '*Mr. Henry Scott Tuke R.A. of Swanpool, Falmouth, the distinguished marine painter, a regular exhibitor at the Royal Academy, an expert yachtsman and a member of the Royal Cornwall Yacht Club, died on March 13th last*'.

As far as we know only two of Tuke's boats are still afloat. *Nada* (now *Curlew*) and *Flame* (now *Melody* V36). Tuke's reputation as a yachtsman may have been forgotten, but two of his boats still sail on.

This article is a short extract from David Crabb's privately printed book, '*Henry Scott Tuke: with Brush and Sail*'. For those wishing full details of Tuke's boats and sailing career, copies may be obtained from the Poly Box Office.

David Crabb was brought up in Falmouth, where he developed a keen interest in boats and marine art. He now lives in the South–East and races a Dragon one–design on the East coast.

Bedruthan Steps

Look after the Landscape

and it will look after you

Adrian Phillips

The Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society congratulates the Cornwall AONB Partnership on the 50th anniversary of the Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This is not just a bureaucratic milestone – it is really there, the landscape largely unchanged and as beautiful as ever, including some of Britain's finest coastline. Congratulations to all concerned.

All photographs by Adrian Phillips

In this article, I want to explore the value of landscape and, above all, to show that it need not be seen as an alternative to economic expansion – so it is a challenge to a simple 'jobs before beauty' argument. But, to use the new jargon phrase beloved of officialdom, my case has to be 'evidence based'. It is not enough to say 'Cornwall is a special place which people love to visit, so please keep it that way'. I must offer proof that it is beautiful, that its wealth depends in part on that beauty, and that its landscape can and should be protected in a time of great change.

Landscape is shaped by nature – the rocks, the land and water, and the living world of trees, other plants and animals; but it is also what people have done to it and how they use it. So it is a record of the past, but also an expression of the present. We value it for many practical reasons – as a place to live, to work in or visit, for its resources and economic value. It has intangible values too, inspiring the arts, refreshing the individual, reinforcing our sense of identity and creating a place that we feel we belong to.

So landscape is much, much more than scenery. We are aware of it with *all* our senses and our intellects, and both as individuals and as part of society. It is truly the context for our lives.

Locally, nationally and now internationally, we have developed tools to understand landscape and policies to manage it. In 2007 the UK signed the European Landscape Convention. This is not an EU measure but the world's first treaty about landscape – and the UK played a big part in drawing it up. The important things it says are these: landscapes matter to people, *all* landscapes are important, not just those we conventionally consider to be the finest; and landscapes everywhere need to be protected, managed or planned according to their needs.

St Michael's Mount

View from Veryan Castle

Against that background, why is Cornwall's landscape so important? First, some parts of the Cornish landscape are internationally important - notably, the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape. Now recognised as a World Heritage Cultural Landscape, it is on a par with places like Thingvellir, the ancient site of Iceland's parliament, and Ayers Rock (or Uluru Tjuta-kata to the aboriginal community) in Australia. World Heritage Cultural Landscape is the highest category of landscape significance; with 5% coverage, Cornwall has more land thus designated than anywhere else in the UK.

The occasion of the 50th birthday of Cornwall's largest Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) reminds us that much of Cornwall's landscape heritage is also important in its national context. Under legislation passed in 1949, there are two ways in which we recognise and protect a landscape as of national importance: as a national park, or as an AONB. In law, these two kinds of protected landscapes are considered to be of equal standing (the parks have a stronger emphasis on outdoor recreation, a separate administration and more central funding). AONBs cover about 15% of England and include such iconic places as the Cotswolds and the North Norfolk Coast. They have been very effective in holding back the pressures that have degraded other parts of the coast and countryside. Indeed, if England has been able to retain some places that are truly beautiful despite all that has happened over the past 50 years, then the AONB designation can claim much of the credit.

Cornwall itself has 30% of its land surface in two separate AONBs, more than any other county. These are the Cornwall AONB and the Cornish part of the Tamar Valley AONB; (the entire Isles of Scilly are also so designated). Not only do all the finest parts of the Cornish Coast enjoy this special status as a nationally important landscape, but many miles of it are also in the ownership of the National Trust. Indeed, in no other coastline in England is there so much land managed by the Trust, which is both a measure of the importance of the coast and a guarantee that it will be managed to the highest conservation standards in perpetuity. In nature, we talk of a relationship where two organisms benefit from the presence of the other as being a 'symbiosis'. The relationship between the AONB, which provides status and planning safeguards, and the National Trust, which guarantees permanent protection and exemplary management, is truly a symbiotic one. It is one which makes the people of Cornwall - and those that visit it - the ultimate beneficiaries.

But we should not forget that *all* of Cornwall's landscape is important at a local level – that is, to the people who live in the county. The recently published *Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Landscape Character Study* helps identify the various character areas of the whole county, showing how and why each individual part of Cornwall is distinct and special. This comprehensive view of landscape is very much in accordance with the aims of the European Landscape Convention.

Cornwall's landscape is also important for its economic value. The traditional view is that it is a tourist attraction, but recent case studies of the economic value of landscape from different parts of Britain tell a more complex story. In the North East, £22m of inward investment can be attributed to firms that went to the region for the quality of its landscape. Over half of all businesses in Yorkshire's three national parks say that landscape designation has been good for them. £200m-worth of business activity in the three Welsh national parks depends on a good quality environment. The 630-mile South West Coast Path - the highlight of Cornwall's landscape experience - generates £300 million p.a. for the region's economy, and supports more than 7,500 jobs. 81% of holiday trips to Cornwall are motivated by landscape, that is 3 million visits, worth

Mining Heritage

Trewalvas Engine House

Kynance Cove

£694m., and supporting nearly 21,000 full-time equivalent jobs. So landscape is worth millions to the Cornish economy, not only jobs and income in tourism, but also as inward (and retained) investment in other sectors drawn to the county by its natural beauty. Policies to protect landscape make good economic sense.

Even so, landscape and economy are not easy bedfellows. Landscape everywhere has to accommodate many pressures – climate change and sea level rise, the impact of globalised markets, and the demands of industry, transport, and new housing. On top of these, the landscape in Cornwall also has to absorb the effects of policies designed to deal with its economic disadvantages: high levels of social deprivation, relative isolation and poor communications, and poor housing stock and infrastructure. There are landscape implications in the investment planned under the Convergence Programme, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, the Cornwall Economic Strategy, and the Regional Spatial Strategy. How can all these pressures and changes be reconciled with the needs of Cornwall's landscape?

Cornwall has several options. It could try to protect everything and permit no change in the landscape; or it could ignore landscape entirely and adopt a crude 'jobs first' strategy. But no sensible person would advocate either course. However, some might be attracted to a policy of protecting the best (World Heritage and AONBs), and allowing relatively unconstrained change elsewhere. The trouble with this approach is that it leaves about 70% of the land unprotected, including the very places where most people live. This is unacceptable because *all* landscapes matter to somebody; local landscapes (as well as designated ones) are important.

A better approach would therefore be to integrate landscape into all decisions. This means treating landscape as a resource to be protected, managed, planned or even created (as has been done at the Eden Project), and accommodating change in ways that respect and reinforce the diversity and distinctiveness of Cornwall's many and varied landscapes, as revealed by the Landscape Character Study. This assessment can be used to set locally-distinctive policies for development and change, for the new housing, roads, infrastructure, minerals, telecoms and wind energy which Cornwall needs, and site-sensitive policies for land management.

Cornwall's landscape is a great asset, worth millions – a foundation for *sustainable* growth in the economy. In 2009, we should rightly celebrate what we have achieved through 50 years of protecting the AONB landscape. But the challenge going forward is to respect the character of landscape everywhere. We need to see it not as an obstacle to change, but as a framework that we can use to help shape a beautiful Cornwall for the future.

Adrian Phillips is a Trustee of the National Trust and worked on the development of the European Landscape Convention.

Approaching St Agnes Head

RIC Collection © 2009

The Gilbert White of Falmouth

Tom Barnicoat

Last year, a collection of manuscripts by the nineteenth century Falmouth naturalist, William Pennington Cocks, was bought by a local collector, Tom Barnicoat, who subsequently loaned them to the Society's 175th anniversary exhibition. Here he writes about the man described as 'the Gilbert White of Falmouth'.

What has emerged is a fascinating, if incomplete, picture of a man closely involved in the scientific and political turmoil of the nineteenth century, the age of electoral reform and Darwinian science. Born in 1791, the son of a Devon surgeon, Cocks took up his father's profession in London before retiring to Falmouth in 1842 at the age of 50. This was apparently due to recurring bouts of unspecified ill-health which continued for the rest of his life. Cocks's constitution must have had an underlying strength, given his active life and longevity: for the next 36 years, he was not only a prolific naturalist, but also keenly engaged in local politics, for the Liberal cause. His main contribution was a stream of lively cartoons and caricatures. Cocks was also an acute social observer, in his writing and drawings, of contemporary mores.

It was as an important regional naturalist that he was principally remembered after his death, in 1878, aged 86. His particular interest was marine and seashore life. He accumulated many specimens over the years, but what became of the bulk of his collections is not known. Nothing, it seems, survives in the Cornish institutions. It is recorded that he gave some material to the British Museum in 1849; and a measure of Cocks's standing is disclosed in Charles Darwin's correspondence, where we read of Darwin seeking access to the Museum's Cocks collection on a visit in 1851, mentioning his particular interest in the barnacles that Cocks had deposited there.

Black Rat - Barnicoat MS

He published numerous pamphlets recording his local observations, generally as simple, unembellished lists. He also contributed a good deal to the RCPS journal in the same vein for nearly thirty years. The Society recognised his achievements by awarding him its Silver Medal and electing him an honorary member.

It is perhaps through the manuscripts that Cocks can be appreciated most vividly. They are far from being dry catalogues of record, as the principal volume's slip case inscription makes clear: '*Hand Coloured Drawings of Birds, Fishes, Insects, Shells, Fungi, Actiniae, Algae and Marine Curiosities, collected in Falmouth and Neighbourhood, 1842-1878*'. In fact, the range of flora and fauna explored by Cocks is far wider, and he meticulously notes, alongside the discoveries he pictures, the location and circumstances: for example *'Black Rat...Gass (sic) Works, Falmouth, Oct. 1845'*. Two albums, of around 200 pages each, contain hundreds of illustrations, mostly in either pen and ink or wonderfully fresh watercolour. The high quality of the artwork is obvious from the few reproduced here. How he acquired this extraordinary facility remains a mystery.

Indeed, comparatively little is known about Cocks. The only account was published in the Society's journal in 1909. It was written by F. Hamilton Davey, in the same year his classic '*Flora of Cornwall*' appeared. It is a splendid essay, worth quoting at some length, since it brings Cocks alive.

Cyclopterus Lumpus - Barnicoat MS

The opening sentences set the tone: '*Thirty-five years ago the visitor to Falmouth would be certain to stumble across a figure whose general appearance and behaviour, though by no means bizarre, and at the farthest remove from studied eccentricity, was sure to arrest attention. Spare of build, of medium height, with an intensely intellectual face, made all the more striking by spectacles of a size and shape not much affected by the present generation, and wearing a coat whose chief attraction was an elaborate velvet collar – such was William Pennington Cocks, a prince among naturalists… Heedless of the rude gaze and idle comment of curious passers-by, yet never wanting in courtesy to all who crossed his path, this Gilbert White of Falmouth pursued his studies in his own quiet way, almost as one apart from his fellow men. For hours at a stretch would he sit by some rock-pool or on a favoured bank, by an almost unsurpassed keenness of observation, adding to a mental store (already almost encyclopaedic in its range) information with which he would subsequently delight his friends…*'

Davey refers to one such occasion, in turn quoting from '*Memories of Old Friends*' by Caroline Fox: '*January 25th. Most animated visit from W.Cocks. Lithography, benevolence, anatomy and religion were all unpacked, arranged, systematised, and lectured upon, with keen insight, and most lively illustration. His parting words, after mentioning his present ill-health, his butter-headed condition, were: "When I am called to appear before God Almighty, I shall not go in the character of an apothecary's shop; no, no medicine, thank you!"*'

Even barely thirty years after Cocks's death, Davey was able to tell us very little about his time in Cornwall, let alone the first fifty years of his life before moving to Falmouth. Instead Davey cites, at length, the reminiscences of a scientist who knew Cocks for 'about a quarter of a century'. According to Professor H. Charlton Bastian, '*W. P. Cocks (or 'Coe' as he constantly called himself, and was spoken of by many of his friends) was a great talker, and in his monologues many facts concerning his previous avocations were mentioned…During his medical career in London Mr Cocks devoted much time to pathological investigations…Many of the coloured drawings by Mr. Cocks were executed as illustrations for works of two or three of the leading physicians of the day…Apart from medical work, Mr Cocks was also, for a time, much interested in some commercial operations – and especially in the work of rubber factories.*'

'*My daughter!!!*' *RIC Collection © 2009*

It seems rubber wasn't the only subject that captured his attention: '*He several times spoke to me of a process which he had invented for the reproduction of printed matter in exact fac simile…He would never tell me what it was… He seemed to have some (surely mistaken) notion that its publication would lead to more harm than good.*'

Reading these snippets of information and memory led me back to the manuscripts now in my possession, and to the rich portfolio of caricatures and cartoons acquired by the Royal Institution of Cornwall in 2002. What more could they tell us about Cocks?

That he was a man of his time is clear, a certain type of Victorian professional with sufficient leisure (and thus means) to pursue a wide range of interests in that age of curiosity and discovery. From all the published sources, it would seem he was also an inveterate bachelor; there is no mention of family life anywhere. Then I found three letters tucked away in one of the manuscripts. They were written from 1850-52 by Joshua Alder, a leading naturalist living in Newcastle. The first confirmed receipt of some specimens sent north by Cocks, '*…apparently a new genus. What a pity they should have died…Should you be able to send me one alive, be so good as avoid sending it on a Friday as if it arrives here on the Sunday it will have to lie an additional day in the post office*'. But it was the last sentence in that letter that really caught my attention: '*My sister unites with me in kind regards to yourself and Mrs Cocks.*' Then I turned to the second letter which begins thus: '*My sister and I beg to congratulate you on Miss Cocks's marriage…We propose going up to London in the course of ten days to see the wonderful crystal palace (sic) and should we have an opportunity, will do ourselves the pleasure of calling upon your daughter.*'

No other references to family life have been spotted so far in the manuscripts – with one possible exception: a pen and ink

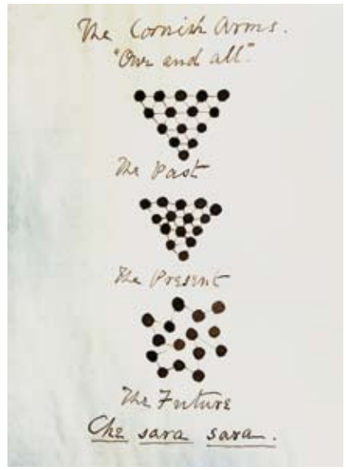
'Darwin's Primitive Man?' RIC Collection © 2009

drawing of a young girl holding hands with an ape. The headline proclaims '*My Daughter!!!*' Apart from the possible family double meaning, the real interest here is what it may tell us about where Cocks stood in the great evolution controversy. The text below the picture is highly significant and perhaps revealing: it quotes at length from lectures given by William Lawrence from 1816-19 and then published, espousing pre-Darwinian ideas on man's nature and, in effect, on evolution. The Lord Chancellor ruled them to be blasphemous and they were suppressed. Lawrence was clearly ambitious; he repudiated his own writings and later became President of the Royal College of Surgeons and Surgeon to Queen Victoria, who made him a baronet.

One suspects that Cocks suffered some of the same ambiguous feelings as Lawrence. He quotes the controversial, banned lectures and their dangerous ideas. Yet elsewhere in his writings he seems a devout upholder of the established religious orthodoxies. One other picture in the archive reveals his doubts: another drawing of an erect ape, with underneath it written: '*Darwin's Primitive Man? Origin of the human family?*'

There is also an intriguing sheet that strikes a chord with a latter-day controversy. Cocks shows three stages in the potential unravelling of the 'Cornish Arms', the bezants which are thought to date back to at least the fourteenth century. There is no text linking the drawings to anything specific, but it is a potent way of conveying the threats Cocks saw to the Cornish body

politic, though his attitude appears somewhat fatalistic: at the bottom of the page he adds: '*Che sara, sara*'. The resonance with today is that Cornwall County Council's current logo features the bezants, and its recent proposal to dispense with them in a new design (at a reported cost of around £500,000) unleashed a tremendous furore across the county. So much so that the Council has decided to scrap the planned change.



RIC Collection © 2009

Politics in nineteenth century Cornwall also raised temperatures. The 1832 Reform Act had swept away the worst of the corrupt rotten boroughs, of which Cornwall had had a disproportionately high number. Further electoral reform remained a key issue and the 1867 Reform Act was another milestone. Cocks was an often strident critic, producing a large volume of skilfully executed, powerful cartoons and caricatures lampooning the Tories and flattering the Liberals. The one reproduced here illustrates '*Tory spectacles…the man who has no opinions of his own and only looks upon a vote as a source of profit must become more and more sordid and debased the oftener he sells himself…*'.
A number of his cartoons were published, as were election pamphlets in his name.

Cocks is not always so vitriolic. Take this charming ditty, titled '*The Falmouth Invincible*':

'*Lovely are the maids of Rhineland,*
Glowing are the maids of Spain,
French, Italians, Greeks, Circassians,
Woo our homage – not in vain –
But for beauty to enchant us,
And for Virtue to enthral,
Give our hearts to the girls of England –
Dearer – better than them all.'

The Falmouth Invincible RIC Collection © 2009

'*The Falmouth Invincible*' may seem a long way from '*The Falmouth Fauna*'. But in truth they are facets of the same wide ranging, enquiring mind and imagination, not untypical at the time. As F. A. Turk puts it in his essay '*Natural History Studies In Cornwall 1700-1900*' (RIC 1959), Cocks's papers '*show the fundamental dislike of specialisation in this old fashioned type of naturalist; grasshoppers and geese, fishes and rats, dogs and cats, pigeons and leeches all came alike to this local Linnaeus.*'

Actinia Tuediae - Barnicoat MS

Uraster Glacialis - Barnicoat MS

This theme is picked up in a contribution to the Conchological Society of Great Britain & Ireland in 1970 by Turk's wife, Stella: Cocks '*exemplifies a type of liberal, semi-professional scholar-naturalist which dates back to the 17th century and which was to continue into the 20th century…Our present highly specialised, statistically-based professional attitudes in biology could not have come about had it not been for the few highly articulate, industrious and many-sided amateurs who helped to lay the foundations of modern natural history studies in the last century… Dr W. P. Cocks…was just such a naturalist*'.

Cocks himself provided a suitable coda. His very first article for the Polytechnic Journal, in 1849, '*Contributions to the Fauna of Falmouth*', quotes Samuel Johnson as a sub-heading. It is taken from a 1758 issue of '*The Idler*' and reuniting the brief extract with Johnson's original text clarifies Cocks's meaning:

'*Man is a transitory being, and his designs must partake of the imperfections of their author. To confer duration is not always in our power. We must snatch the present moment, and employ it well, without too much solicitude for the future, and content ourselves with reflecting that our part is performed.*' Then follows the passage selected by Cocks: '***He that waits for an opportunity to do much at once, may breathe out his life in idle wishes; and regret, in his last hour, his useless intentions and barren zeal***'.

Tom Barnicoat was a television journalist and then ran a large production company. He now chairs a radio production group.

21 Broad Street, Penryn - before and after

Heritage-led regeneration in Falmouth and Penryn

Alyson Cooper

The outward appearance of buildings and shops will often be a good indicator of the quality, prosperity and image of a town. Derelict, empty buildings, poor maintenance and lack of attention to detail, will send out a negative message and create an impression of economic stagnation, whatever the architectural or historic importance of the building stock. Even in a competitive market, this will discourage investment and perpetuate decline.

In Cornwall, over the last ten years, Heritage Economic Regeneration Schemes (HERs) and Townscape Heritage Initiative Schemes (THIs) have targeted the repair and improvement of historic buildings and public realm, not only enhancing local distinctiveness, but also significantly increasing employment and sales, and attracting investment in the local economy. These schemes have enabled the £1.3 million contributed by Local Authorities to lever in significant public funding from bodies such as Objective 1, Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage, and the South West Regional Development Agency, resulting in £22.41 million being spent in targeted Conservation Areas across Cornwall. This however has relied heavily on private sector match funding. In a County that in 1999 had one of the lowest incomes in Europe, market failure in key sectors and a Gross Domestic Product which was 67% of the European Union average, it is a testimony to the confidence of local businesses that they were prepared, not only to invest in between 25% to 60% of the total cost of works, but also to spend considerable sums on additional works.

The Falmouth HERs which ran from 2001 to 2005 was the first of its type to obtain Objective 1 funding in Cornwall, and as a result proved to be a guinea pig for the extremely complex requirements associated with European Funding. However it established a methodology and systems of project management which benefited the Penryn Townscape Heritage Initiative that followed, operating between 2002 and 2008.

At the time when the Falmouth and Penryn bids were submitted, economic decline in the town centres had led to a lack of investment. In Falmouth many businesses were trading in buildings where the upper floors were underused, and buckets often had to be placed strategically when it rained. In Penryn, survey work between 1999 and 2001 demonstrated that the majority of buildings requiring urgent repair were within the town centre, where ground floor shops had been vacated and buildings left untended, with little or no maintenance undertaken. Out of 69 potential commercial properties, 25% were vacant with 13 buildings deemed at risk.

The poor environmental quality of modern alterations to the Public Realm had reinforced the general sense of decline, compromising appreciation of the surviving high quality and locally distinctive traditional features, and what was potentially a strong and attractive street scene.

Grant support concentrated on

- Improvement and enhancement of the external appearance of key historic buildings, including repairs to target buildings, restoration of principal elevations, and reinstatement of lost architectural detail
- Conversion of vacant buildings in order to bring them back into economic use
- Upgrading streets and opeways to improve environmental quality in the public realm
- Providing support measures to local owners to sustain the improvements in the long term

The works were intended to facilitate increased economic activity in the two town centres, increasing the volume of visits and spending in town by local residents, students and visitors; generating new jobs and safeguarding existing ones by means of investment in physical construction works, and re-occupying vacant properties.

The outputs and outcomes have far exceeded initial predictions and include

- 49 buildings improved, including 37 listed buildings, all with architectural features restored
- 14 buildings at risk of collapse, or in a condition seriously affecting business, brought back into full use
- 19 vacant or partially vacant commercial properties and 9 vacant or partially vacant residential properties brought back into use
- 7,183 square metres of commercial space improved
- 3,969 square metres of residential floor space and 178 habitable rooms improved

In Penryn, in order to match the public funding, private grantees have spent £970,820, with a further £645,326 spent concurrently or subsequent to the grant aided works. The result has been that 37 additional jobs have been created, and a number of non grant aided projects have followed as a result of the increased confidence generated by bringing empty properties back into use.

There is a real pressure among businesses to smarten up. In Penryn local volunteers from the museum have produced a Town Trail, funded by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Penryn businesses have joined to market themselves as a group and have produced stylish leaflets. Often the information on their websites not only promotes their own businesses but also those of their neighbours. There is a definite buzz from University students, and many of the new businesses, which are arts orientated, produce high quality individual merchandise and offer training and community involvement in what were previously derelict, empty buildings.

In Falmouth, as a result of bringing empty properties back into use and repairing target buildings which were at risk of collapse, over £2.5 million sales have been generated with a further £3.8 million safeguarded. In time, dependant on the impact of the current recession, increased sales and employment will generate further sales and jobs in the local community.

21a Arwenack Street, Falmouth

Fourteen shop-fronts were grant aided in Church Street, High Street and Arwenack Street , Falmouth, and the results have had a dramatic impact on the street scene. Unsympathetic alterations during the 1960s and 1970s had left many buildings with their shop windows set back from the original building line, looking like a mouth with missing teeth. By reinstating the earlier plan, the appearance has been improved and extra commercial space provided.

At the beginning of the projects, the skills shortage among professional agents and contractors had left many reluctant to take on such work. To address this, the project team organised two, one-week traditional building skills training programmes. Fifteen local construction firms were invited to participate, with free places being offered for courses in traditional masonry and roofing repairs and cob and lime plaster techniques. Many of the contractors who completed the courses have continued training at Cornwall College and have attained NVQ levels 2 and 3. Other similar programmes are now being developed and offered in Cornwall.

By the end of the schemes the construction costs had exceeded £5 million. This generated over 110 full time equivalent temporary jobs as well as improving the skills basis for repairs to historic buildings for the future.

The survival of historic detailing dictated the design of the public realm improvements in Penryn which concentrated on the Town centre. It was vital to ensure that the twelve week contract period was not extended, as local businesses were anxious about resultant loss of trade. However, with close cooperation between the Project Officer, Site Supervisor and contractors, the works came in on time and on budget. The historic paving was lifted and re-laid as necessary, and all new granite was sourced from a quarry ten miles away. Granite troughs have not only been used to create colour and interest but also to prevent unauthorised car parking. Traditional materials have been carefully used to provide tactile paving for those with visual impairment.

Skills Training

There has been a requirement to collect baseline data for both projects and then to monitor each stage. As a result both the Falmouth HERs and Penryn THI have hard evidence to demonstrate the economic and social value of such schemes. Final Reports can be accessed on the Carrick District Council website at www.carrick.gov.uk/indexx.cmf?articleid=14176. They provide detailed evidence of the impact on the local economy, employment and the historic environment, and illustrate how heritage-led regeneration has benefited the wider community.

It is unlikely of course that these schemes would have had as much success in isolation, and there are still opportunities for enhancement and improvement. However, it has encouraged private investment in the historic environment and has pump-primed non grant aided improvements. The task will now be for the momentum to be maintained.

Dr Alyson Cooper, Conservation Team Leader for Carrick District Council, project managed both schemes from inception to completion.

8, 9 High Street, Falmouth - before and after

Public Realm, Penryn - before and after

Chasing Clouds

putting together the 175th anniversary exhibition

Joanna Mattingly

Putting together an exhibition on the scale of *Chasing Clouds* presented quite an academic challenge. There was a dearth of artefacts but a mass of information about the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society's history.

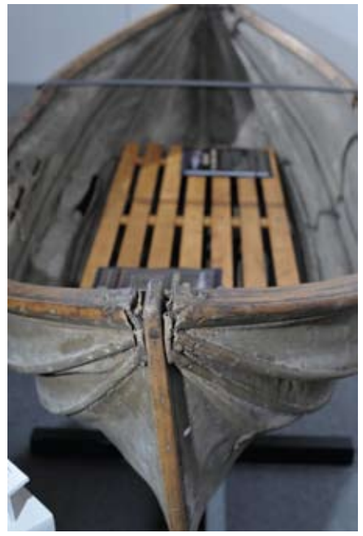
The key building blocks would clearly have to be the Society's own journals and archives. Armed with this academic tool kit, work could begin. The 1933 journal provided a rather uninspiring starting point, though it did give the exhibition its title. At the time of the centenary celebrations, the building housed the town museum, which left little room for other exhibits apart from some colour photographs of clouds. Described as 'cloud transparencies', they were exhibited for a week and accompanied Sir William Napier's lantern slide lecture on 'Unofficial Meteorology' (meteorology being a favourite Society subject). Colour photographs of clouds, which may have been part of the 1933 show, were recently found in the National Maritime Museum Cornwall (NMMC) stores, and exhibited at the start of the exhibition.

The next stage of research was to read the many excellent studies of the Society which had already appeared, including an MA thesis by Alan Pearson, which focused on the recurrent financial crises. Other studies saw the RCPS as a product of the 18th century Cornish Industrial Revolution. But telling the story the traditional way had a major flaw. Any exhibition based on the generally accepted story, whether arranged chronologically or thematically, would end on a downbeat note. In essence, a great society was founded when mining flourished, but then went into decline as mining failed. This turned out, fortunately for the exhibition, to be a gross simplification. The Society, like many others in Cornwall and elsewhere, adapted and survives today.

As research for the exhibition progressed and objects began to be offered, it became clear that there were two significant upbeat stories which were visually attractive. Firstly, and most significantly, there was the promotion of youthful (often working class) talent; and secondly, a strong strand of early feminism which underlay much of the Society's work.

Although Professor Lomax, in the next article, is quite correct in stating that this was a society run by men, behind the scenes female members, including the Fox family, were extremely active. At most periods in the Society's history, up to two-fifths of ordinary members and competitors were women. They were also among the founders and judges, and Lady Mary Trefusis became the first female vice-president before her death in 1927.

Article photography by Eight Wire Design & Media



Berthon Collapsible Boat

A close study of the annual list of exhibits also revealed something quite unexpected – the high number of domestic appliances, most notably an 1890 dishwasher and Cornish ranges, displayed alongside mining machinery. Thus many domestic improvements were made through Polytechnic competitions. Falmouth's Quaker circle produced female preachers, the Society's founders and philanthropists, and then early feminists who called for votes for women.

Promotion of youthful talent continues to be part of the present day Society's main role, notably the hosting of regular exhibitions of work by University College Falmouth students. These exhibitions also offer exciting future collaborative opportunities.

Hamilton Davey's Microscope

Study of the journals and reports showed the breadth of the Society's interests, with maritime items important in the port town of Falmouth. George Hogg, honorary archivist of NMMC, looked through the list of RCPS silver medal winners and picked out the Berthon collapsible lifeboat. This became a star exhibit, and at 7 foot long, one of the largest items in the exhibition. Reverend Edward Berthon of Romsey in Hampshire was a clergyman-inventor. His inventions included other collapsible items like bandstands and field dressing stations, and also a patent log used for recording the speed of ships. When Berthon came to Falmouth in 1873 he exhibited a lifeboat and a patent log, pointing out in an evening lecture that the former took up a sixth of the space of an ordinary lifeboat, allowing more to be carried by ships. Eyemouth Museum in Scotland loaned their Berthon boat for the exhibition, and because it folded up, it was able to travel the last stage to Falmouth in the back of an estate car.

Among the major discoveries in private collections was a copy of Robert Were Fox's journals for 1833-7. These included miniature versions of many of the original exhibition entries for those years. Probably produced by Robert's three children and their friends, these gave the exhibition panels, designed by Steve Collinson, a visual unity, and Mike Bradley's scans of the same made a fascinating slide presentation. One illustration came from Anna Maria Fox's 1836 exhibition entry entitled '*A New Tourist Itinerary of Cornwall*', and the actual entry was found in a local antiquarian bookshop in time for inclusion.

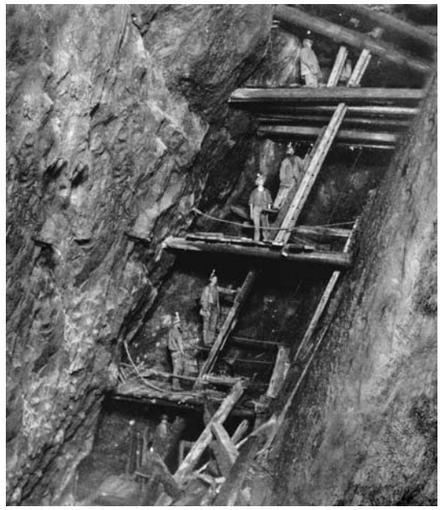
Youthful talent in Natural History was illustrated in the exhibition by Frederick Hamilton Davey's late 19th century microscope, medals and photograph, with earlier letters from Elizabeth Warren of Flushing illustrating the role of a local woman in this field. The microscope had remained as a cherished item in the hands of Davey's family, and has now been given to the Royal Institution of Cornwall. Several models by Thomas Cadwell, a watch-maker from Camborne, who had won prizes during his apprenticeship were also shown - a particularly pleasing display.

Many members of the Fox family turned out their cupboards, producing original entries by young Foxes ranging from calligraphy to collections of ferns. They also allowed cherished paintings and portraits of the founding family to be taken from their walls, and a late find was a photograph album compiled by Naomi Fox, grand-niece of the founder Anna Maria. The album included photographs and maps of the 1913 Suffragist pilgrimage which demanded votes for women, with Naomi participating in that from Land's End to London (Suffragists were the pacifist wing of the Suffragettes). A leather blotter, a probable exhibition winner by Mary Bassett (Naomi's aunt) or the Leighton Buzzard leatherwork school which she ran, was found, almost forgotten, in the Society's library. In another Fox family photo album was an 1858 photograph of Robert Were Fox's wife Maria (nee Barclay), mother of Anna Maria, Barclay and Caroline, taken shortly before she died. Photographed in bonnet and shawl, her face had the same sparkle and vivacity as Caroline's. Maria was clearly a strong personality who took her family with her, disrupting family holidays, to pursue a career as a Quaker preacher. A Quaker bonnet came on loan from the Truro Society of Friends.

RCPS Silver Medal

A decision was made early on to include works by as many artist exhibitors as possible, irrespective of whether the actual works shown had definitely been displayed at the Society's annual exhibitions. Children who won prizes for their art often became artists as adults, a medal being an antidote to parental disapproval, perhaps. Identifying paintings with Polytechnic exhibition catalogues proved to be problematic, as titles for works of art often change over time and artists frequently painted several versions of the same subject. Photographs taken of exhibitions in 1859, 1872 and 1882 were too general to help much with individual identifications. Works by the Hart family were lent, and representative samples of other work by John Blight, William Colenso, William Casley, J. Boase Smith, Richard Harry Carter, Henry Scott Tuke, John Shapland, Garstin Cox, John Thomas

Richardson, Fred and Gwen Whicker, Neil Miners and Francis Hewlett were shown. Paintings and photographs by recent graduates and artists with Falmouth connections were also displayed. Early mining sketches by Warrington Wilkinson Smyth (later Society vice-president), natural history and political sketches by William Pennington Cocks, and humorous watercolours of the man engine in operation (a major invention that the Society fostered and promoted) were also included in the exhibition and aroused much interest (see paper by Tom Barnicoat and a past paper by Michael Carver on the latter two exhibits).



Man Engine - RCPS Archive

Early photography and the serpentine industry were among the new industries actively promoted by the Society. Excellent photographs of historic mill interiors by Hawke of Helston from a 1927 heritage competition came from Falmouth Library, and other early photographs from the Royal Institution of Cornwall and private collections. In the case of serpentine, youthful workers at Kynance, Penzance and Truro were to show their work at the 1851 Great Exhibition. Fine examples of Brannam pottery, similar to those displayed at the Polytechnic in 1900, were borrowed from the Colin Benford Gallery, Falmouth.

The 175th anniversary exhibition followed on from an inspirational design history exhibition and conference organised by University College Falmouth. *Chasing Clouds* inherited the framework of 'rooms' from this exhibition and was largely put up over a weekend by an enthusiastic team. This included several students and young staff from the box office working alongside old hands like Alex Hooper and Tony Waddington and several Board members. Jo Field took on the responsibility of checking in and out more than 350 objects and paintings and Alison Cameron hand-mounted all the captions. Putting up the show proved to be an excellent example of the promotion of youthful talent.

In addition to those already named, I would particularly like to thank Anthony Phillips, Sasha Cope, John Tonkin, Marcy Leavitt Bourne and Peter Gilson who were involved in the project from the start, and Keith Hambly-Staite who joined the team later.

Joanna Mattingly curated the exhibition 'Chasing Clouds - 175 years of Achievement' for the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society. She is currently working at Penlee House Gallery and Museum on the Social History redisplay.

Polytechnic Hall - RCPS Archive

The First Men of the Cornwall Polytechnic Society

Pam Lomax

'Two sisters who were part of a prominent Falmouth family, the Fox family, took an interest in the conditions of the people working in their foundry at Perranarworthal. They found that many of the workers had good ideas and suggestions about the work of the foundry, but lacked the means to develop them. The elder sister, Anna Maria, was impressed by the fact that the workmen of the Foundry kept coming to her Father with inventions and suggestions regarding their work. Although Anna Maria was only seventeen years old and her sister Caroline fourteen they felt the inventiveness of the workmen should be encouraged by some institution to cater for the demands of the situation.' **(Stephens & Roderick)**

Sir Charles Lemon - RCPS Archive

It is interesting that this story, which is found in most of the literature about the start of the Cornwall Polytechnic Society, dwells on only *one* of the three aims of the Society. These aims were outlined in the first Polytechnic Report of 1833: 'to stimulate the ingenuity of the young, to promote industrious habits among the working classes, and to elicit the inventive powers of the community at large'.

The Cornwall Polytechnic Society was formed in 1833 with a patron (Lord de Dunstanville), president (Sir Charles Lemon), seven vice presidents (Sir RR Vyvyan, EWW Pendarves, JS Enys, J Williams, G C Fox, J Taylor, and GS Borlase), and a committee of thirty ladies and gentlemen chaired by Robert Were Fox, who was the father of the two sisters mentioned above. Despite the presence of the ladies, it was primarily an association of powerful businessmen whose self-interest made it attractive to encourage inventions that led to more efficiency in their businesses. From the beginning, the seven vice presidents of the new Society, with their President and Patron, looked for inventions that could increase their profits in the mining industry.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Cornwall dominated the world's output of copper, tin and arsenic, all products of its mining industry. The exploitation of mining was part of a wider global industrial revolution, in which Cornwall for a time played a central role. The Cornwall Polytechnic Society was formed when Cornish mining was undergoing its greatest activity. For example, in 1837-1838 it was estimated that 18,472 men, approximately 5,700 women, and 5,700 children were employed in Cornish mining.

The mining industry was highly capitalized and therefore capable of providing finance for technological innovation, but there was no obvious channel for bringing 'the money' and 'the science' together. The Cornwall Polytechnic Society filled this gap and in doing so, captured the imagination of the landowners, merchants, and businessmen whose capital supported industry. In fact, the use of private capital was one of the distinctive features of Cornish mining, going back to the historic stannary system of 'bounding', in which all Cornish tinners had a right to mark out an area of land as a claim on which to dig for tin or other minerals. This old practice was said to have stimulated entrepreneurial working practices in order to

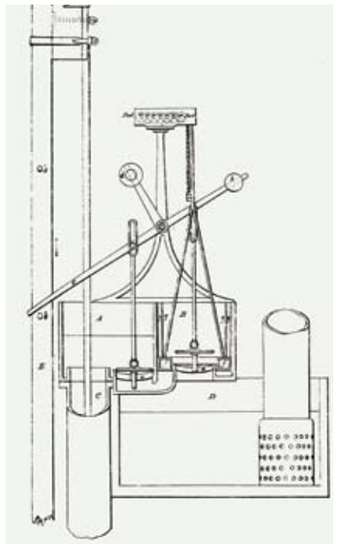
Lord de Dunstanville - RCPS Archive

produce the greatest profit in the shortest time, to the ultimate benefit of the mine owners and mineral lords.

The 'private and local individuals' who provided the capital were known as 'adventurers' and they usually associated in what were known as 'cost book companies'. These companies were related to particular activities, but the businessmen who invested in them usually spread their portfolios across a number of different enterprises such as mining, banking or smelting. Adventurers came from a range of backgrounds. A report of the parliamentary committee convened to look at the copper industry of the UK in 1799 listed the adventurers from sixteen Cornish mines, and included bankers, clergy, engineers, landowners, legal men, merchants, mine managers, mineral lords, MPs, peers, sheriffs and smelters.

The first Committee of the Polytechnic Society included a number of landowners and merchants who financed and profited from mining and associated industry. Sir William Lemon of Carclew was the first President of the Society; he was a land and mineral lord, a banker and MP for Cornwall.

Francis Basset, Lord de Dunstanville, who lived at Tehidy House near Illogan (one of the finest seats in Cornwall) and a member of parliament for Penryn, was the first Patron of the Society. He owned a number of mines and had other interests like the Cornish Metal Company, which was an attempt to form a cartel to purchase all of the Cornish copper. In 1785, Basset was responsible for arresting, hanging or transporting the leaders of the local 'food' riots: miners who were objecting to their low wages, which were paid in tokens that could only be redeemed for goods at the mine owner's store. In recognition of his actions, Prime Minister Pitt made Basset, Lord de Dunstanville in 1796. Basset (like others) was both an 'adventurer' and a mineral lord, and benefited financially from this.

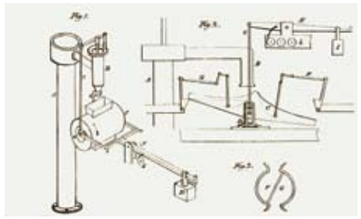


Richard Hosking - Lifting Pump - RCPS Archive

Thus, the 1799 parliamentary report showed that whilst securing a profit of £6,696 over seven years on his holdings in *Cook's Kitchen* and *Wheal Gons & Stray Park* mines, he also received a further £9,625 in mineral dues. The same report showed that Messrs Geo C Fox and Sons, who held shares in seven mines *(Consolidated, Herland, North Downs, Tresavean, Wheal Gorland, Wheal Hope* and *Wheal Jewell)*, suffered a loss over the seven year period of £4,142, and another member of the new Polytechnic Society committee, William Carne of Penzance, who was a banker, purser, mine agent, broker and merchant, lost £1,778. Such losses were easily sustained by the two businessmen because they were both merchants who supplied the mines in which they were adventurers. For example, in Cornish mines in 1837-1838, 'approximately 56,860 tons of coal, valued at £48,381; 14,056 loads of timber, valued at £36,545; 300 tons of gunpowder at £44 per ton; and 1,344,000 lbs of candles at £35,000 were used.'

In 1833, George Croker Fox was the head of the Fox family of Falmouth. His father of the same name had founded the firm of G. C. Fox and Co, the Falmouth shipping agents, and by 1833 the family had interests in most of the main business ventures of Cornwall, including 'Foxes and Perran Foundry Co,' which was managed by Charles Fox, one of George Croker Fox's six sons. The Perran Foundry at Perranworthal was set up in 1791 by the Fox family and was the first major ironworks within Cornwall. It manufactured a range of industrial machinery including some of the largest and most powerful Cornish beam engines of their day, and was a major exporter to mining sites around the world. There was a busy wharf at Perran Foundry, where all kinds of mining equipment was produced and transported, including powerful steam engines.

The men who founded the Polytechnic Society were also tied by business associations and partnerships. Between 1858 and 1879, the Perran Foundry traded under the name Williams & Perran Foundry Co after the Williams family became major shareholders. The Basset family had business connections with the Foxes of Falmouth and the Williams's of Scorrier. The three families had formed a business partnership to build the first tram road in Cornwall. It ran from Poldice to Portreath, and transported copper and tin from Poldice and other mines to the port of Portreath. The new tram-way was an important investment supporting the Bassets' interest in Portreath Harbour, the Foxes' and Williams' interests in the Welsh fleet, and the Williams' interest in copper smelters in Swansea such as Middlebank and Neath Abbey. All three also owned copper and tin mines in the Scorrier, Poldice, and St Day area of Gwennap. The Bassets, Williams's and Foxes were all represented as president or vice presidents when the Polytechnic Society was formed.



John Arthur - Lifting Pump - RCPS Archive

It would be a mistake to argue that the original members of the Society were solely businessmen. The Presidents and two of the vice presidents were also members of parliament, other men were committed scientists and engineers; thus the first President and five of the original vice presidents were Fellows of the Royal Society of Arts. George Croker Fox was said to have a highly cultivated mind and an intellect enriched by the study of the classics, thus presenting in an unusual degree a combination of the scholar and the gentleman.

The Polytechnic encouraged innovation in industry by offering monetary prizes to inventors, who might come from any position in a recognised business venture. In order to develop their inventions, these men needed strong support from those higher up the chain of management or ownership, so it is not surprising that the business ventures of Polytechnic members generated most of the competitors - like Richard Hosking and John Arthur who worked at Perran Foundry. Richard Hosking won prizes in 1833, 1834 and 1835 and was a judge in 1836 and 1837. John Arthur won prizes in 1833, 1834, 1835, 1836 and 1837, and in 1839 he won a silver medal in the Mechanics section, submitting a model of an instrument for lifting pumps.

Perran Foundry - RCPS Archive

Robert Were Fox, the chairman of the committee in its first year, was a businessman and active in the various family enterprises, but he was also a man of considerable scientific achievements and a Fellow of the Royal Society. He was probably the most important influence on the early development of the new Society.

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Pam Lomax was a professor of educational research before moving to Newlyn, when she changed her interest to that of art history and local history. She has published in both these fields, and is the current editor of the Lamorna Society Magazine and the Journal of the Cornwall Association of Local Historians.

Gilding the Tukes

Lynn Blake

Gilding is the technique of applying a thin layer of gold to a surface. The process of gilding varies as there are many different techniques, depending on the materials to be gilded and the required result.

Early signs of gilding were found in a tomb at Saqqara, an Ancient Egyptian burial ground, in about 2500 BC. There were also leaves of gold found among Ancient Egyptian remains, now in the Louvre in Paris, which are the same size as those used today.

Sully's Framing were asked to provide gilt frames for the RCPS Tuke exhibitions during 2008. After much discussion and research, it was agreed that the frames should be made of oak. We asked a local joinery to mill the wood especially for the exhibition – four different profiles of wood were used altogether. The wood was then joined into frames, and the frames were joined in sets of three to create a tiered frame for each painting.

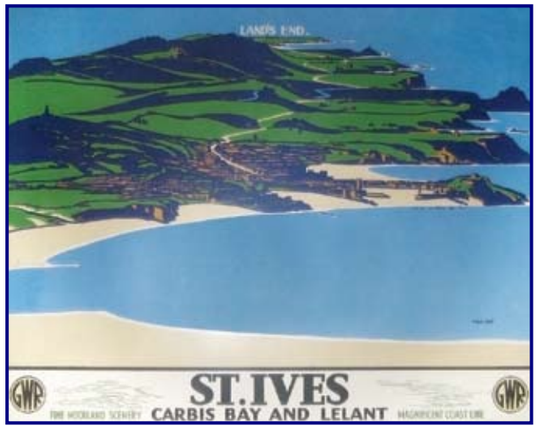
For the Tukes we agreed on a red gold colour, over a red bole. Bole is a coloured liquid clay that is built up in layers before applying the gold leaf. When the surfaces had all been carefully prepared and the bole layers applied, we were ready to begin applying the 'size' (a specialist type of glue) before laying the gold leaf. Each leaf then had to be positioned and applied with great care and a lot of patience.

Each tier frame had a different finished effect – some were finished to show the oak grain through the gold, some solid, and some distressed to show the red bole through the gold. On the edges of the outer frames we applied a special gold cream containing real gold fragments.

The completed frames complimented the style of the Tuke paintings very well. We are honoured to have had the opportunity to play such an important role in the exhibition of the Society's Tuke Collection.

Sully's Framing was established in 1921 and has been kept in the family ever since. As well as providing a bespoke framing service to the general public, we also provide services to local galleries, hotels, artists and museums. Lynn Blake is a director of Sully's, along with partner Peter Hambrook. She has been trained in many gilding techniques.

Photograph - Sully's Framing



Courtesy of Tim and Jan Guy

Cornwall's Branch Lines

Julian Crow

In 1905 the Great Western Railway published *The Cornish Riviera*, a guidebook intended to popularise the train services and attract people to local seaside resorts. The railway came to Cornwall in the nineteenth century, and the work of Isambard Kingdom Brunel has left a legacy of inestimable value to the social and economic life of the county. The country railway was at the heart of our culture. Trains moved china clay, milk, flowers and cauliflower to markets around the country, and visitors to Cornwall arrived in Newquay and Penzance on express trains for their summer holidays.

Much has changed since the first railways were built in the 1830s. A roll call of stations once serving the rural areas of the county is evocative of an era long gone. Stations like Bude, Port Isaac Road, Camelford, St Agnes, Chacewater, Gwinear Road and Helston have long passed away; but others such as St Ives, Looe, Gunnislake, Newquay and Falmouth remain as living reminders of a time when the railways liberated people and connected them to each other and the world beyond their own hamlets, villages and towns.

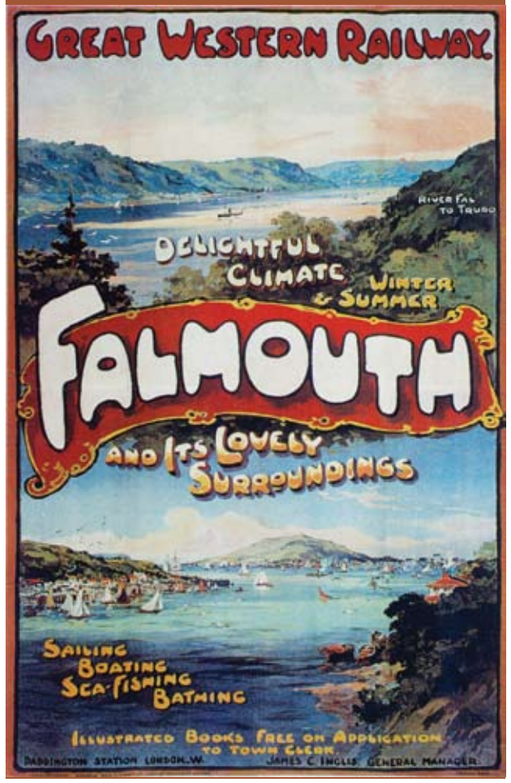
The branch line network in Cornwall has survived better than in most other counties, and includes at least two of the most attractive routes in Britain. Recent investment has seen substantial growth in passenger numbers and more reliable timetables.

All lines have seen improvements in facilities for passengers, but probably the most significant development has been on the Truro to Falmouth line. Established in 1863, the line has recently been upgraded with new track, new signalling, and even a new train. The social and business benefits will rapidly become apparent, as the improved link with the mainline supports the growth of Falmouth and Penryn as the maritime and higher education capitals of Cornwall.

In contrast is the 21 mile Par to Newquay line, which connects the home of British surfing with the rest of the country. Crossing the Goss Moor National Nature Reserve and passing through the Luxulyan Valley - part of the UNESCO inscribed Cornish and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site - the route is popular with young people and visitors. The Liskeard to Looe line is another route that owes its origins to the needs of the mining industry. Built on an old canal and the original railway of 1828 from Moorswater to Looe, the link with Liskeard was made in 1901. This delightful branch line offers today's travellers views of birds, boats and mining infrastructure. The line is now used by commuters, school children and visitors.

Like other branch lines, the railway takes cars off narrow country lanes, reducing congestion which was particularly daunting during the summer. But this traffic is increasingly becoming year-round. This is possibly best illustrated by what is probably now one of the most famous routes in Britain: the St Erth to St Ives line. Opened in 1877, it was the last stretch of broad gauge railway built by Brunel. Although the gauge was soon changed, the land acquisition left a magnificent legacy. Only four and a half miles long, it passes through some of the most beautiful landscapes on the national railway branch network. The potential was quickly recognised by the Great Western Railway which built a hotel, the Tregenna Castle at St Ives. This branch line was part of the railway company's plan to bring tourism to the West Country. Leaving St Erth, the line passes the saltings and mud flats of the tidal Hayle estuary, with its rich diversity of birds, before presenting magnificent views of the Atlantic Ocean on its way to St Ives.

Arrival of the first train at Falmouth Station: Illustrated London News 1863. RCPS Archive



RCPS Archive

First Great Western and Cornwall Council have more recently recognized the potential for the line, and a park and ride facility is to be built at St Erth. What may at first appear as a minor bolt-on to the main line has become an important economic asset in its own right. Over 450,000 journeys were undertaken in 2008, and the line plays a significant part in the economy of St Ives and its hinterland. With the Tate St Ives and the broader artistic tradition of the town, together with its reputation as an exquisite jewel in the South West's crown, St Ives is benefiting from investment in the railway which has brought 25 trains daily in each direction throughout the year.

At the other end of the county is the Gunnislake line. Opened in 1907, the Plymouth to Gunnislake line is 15 miles long. It fits well into the Tamar Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and parts of the World Heritage Site. However, as a line maintained primarily for commuters, it demonstrates that with an efficient railway service people are able to continue living in small rural communities and still have access to work in towns like Plymouth. The service is seen as a life-line by many people. The surrounding population is around 10,000, yet 140,000 annual journeys are made, which, perhaps surprisingly, compares favourably to the lines into London when one looks at usage per person.

Our railways are held in deep affection by many people. The railway system is environmentally very efficient. The branch network in Cornwall, one of the most extensive in any county, is not only a tourist attraction but, with more new investment, is set to be at the heart of the county's business and social life once again.

Julian Crow is General Manager, West of England, First Great Western. A long career in the rail industry, largely in the passenger business, has seen many changes. Julian has a strong personal belief in ensuring that the industry effectively supports the South West Region, playing an important part in its business and tourist economy.

Carnations - a study

Anthony Phillips

Thanks to the generosity of Mr. George Bednar of London, the Society has acquired its 278th painting to add to its unique Tuke Collection. This rare flower picture, signed and dated 1890, is entitled 'Carnations – a Study' and was purchased as a gift for the Society by Mr. Bednar at a sale at Bonhams, Knightsbridge in November 2008. It measures 35.6 cm x 26 cm.

Growing carnations was one of Tuke's hobbies and, as Catherine Wallace pointed out in the Bonhams Catalogue for the sale, this study was painted at the same time as another work entitled 'Picking Carnations'. This features Tuke's housekeeper, Mrs. Fouracre, standing in the garden of Tuke's cottage at Pennance picking carnations.

The Bonhams catalogue notes that both paintings were sold in a lot for £80 to Tuke's fellow artists, Ayerst Ingram and John Eva Downing, but according to Tuke's register 'the bargain was annulled and I took them back'.

Mr. Bednar has not only presented the painting to the Society, but also paid for its cleaning and restoration by Mrs. Gilly Kinloch, who recently so handsomely restored the oils in the Society's collection. We keenly look forward to the arrival of the painting in Falmouth and are very grateful to the donor for this magnificent gift

Carnations - A Study Courtesy Bonhams

King Harry Reach

A Short Trip Along A River With A Long History

Tim Light

While the history of the beguiling River Fal could chomp its way into a weighty tome, this short article sets out to help us appreciate the potential of the river, and to increase our understanding of the quality of this jewel in Cornwall's crowded crown. A challenge - particularly if reducing the impact of modern transportation on our increasingly fragile environment is to be achieved.

The Fal Estuary is tidal for a distance of 11 miles inland and has a shoreline 72 miles in length, most of which is designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a Special Area of Conservation. We share the estuary with an amazingly diverse offering of flora and fauna, and are lucky enough to enjoy it in flood and in ebb. On the ebb, the mud flats emerge through the water to offer the birds a chance to feed on critters from the mud.

The Fal is one Britain's finest estuaries in both its natural and its historic legacy. Located on the south coast of Cornwall, it is the county's largest estuary and has served as a refuge for shipping in both good and bad times. Today it continues to be of significant commercial importance to the region and the country. To do justice to this fascinating 'jewel', one has to understand the drama and tradition of its evolution, which embraces ancient and modern history with the same intensity, from the now sleepy port of Truro to the bustling commercial port of Falmouth.

A drowned river valley which began forming during the Quaternary nearly two million years ago, it now consists of a deep tidal basin opening into Falmouth Bay, fed by rivers and creeks that rise many miles inland. Tiny springs and brooks chatter their way down to merge with the tide. The last great change came after the final Ice Age 10,000 years ago, which carved deep, narrow valleys like King Harry Reach down the middle of the river - channels deep enough for large ships to be moored only a stone's throw from the bank (stone throwing not recommended).

The first signs of human habitation around the estuary are from the Iron Age (800 BC to 100 AD); you can see the best-preserved evidence of this at Roundwood Quay near the Trelissick Estate - an easy walk, and a truly inspiring place for a breakfast, a picnic, and a dog walk. You can still wander, and indeed wonder, at the defensive works and quays that await your morning exertion. While these quays were used relatively recently as the further reaches and rivers silted up, there is direct evidence that they were used for trading tin in the Bronze Age, and during the Roman occupation of England and Cornwall.

Not all traders would brave the estuary, and stories suggest that Phoenicians traded on what we now know as Black Rock at the mouth of the estuary. This would have given them an escape from local 'traders', intent on a bit of plunder. The extension of the area's maritime links took place with the arrival of Christianity during the 5th and 6th centuries. Many of the settlements of this time were based around the need to trade within and from the Fal, and as individualism gave way to collectivism, a system of moving people and produce to and between markets became an essential aspect of life on the River.

As populations increased, so did the trades and opportunities for commerce. Waterside structures including fish weirs, tidal ponds, harbours and quays, agriculture, fishing, boat building and, of course, mining - all have played their part in shaping the human history of the Fal.

RCPS Archive

Photography FRL

Barrows, encampments and farmsteads have left clues for the intrepid explorer armed with an ordnance survey map, and after a long day's walk along the banks of the rivers, it is easy to see how important boats and ferries were for moving people and produce across and along the river. Before the chain floating bridge over King Harry Passage there was a succession of ever larger rowing ferries for foot passengers and the squire's horse and buggy; but the hapless farm animals on their way to Truro market had to enjoy a low tide swim, with boatmen posted down-river for the animals that could not stem the tide.

While communities were seemingly more isolated before the age of modern transport, there were in fact a great number of commercial and social activities that brought the various settlements together; even the folk of Penryn and Falmouth - renowned for fighting as much as trading - shared a need for the Penryn River

Before the age of the motorcar there were at least 15 regular ferry services, many being owned by the squires, to allow locals to get to work, and produce to get to market. Some were in receipt of a Charter, while others just came and went as the needs of local people waxed and waned. Although many of the older crossings have now carried their last passengers, such as the rowing ferries between Mylor Harbour and Great Wood Quay, and Pandora Inn and Restronguet Point, there remains a healthy offering of motor ferries to this day.

In 1999 Cornwall County Council and the National Trust commissioned local consultants to investigate the potential for reducing car traffic through a network of ferries, buses, trains and footpaths. The findings recommended a focused management structure that should provide a marketing and communications plan to make more people aware of the existing offerings, and encourage the private sector to start more services with integrated timetables, so that customers could share tickets on different forms of public transport.

The Fal River Links (FRL) project as a public/private initiative started its first trials in 2002, with a great deal of support from local business, local government, the National Trust and The Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The first major improvements in the area's transport offering were the opening of the Falmouth Park and Ride/Float scheme, the launch of a fast water taxi service, and a brochure advertising days out on the estuary, with walking routes linked to ferry, bus and train services, and attractions offering discounted entry for those using public transport.

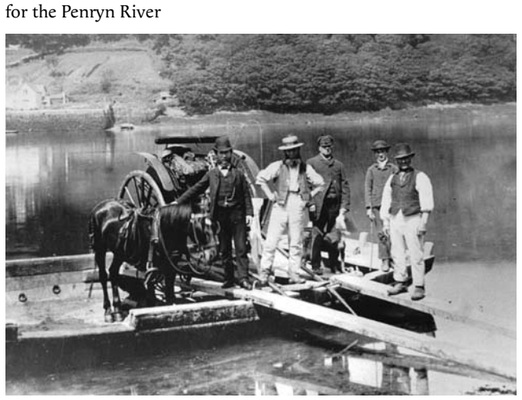
The Landing Pontoon, completed at the Trelissick Estate in 2005, has become a very popular way of getting to this National Trust property, allowing further development of the transport network, in particular links with the wonderful footpaths that cross the hinterland.

With funding from, amongst others, HSBC, Cornwall County Council and Regional Development Funds, FRL went on to develop strong links with Cornwall Wildlife Trust and the Environment Agency in order to focus not just on the journey, but also the product. Working with an education consultant, a Cornish River module was provided within the Sense of Place Curriculum Area, and HSBC funding was accessed to help schools with transport costs.

The FRL management board believes there is still much to be achieved, and looks forward this year to launching the Fal Oyster Card to allow advance ticket sales through the internet, and also linked and joint tickets with a visitor payback scheme to help with local projects. As part of this project, we are launching a **Friends of the Fal** scheme to encourage greater use of local public transport, and organise beach cleans and cultural events. We are eager to hear of any ideas that might help reduce car traffic, while increasing fun and access to the beautiful River Fal. We would love to hear from you!

A ferry across King Harry Reach has existed for over 500 years, the first Charter being granted by Henry VI in the 15th century. To learn more, access www.kingharryscornwall.co.uk

Tim Light is an ex Army officer who enjoys mucking about in boats, and found his natural niche for work, rest and play as part of life on the River Fal.



'The Squire's Horse and Buggy' - RCPS Archive

RCPS Archive

Between the Mines and the Sea

The RCPS and Marine Natural History

Jason Birt

The Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society has a justifiably proud history of promoting artistic endeavour and technological developments, in particular those related to mining. Perhaps less well known was its championing of marine biology, although in those days it wasn't known as such.

During the 1800s, there was an up-swell of interest in natural history, driven by the passions of doctors and other learned gentlemen and ladies, arguably the first environmentalists, who poured much of their leisure time into the pursuit of knowledge about our natural world. None, arguably, were more passionate and learned than those who published in the *Annual Reports of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society*. Most passionate and learned among them were the Couch family. Jonathan and Richard Quiller Couch, father and son, were particularly dominant during this period. They covered a wide range of subjects but concentrated on the marine world. Their most notable achievement in my view was the description of moulting and larval development in crustaceans.

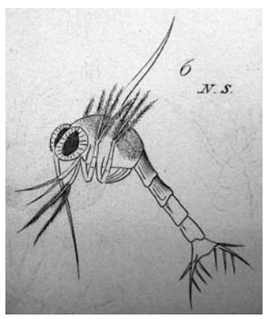
At this time, it was widely believed that crustaceans developed directly – they hatched from the egg looking like miniature adults. Between 1822 and 1835, the Irish naturalist J. V. Thompson described the growth and development of the shore crab, and stated that the young were not like the adults, but resembled two genera previously identified as *Zoea* and *Megalopa* (indeed, these are now the names given to the larval stages of crabs). His work was widely published but also widely rejected – ridiculed, even. In England the work was largely forgotten, but in France two zoologists were dispatched to investigate this supposed phenomenon, with their research summarised and presented by the celebrated invertebrate biologist Henri Milne Edwards. Their investigations revealed that Thompson's work was incorrect and the established view prevailed.

A student trawling for plankton with a net in the Carrick Roads. The samples were being used for a project to assess the biodiversity of zooplankton at this location. Some of the species found previously had their life histories described in some detail by Richard Quiller Couch and the whole activity echoes the biodiversity studies of a century and a half before.

Photo Jason Birt

However, Thompson's research and subsequent mistreatment by established scientists caught the imagination of Richard Quiller Couch. Over the period of a year, Couch investigated the shore crab and a range of other crustaceans. He was meticulous in his investigations, making sure that the eggs came from the adults in his tanks, and followed every stage from the hatching to adulthood. He found that Thompson's work was – far from being inaccurate – indeed correct, and that the famous and great Edwards was wrong. He was damning in his verdict of Edwards' work, stating *'…though appointed to investigate the subject, he must have accomplished his task in a very unsatisfactory manner.'* His findings were published in the 11th *Annual Report of the RCPS*, published in 1843, the article earning his first silver medal at the annual exhibition.

In 1844, he published a further article on larval development involving the rest of the crustacean class, which supported his earlier study and led him to state, *'…the opinion of M. Milne Edwards, that decapod crustacea are born in a state differing but little from that which they will ultimately attain, may now be considered as exploded.'* However, towards the end of the article, he drifted from his message of metamorphosis with a diatribe on the decline in crab populations, a decline he attributed not to the capture of 'berried' females (those with eggs attached) but partly to the harvest of seaweeds from the rocky shores of Cornwall. During the 1800s, it was common practice to remove large amounts of seaweed to form fertiliser for the fields. This practice removed shelter from the shores and rendered them uninhabitable for edible crabs and shrimps. However, he attributed most of the blame to the trawl net, *'…one of the most objectionable forms of fishing ever devised.'*



Zoea – or first larval stage – of the edible crab, drawn for Richard Quiller Couch's 1843 article. Considering the technology available then, the level of detail is excellent. The work by Couch, amongst others like Du Cane, swept away many species when it was realised that they were the larval forms of other species.

Photo Jason Birt
RCPS Archive

Students preparing to enter the water at Maenporth to assess the biodiversity of flora and fauna. This was part of an activity called a BioBlitz, a 24-hour intensive survey. Such activities are low-cost yet provide much useful information about our marine habitats. This activity again resonates with those undertaken by the likes of Miss Warren and Dr Cocks, albeit at a much faster pace.

Photo Jason Birt

He felt that trawl fishing caused untold damage to the seabed and killed countless crabs and lobsters. His ire was raised by the prospect of a law that would have closed the crab fishery during the breeding season, an act that would have devastated the shellfishery of Cornwall, without, in his view, protecting the animals it was designed to protect. Interestingly, the issue of fisheries is a problem without solution 165 years on…

The *Annual Reports of the RCPS* also published articles on the seaweeds, flora and fauna to be found around Falmouth (in particular by Miss Warren and W. P. Cocks) and around other districts in Cornwall (notably by C. W. Peach).

The mid-19th century marked the apogee of Cornish marine natural history, but as the years carried on, whilst this subject gained ever more recognition in other parts of England with Charles Darwin's expeditions and pronouncements and the construction of the Natural History Museum, it waned in Cornwall and more particularly in the *Annual Reports of the RCPS*. Nevertheless, some articles on terrestrial species continued to be published. The Royal Institution of Cornwall continued to publish reports on marine natural history, and in 1907 the *Victoria County History of Cornwall* was published, a publication that was exhaustive in its coverage. However, at the RCPS, year after year, with the exception of articles on fish by Matthias Dunn of Mevagissey, the judges lamented the poor showing of exhibits in natural history for the annual exhibition, with few articles of worth. By the early part of the 20th century, articles were limited to biographies of the men and women themselves.

Other species were also being removed from the lists as studies of life cycles improved. Previously thought to be a type of 'sea cup' or cup coral, work by C. W. Peach revealed these to be the eggs of the dog whelk, Nucella lapillus. *Note that the genus name has changed from* Purpura. *To the annoyance of field biologists worldwide name changes occur rather often!*

Photo Jason Birt RCPS Archive

Academically, present day Cornish marine biology, as marine natural history is today referred, is represented by the University of Exeter in Cornwall, which has a unit that studies sea turtles, and further and higher education colleges like Cornwall College Newquay and Falmouth Marine School. These latter institutions practise low-cost but valuable research, both by staff and students. In my opinion, they should also undertake long-term recording of biodiversity and the physical factors that influence it. Then these bodies will have returned to the type of science practised by those early pioneers - and there is nothing wrong with that. As Stella Turk wrote in her *Seashore Life in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly*:

'It is worth remembering that men like W. P. Cocks of Falmouth and J. Couch of Polperro explored intensively quite small stretches of coast season by season and over many years, still continuing to find new plants and animals and to make fresh observation on their ecology and behaviour.'

In the commercial sector, research is being undertaken by Blue Reef Aquarium, who have made advances in coral propagation techniques and the culture of sea horses, and by the National Seal Sanctuary, which has advanced the rehabilitation of seals injured by the natural elements or as a side-effect of Man's activities. Additionally, the National Lobster Hatchery in Padstow has pioneered the culture and reintroduction of lobsters around the coast of Cornwall. Recently, there have been advances in the low-cost culture of scallops by local scientists like Colin Pringle, and the development of dolphin protection pingers (these emit a sound to deter dolphins and porpoises from entering fishing nets) by Dr Nick Tregenza. Marine conservation has been championed by Cornwall Wildlife Trust, which assists in the SeaSearch programme to encourage divers to record the distribution of shallow water marine species, increasing our baseline understanding, and by the Environmental Records Centre for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, which retains records of marine strandings.

So, with all this marine activity to promote, what role could the RCPS play in today's world? As is becoming increasingly well-known, the RCPS is looking to return to its founding principles, to promote the sciences and technology, as well as the arts. The RCPS could appoint fellows practising marine biology, and fund simple research that provides the baseline data that conservation laws require, to make the right decisions on protection. The RCPS could bring back the annual exhibition that rewarded the writing of reports on natural history, and the production of displays that brought the people to the natural world around them. Historically, these exhibitions encouraged and rewarded the young to get involved. To bring back the exhibition would encourage them to study such a captivating subject. Above all, it could assist in the popularisation of our marine environment by providing incentives to develop new means of marine education that combine its modern day expertise in art with its historical expertise in natural history.

Jason Birt trained as a marine biologist at Southampton University and is a lecturer of biology at Cornwall College Newquay. For six years he was course manager of marine biology at Falmouth Marine School. His main interest is the popularisation of our marine environment.

Constructing South Pier Mevagissey

Brian Stewart

Sir Frank Brangwyn RA RWS PRBA HRSA (1867-1956) was one of the most celebrated artists of his time, enjoying a worldwide reputation. Brangwyn was the first living artist to be awarded a retrospective exhibition at the Royal Academy, and he was singled out by Kandinsky as one of the earliest 20th century artists to use colour in a modern manner.

In 2006 financial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Art Fund, and the MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund enabled Falmouth Art Gallery to acquire one of Brangwyn's most fascinating and important Newlyn-style oils, painted early in his career in Cornwall in 1888 - *Constructing South Pier, Mevagissey*.

As a young artist Brangwyn studied at the South Kensington Museum (now the V&A), where his talent was encouraged by Thomas Armstrong (1832-1911), who was Director of Art there. Armstrong was an art advisor to Sir Edward Lycett Green, a Yorkshire industrialist who made his fortune with a device which recycled heat from steam boilers. On Armstrong's advice Green purchased a number of early Brangwyn paintings, including *Constructing South Pier, Mevagissey*.

Brangwyn's visit to Mevagissey was said to have been financed by Frederick Mills, head of Newman's, the Soho firm of colourmen, with the capital outlay to be repaid in paintings. The visit was productive and resulted in a number of masterpieces, including the exhibiting at the Royal Academy in 1888 of a rustic scene entitled *Bark Stripping*, which was described by Walter Shaw Sparrow as 'rather in keeping with what is now known as the Newlyn School'.

To get to Mevagissey, the young artist left London aboard the Waterford Packet in October 1887, which travelled from Miller's Wharf, Lower East Smithfield, London, via Portsmouth, Southampton and Plymouth. He landed at Falmouth, where he more than likely visited his good friend and mentor Charles Napier Hemy RA (1841-1917). From Falmouth he travelled by road to St Austell, and then walked carrying his painting materials to Mevagissey, where he painted plein-air in the modern Newlyn style. Brangwyn's short time in the area was important, helping him to concentrate on the half-tones that vary so subtly in the constantly changing Cornish light.

One of the first canvases Brangwyn completed that autumn was a view from Mevagissey's inner harbour (Christie's 27 November 2002 lot 27). This painting, when sold, had mistakenly been catalogued as Fowey because the name appears on one of the boats featured. In fact, all Mevagissey boats were, and still are, registered at Fowey. The background buildings in the painting, many of which still exist today, clearly place the scene at the inner harbour of Mevagissey.

At the beginning of 1888, Brangwyn began the view of the construction of the outer harbour. It was a most unusual subject for an artist, comparable to an artist today deciding to paint workmen constructing a motorway. Neverthless, it was entirely in keeping with the ideals of William Morris, for whom both Brangwyn and Hemy had worked. The subject of manual labour was a theme Brangwyn would return to throughout his career.

Mevagissey's inner harbour, 1887 painted by Frank Brangwyn (photo: Christie's) and today in a photograph by John Dyer

The outer harbour was already under construction when Brangwyn arrived. To build it, the Trustees had to apply to the Board of Trade for permission and an engineer, Mr J.C. Inglis, was employed to draw up plans. The case for the outer harbour was that there was no room for any more boats in the present inner harbour and as a consequence boatbuilding was at a standstill. The inner harbour was tidal and also exposed to strong south-easterly gales, so that many days and nights fishing were lost annually. The Trustees also argued that the building of the harbour would give much needed local employment.

On receiving the appropriate permission, Duchy land was purchased for £106.6s.0d as well as half an acre of land at Point Stuccombe Field. John E. Lea was appointed Clerk of the Works, with the contractors being the well known firm of Messrs. W. Hill & Co of 26 Parliament Street, Westminster, who had built the Newlyn pier.

Mr Tremayne of Heligan gave permission for stone for the new quays to be quarried from Cockaluney Beach between Mevagissey and Pentewan, and sand from Pentewan Beach. Sixteen-inch granite was recommended and used for the top surface.

Construction was a dangerous task. The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* 19 August 1887 reported: '*A workman named William Hunkin who was engaged on the pier was ordered to load two holes with powder and set fire to the fuse. As one did not go off as soon as he thought it should, he recklessly went to see the hole, when the explosion took place and blew him over the cliff. He was badly cut about the head but how he was not blown to atoms is a complete mystery. His escape is considered to be miraculous.*'

On the 14 October 1887 the same paper reported: '*Two labourers named Francis Pomeroy and Orlando Avery employed by Messrs. Hill & Co., the contractors upon the work of constructing the new pier at Mevagissey, were on Thursday digging from a heap of sand when they undermined four huge blocks of granite piled one on the other and weighing about six tons. These came crashing down upon them and Pomeroy was killed on the spot, being dreadfully crushed about the head and body. Avery was caught by the leg and sustained a compound fracture of the limb. Both were single men but Pomeroy supported his mother who is a widow.*'

Brangwyn's painting, executed in the Newlyn-style square brush technique, is fluid and masterly, capturing a unique historical record of Cornwall's coastal heritage. The picture shows the massive upright timber beams that supported the wooden shuttering. These were lined on the inside with heavy granite slabs sixteen inches thick. Within the granite walls shingle infill and concrete were placed, before being topped with granite. After construction, the beams on the outside of the shuttering were removed, along with the planks. The inner beams encased by the granite walls were left as 'ties' for the sailing vessels, such as the Lowestoft drifters seen in the far distance of the painting.

One of the workmen in Brangwyn's painting stands holding a long-handled Cornish shovel used to spread the shingle, while beyond him a group of men turn a capstan. The labourers featured in the picture were each paid £1 a week, and the masons 27 shillings. The entire cost of the quay was £22,000.

The Trustees would no doubt be shocked if they knew that one day the painting of the construction undertaken 'plein-air' by the young artist staying in their town, would command far more money than the original cost of the entire outer harbour.

Despite the labourers' hard work and the pier's granite facing, it suffered severe damage in the great blizzard of 1891, which resulted in some 300 feet of the construction being eventually washed away on 9 March. The situation had been exacerbated because the foundations of the pier had in places not been sunk far enough to meet the bed-rock.

The pier had to be rebuilt at an estimated £30,000. The Trustees applied for an extended loan from the Public Works Loan Board, but this was refused. Fortunately Mr J.C. Williams of Caerhayes, by now the Chairman of the Trustees, came to the rescue with an extremely generous gift of £10,000, which in addition to the imposition of new local taxes resulted in work commencing, this time using the firm of Sir John Coode. The new outer harbour was finally completed in 1897. Mr Williams, whether through modesty or superstition, declined a proposal for an opening celebration, and instead went for a simple plaque.

Research team: H A Behenna, Linda and Michael Bickford, Hugh Bowles, Alex Hooper, Brian Stewart and John F. Tonkin.

Brian Stewart is Curator of Falmouth Art Gallery.

The collection of Falmouth Art Gallery can be viewed on-line at www.falmouthartgallery.com

Sir Frank Brangwyn RA RWS PRBA HRSA (1867-1956)

Constructing South Pier, Mevagissey, 1888
Oil on canvas , 51 x 76 cms.
Falmouth Art Gallery Collection.

Purchased with funding from The Art Fund, the MLA/V&A Purchase Fund and The Heritage Lottery Fund.

Photography by MOR

Space to Think

How contemporary public art is reinforcing our sense of place and pride in our surroundings

David Buurma and
Philip Wyatt

While strolling through a town centre, you might be fortunate enough to stumble upon a piece of art in an unexpected place. From classic granite war memorials to challenging constructions of glass and steel, the quality of art in our public spaces is often seen as a barometer of economic and cultural health. Art can do much to reconnect people with their local environment, and is an important tool in the reanimation of our built environment. We all experience a mixture of reactions at different times - it might remind us of something trivial, cheer us up, or evoke a particular historical event. Alternatively, the art may simply invoke a sense of joy through shape, beauty or just fun.

Over the last 20 years there has been a shift in the role of public art. Sculptures, placed in the public arena more than 200 years ago, were often symbolised expressions of power through large-scale classical geometric objects such as pyramids and obelisks, or a man on horseback upon a pedestal. These days most public artworks have come down off the pedestal and are quite often expected to work harder amongst the crowds at ground level.

Two waterfront pieces of art in Falmouth are good examples of this shift - the rather ambiguous Killigrew Monument near the National Maritime Museum, and the recently rededicated St Nazaire Memorial on the Prince of Wales Pier in Falmouth.

The Killigrew Monument is a stunning 10m sharp pyramid that commemorates one of Falmouth's best-known families. The monument sparks curiosity owing to its awesome geometric beauty, but the lack of information surrounding it means that it falls short of truly engaging the public. We are further held at arm's length by planting and railings. The monument's anonymity purposefully conceals the true story behind the Killigrew family, as research suggests that not only is it a tribute to the family's contribution to Falmouth town, but it also links to stories of piracy, greed and ambition.

In comparison, the rededicated St Nazaire Memorial is a far more accessible and welcoming piece of art. Seven white concrete oval plinths draw the eye towards the stone memorial, and on each plinth is a brass plaque holding quotes from servicemen involved in the raid.

Those taking part in the invasion set off from Falmouth in March 1942 with the aim of destroying the St Nazaire dock in France and preventing the Tirpitz, the Germans' largest and most powerful warship, from being put to sea and destroying Allied shipping. By aiming to satisfy physical, emotional and spiritual human needs surrounding the history of this memorial, the redesign of the public space encourages people to take a moment to reflect on this event. Such islands of calm and contemplation are much needed in public spaces today, and offer an interactive experience for those passing by.

St Nazaire Memorial

Tinners Hounds

Pencalenick School

Another evocative memorial that engages the public can be found in Redruth. As part of the successful public realm regeneration project in the town, a pack of bronze hounds, called the Tinners Hounds, has been installed by internationally known artist David Kemp. The original hounds were made from the discarded miners' rubber wellies that littered the mine after it closed down in 1990, ending a 4000-year history of tin mining in the area. The idea was to celebrate the legacy of the miners' labour in a light-hearted and inspiring way. The hounds, now cast in bronze rather than their original rubber, are described by David Kemp as 'relics of a vast underground workforce that rarely saw the light of day… released from their subterranean labours, they now wander the clifftops looking for a proper job'.

At Pencalenick School, the Penhaligon Star sculpture is a more personal form of memorial, enjoyed and appreciated by children and adults alike. Popular Cornish MP David Penhaligon died in a car accident in 1986. On her wreath at David's funeral, his widow Annette quoted a poem from Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet':

When he shall die
Take him and cut him out in little stars
And he will make the face of heaven so fine
That all the world shall be in love with night

The significance and relevance of art in public spaces has grown and changed over the last ten years in Cornwall, and artists have played a significant role in transforming them. This has seen creative freedom flourish, with practical everyday objects such as handrails, bike racks, tree grates, lighting, planters and bollards becoming public art, resulting in a more profound interaction between the public and the public space.

So when you're visiting our town centres or more rural destinations, look around at the increasing number of artistic expressions that provoke memories, inspire your imagination, or just make you smile. Through art, meaningful public space takes on a unique identity, suitable for multiple functions. An ordinary space can develop its own 'soul' and become a truly unique and special place.

David Buurma
Landscape Architect & Artist, Partner at Mor

David has a Masters Degree in Landscape Architecture from Harvard University. His work has ranged from urban regeneration schemes and public parks to private gardens. His key skills are also public art and furniture and garden design. He is an expert photographer and a keen sculptor

Philip Wyatt
Spatial Designer at Mor

Philip Wyatt graduated from Falmouth College of Arts with a BA (Hons) in Spatial Design in 2003. He is currently working on the Crayford Waterside Gardens project in Kent. His main interest is in encouraging a sense of wellbeing through the design of people-friendly places and designs which will stand the test of time.

The Penhaligon Star

Whale Blowing - RCPS Collection

Henry Scott Tuke

Paintings from Cornwall

The Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society Collection

Catherine Wallace

Alison Bevan

The RCPS and publishers Halsgrove are greatly to be congratulated on the production of the superb, hardback book cataloguing and illustrating the 277 works by Henry Scott Tuke in the Society's collection – the largest collection of the artist's work in public ownership.

Henry Scott Tuke (1858 – 1929) was born in York, but the place that he is most associated with is Falmouth, which was both his childhood home and his chosen place of residence for much of his artistic career. While training at the Slade School of Art, London, in the late 1870s, he befriended fellow student Thomas Cooper Gotch. It was the latter's future wife, Caroline Burland Yates, who introduced both Gotch and Tuke to the artistically inspirational village of Newlyn in 1879, which Tuke declared to be '*simply reeking with subjects*'.

Rounding the Manacle Buoy - RCPS Collection

When the artists' colony known as the Newlyn School developed in the early 1880s, the Gotches settled in the village, but although Tuke visited frequently, he never made it his permanent home, instead following his passion for sailing by basing himself in a floating studio off Falmouth. Nevertheless, Tuke was very much accepted as one of the Newlyn School, and an article in the Art Journal in 1889 explains that residency was not prerequisite for inclusion as a 'Newlyner', since '*one dwells in a boat off Falmouth*'.

Tuke settled in a cottage at Pennance Point in 1885 and kept this as his base for the next 40 years. He continued to visit Newlyn frequently, maintaining his friendships with various members of the colony, but gradually developed his own style and subjects. He adored painting the human form 'en plein air', using local boys as his uninhibited models, and it is for these brightly lit, evocative paintings of naked youths that he is best known. He was equally adept at portraiture, which proved a more lucrative form of painting, and also frequently painted other craft in the water, using his intimate knowledge of rigging and seamanship to excellent effect.

Because the collection covers all periods of Tuke's career, the Catalogue presents a unique insight into the artist's wide-ranging talent, from childhood to old age, while also offering 'something for everyone' in style and theme. For those who rejoice at the capturing of summer sunshine on youthful bathers, paintings like *'Noonday Heat'* or sketches such as *'Study for a Summer Morning (Boy Bathing)'* show unsurpassed painterly excellence. Works like *'Our Jack'* and *'Portrait of William J. Martin'* are outstanding examples of characterful portraiture, while the views of Falmouth and other British and foreign places contain wonderfully evocative images of landscape, architecture and coastal scenes. Tuke's depictions of all kinds of ships and seacraft – from brigantines, barques and schooners to steamers, smacks and rowing boats – make the book full of fascination.

Catherine Wallace's enlightening introductions to each chapter give the perfect amount of biographical information to give the reader an overview of Tuke's fascinating life, while the extended captions accompanying the catalogue entries offer absorbing detail to intensify enjoyment of the images themselves. Also moving and interesting is the introduction provided by Brian Price, the remarkable man who donated the majority of the paintings in the collection; his passion for Tuke's work is infectious, and his generosity and public spirit are inspirational.

The RCPS Tuke Collection is quite simply breathtaking, and the beauty of this book is that it makes it available to everyone.

Alison Bevan is Director of Penlee House Gallery and Museum, Penzance, which specialises in showing Newlyn School paintings.

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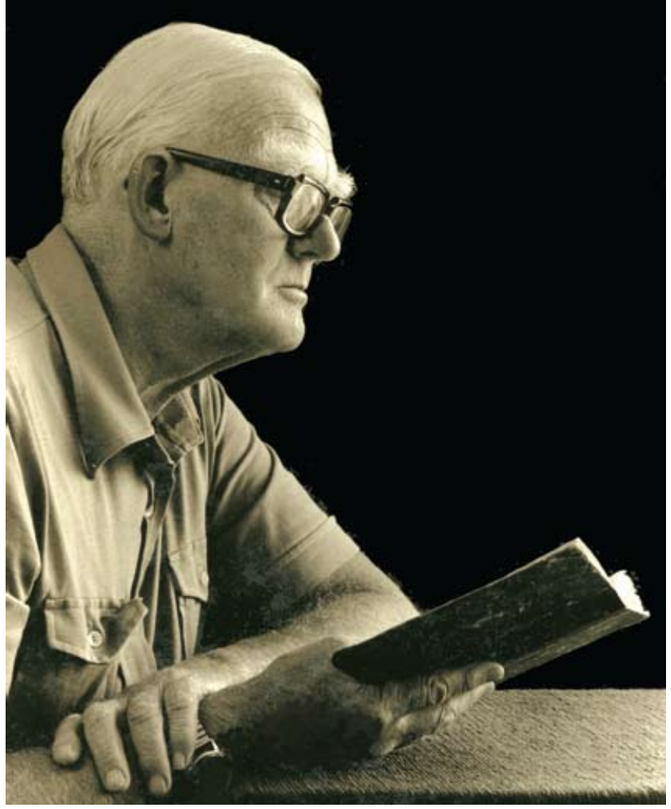

Peter Stanley Gilson (1925 – 2009)

Michael Bradley

An old friend of the Poly, Peter Gilson, having suffered another stroke, passed away peacefully on 13th February 2009. A well-known figure in Falmouth, Peter, with his wife Thelma, joined the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society in 1982. He was responsible for the establishment of the Local History and Research Group in 1983, working tirelessly on 'The Project', as he liked to call the History Group, virtually up to the time of his death.

Born in July 1925, Peter first came to Falmouth in 1937 when his father came to work as a wages clerk at Falmouth Docks. Peter told me that his first experience of Falmouth was from a photograph of Barracks Ope in the High Street. It made such an impression on him that he was delighted when he discovered the real place, and it was from there that he went on to find out so much about the town and its history. He attended Falmouth Grammar School as a pupil, going on to win a scholarship to Cambridge University, from where he returned to his old school to teach Geography and Geology, subjects that fascinated him all his life. At school Peter was a great sportsman and excelled at rugby, athletics, and especially cricket, a game he loved and played so well.

Anyone who had been taught by him will remember the great knowledge and passion he held for both his subjects and the school. He went on to form an Old Boys' Association for F.G.S., the last big reunion being held at the Green Lawns Hotel in 2000.

Having joined the Poly, Peter became deeply involved in its affairs, and went on to become its Librarian and eventually Hall Manager, responsible for the overall running of the building and the events held there in the 1980s. Having accumulated a vast amount of historical material on the town, it was inevitable that he would establish 'The Project'. As an offshoot of this work, he established the very popular 'Up the Creek' boat trips, giving a fascinating and detailed commentary on the various sights and features of the River Fal and the harbour. Few will forget the magic of gently gliding down the various creeks on a warm summer's evening, with such a knowledgeable and brilliant man 'at the helm'.

Peter always encouraged people to pass on to the History Group old family papers and objects, and also to visit the Group to research his pet subject - the town he had lived in so long. In 2005 he made to the Society a Deed of Gift of the **Peter Gilson Collection** which comprised '*all the property in or about the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society belonging to him*'. This included all the photographs, documents, and research that he had spent many years collecting, and today forms an archive of incalculable worth.

Peter went on to write several books about Falmouth that are still in print today. Until a few weeks before his death he was working on a new volume, and I was very privileged when he asked me to be part of it with him. I hope to continue the work he started as a tribute to a great man – a man of wry and gentle humour.

I feel proud to be part of the team that Peter started all those years ago. He became my mentor, giving me encouragement and support with his vast knowledge, always finding time to explain fascinating facts in great detail about the town he loved so much. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

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