

FROM YOUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS

AN UPDATE FROM CORNWALL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S AREA REPRESENTATIVES

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BOLVENTOR MILESTONE REDISCOVERED

In the first of two articles this month Rosy Hanns reports on the chance find of a feature from the Golden Age of Coaching:

A landowner at Bolventor found the stone in a heap of rubble in his yard left behind from building works. He noticed the writing and had it erected in his back garden.

Following a recent site visit, Ian Thompson of The Milestone Society has identified the milestone as a 1830s Bodmin Turnpike Trust milestone, a replacement of the original 1760s milestone.



This roughly triangular stone has a rounded top and is inscribed with B 10 on one flat face and L 12 on the other flat face. The back of the stone is rounded.

The landowner is keen to preserve the milestone and to replace it as near to



the original position as possible and is working with Ian Thompson to facilitate the move.

When the Bolventor bypass was built in the 1990s, the current 1890s Listed milestone was placed on the North side of the dual carriageway by Bolventor church.



Rosy Hanns

WHAT IS GOING ON AT THIS WORLD HERITAGE SITE?

Iain Rowe is the Area Representative for St Cleer Parish. On a recent visit to the South Caradon and West Caradon Mines Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) & Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), he encountered a very worrying scene.

Iain is perplexed by the installation of fencing inside the perimeter of the SAM. This may have been given permission but appears rather incongruous as his photos show:



New fencing inside of SAM from south looking north
Photo: Iain Rowe



Fencing inside of SAM from south looking north
Photo: Iain Rowe



Fencing inside of SAM from south looking north
Photo: Iain Rowe

The installation of extensive lengths of fencing has come as shock to some people but, as Iain points out, it may have been given the necessary level of permission and have a useful, practical purpose. Of greater concern, because of the potential impact on the River Seaton, is the dumping of stone from the mines, as the following photographs show.



Mine stone from SSI dumped in River Seaton affecting SSSI, SAM & river quality & flow – looking east
Photo: Iain Rowe



Mine stone from SSI dumped in River Seaton affecting SSSI, SAM & river quality & flow – looking east
Photo: Iain Rowe

Land management is necessary but on important sites such as this it needs to be done sensitively in order to protect the natural and historic environment. Iain continues to look into the matter.

FAIRY CASTLES – THE INTERNATIONAL PICTURE

Sites in Cornwall, notably Stowe's Pound, have been blighted by the puzzling craze for building 'fairy castles'. Andrew Langdon has recently visited Cyprus and has sent these photographs of the Tombs of the Kings at Kato Pafos, which show that other major archaeological locations, in this case a World Heritage Site, are also subject to this practice.



Andrew was disappointed to see these stone stacks. It hasn't ruined the splendour or importance of these archaeological features (see photos below) but raises questions about why some people visit such sites: is it to understand and learn, or to use them as playgrounds or photo-opportunities?



LISKEARD HERITAGE WEEKEND

Liskeard is a beautiful town, well worth a leisurely visit, as this report by Rosy Hanns of the recent Heritage Weekend shows:

In 1991 the Council of Europe and the European Commission set up European Heritage Days to raise appreciation for Europe's rich and diverse cultural assets and their need for care and protection. The central principle was as simple as it was compelling: to throw open the doors to historic monuments and buildings, in particular those normally closed to the public. Today, they are held annually in September in 50 signatory states to the European Cultural Convention, with each country running it in its own way. The National theme for Heritage Open Days this year is 'Women in Power' to mark 100 years since many women got the vote.

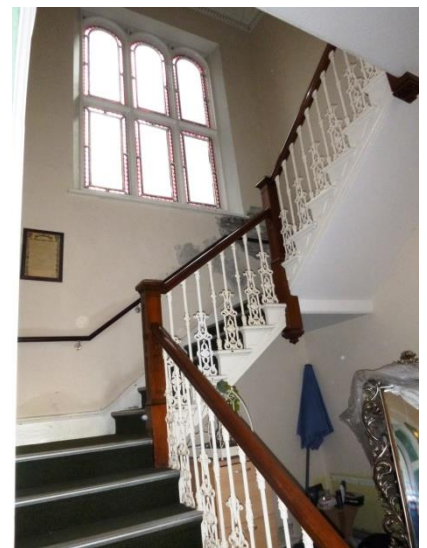
Liskeard Heritage weekend was 13th – 16th September and it gave people the chance to see behind doors which are usually closed, including:



Pendean - a Grade II Listed 19th Century private residence and former home of the Glubb family. There are many original features in a house designed by celebrated local architect Henry Rice. An intricate carved staircase and bookcase by separate generations of the Glubb family, all of whom were solicitors and Mayors of Liskeard. The front garden wall of Pendean is also Grade II Listed.



Trewithan House - a 19th Century building, until recently occupied by Cornwall Council's Housing Office; prior to that it was used by the Health Authority. It is now privately owned and the new owners are restoring the house to its original use as a private residence with its magnificent hall, stairway and window as well as gardens overlooking the town of Liskeard.





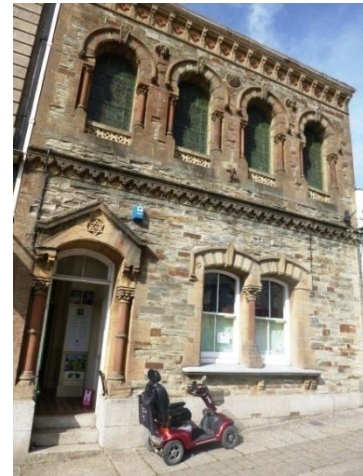
Greenbank House – a Grade II Listed 19th Century residence in private ownership with original open well staircase and window.



Freemasons' Mark Master Lodge in Liskeard - a Grade II Listed Masonic hall



with an 1872 datestone, which was the work of John Paul, who was from Morval, and was himself a freemason. He worked with Liskeard's foremost and best-known architect Henry Rice. Freemasonry first came to Liskeard in 1845 with the formation of St Martin's Lodge, the Lodge met



at several different venues before the current building was erected in 1872. Today's Visitors were given the opportunity to admire the magnificent Victorian architecture and the beautiful stained glass windows of St Martin's Lodge room.

Stuart House - a Grade II Listed late medieval town house. Who built the original house and



when is a mystery. The granite arches and other features give a date around 1500 but there is no documentary evidence further back than the early 17th century. The house had four large windows facing east over the town towards the church and castle. By 1627 the house was owned by the Jane family. Thomas Jane was at one time Mayor and Steward in the town and his son, Joseph, was sometime Mayor, Chief Steward and MP for the town in the 1620s to 40s. They appear to have reversed the house from facing east over the town to west facing onto the King's Highway (Barras Street), by moving the outer of the

two granite arches that date to the 15th or very early 16th century from its original position in the rear to facing west which creates the impressive entrance porch we see today. They also built the tower porch and the three storey, double-gabled wing to the east.

Joseph supported King Charles in the Civil War and hosted him in the house in August 1644.

The Stuart House Trust purchased the house in 1988 with the aims of purchasing, restoring and maintaining the house and using it as an Arts and Heritage Centre and community facility.



St Martin's Church - this Grade II Listed church is the second largest parish church in



Cornwall. The church includes some Norman fragments, but is mostly 15th century. The tower was repaired in 1675, but was largely rebuilt between 1898 and 1902 and contains eight bells in the key of E flat. Visitors to the church during Heritage weekend had a rare opportunity to visit the tower, learn about the bells and the constant maintenance they require and experience the magnificent panoramic vista from the top of the tower.



View towards Caradon from St Martin's church tower

The Pipewell - Normally behind protective iron gates, this well is the probable reason for building a settlement at Liskeard. Its first written mention dates from the 14th century and is referred to in old documents as "The Well of Lyskiret" or "The Well of St Martin's".



The water of the well is fed by four springs and has never been known to run dry. Like most



Cornish wells, it is meant to bring luck in matrimony and it was also believed to possess miraculous healing powers and would cure "weak eyes. The water was declared unsafe to drink in 1976.

Heritage walks - Brian Oldham led a walk around the key sites and building involved in the Heritage weekend on Thursday evening. Brian regaled his audience with added information and often amusing quips about each site along the route. The walk finished at Liskeard Museum where welcome refreshments were available.

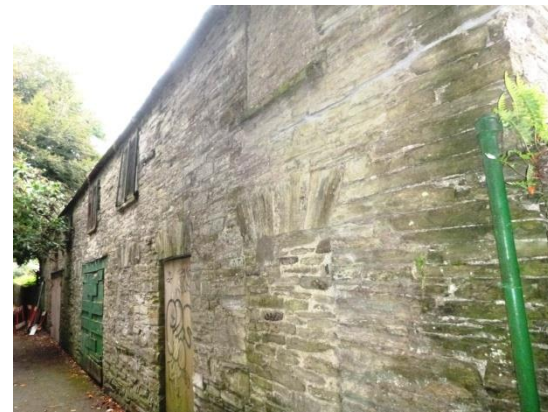


'Drangways' (alleyways) of Liskeard - Liskeard Heritage weekend culminated with Brian Oldham giving a walk through the back streets and alleys of Liskeard imparting interesting information and often amusing tales on the way.



Among numerous sites visited, Brian led us behind the Catholic Church and showed us the site where St Martin's Court cottages once stood. The only visible evidence today is the imprint of a gable in the building (once a public house) that would have abutted the end cottage.

We were led down Westbourne Lane to see the old miner's cottages and Brian read from an article describing how 53 people once lived in squalor and poverty in this row of small dwellings.



A stop at the site of a tannery in Pavlova Court.

And the mural in Pigmeadow Lane depicting the history of Liskeard and South East Cornwall from the earliest times to name but a few of the varied points of interest.



Congratulations to Brian and his team on a fascinating, informative and superbly coordinated event enjoyed by many. And a big thanks to everybody involved for freely giving their time for the many hours it must have taken to prepare and run. It was an experience that truly heightened the visitors' awareness of the many facets of Liskeard's rich and diverse heritage.

Rosy Hanns

IMBUED WITH HISTORICAL INTEREST

Richard Heard has taken advantage of the glorious summer weather to explore his patch around Bude. First, he and fellow CAS member Malcolm Wright carried out a geophysical survey at Thorne Farm, Stratton in the hope of locating 'Bude's Roman fort'. Sadly, they were unsuccessful.

More success came at Whalesborough Farm in the parish of Marhamchurch parish. This is the site of a Domesday manor which passed from the Whalesborough family to the Trevelyans in 1460. The manor house and chapel are no longer extant, so any information derived from Richard's surveying will be of great interest.

Richard writes: 'The attached photo shows the edge of the eastern bailey at Kilkhampton Castle. The 2 green humps with bracken are seldom visible because of undergrowth. Both baileys and the top of the motte were strimmed off by the National Trust. The humps may well be the remains of a pair of entrance towers.'



IVY AND VANDALS

The C14 chantry chapel of St Thomas Becket in Bodmin has long been the subject of great concern, so much so that it is on the 2017 Heritage at Risk Register. Its problems include ivy growth and vandalism. Progress has been made lately, thanks to a combined effort by Historic England, Bodmin Town Council and volunteers from CAS and the Federation of Old Cornwall Societies. Ivy was removed from three walls earlier in the year and very recently Sue Jewell allowed access to her garden so that this could be carried out on the east wall.



CAS' elite ivy-removal unit in action

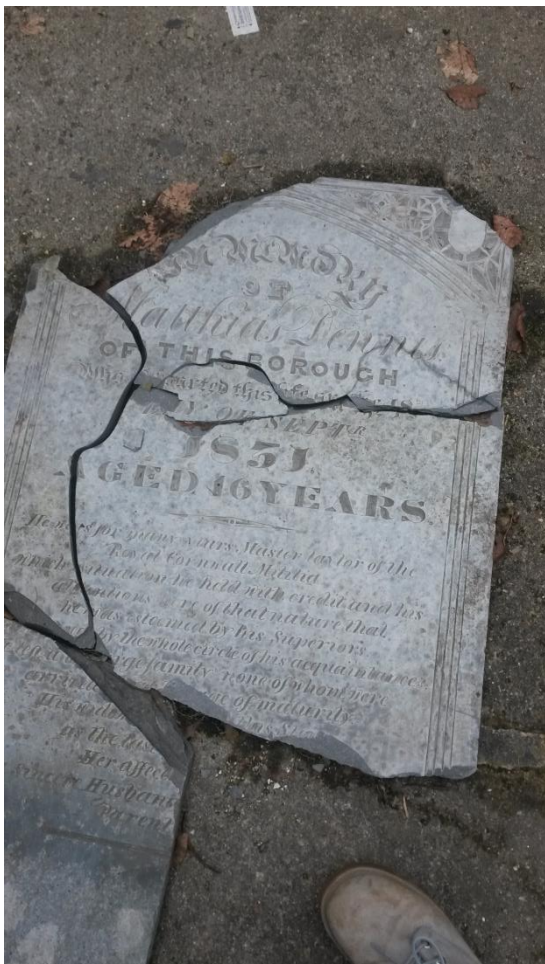
Photo: Ann Preston-Jones

The crypt, once the location for drug-taking, is now locked but vandals, often youngsters, regularly use the chapel for a range of inappropriate activities, including skateboarding. This summer there were even reports from locals of parents dropping their children off to run loose in the chapel, even though there is a public playground in nearby Priory Park. As a result, damage is being done to the masonry. Damage to this structure, which is a Scheduled Monument, is an offence under the 1979 Ancient Monuments Act. The local police are investigating this as well as recent incidents of anti-social behaviour which have occurred in the building.

Over the years some of the historic tombstones have been vandalised. The next photograph shows one that was brought into the chapel and gradually pulverized:



Sue Jewell has a keen interest in local history and has carried out research into the people commemorated on tombstones in Bodmin's churchyard. Below is the story behind this broken tombstone:



Tombstone of Matthias Dennis

The inscription says "for many years he was a master tailor to the Cornwall Militia". He was born in 1785 in Egloskerry. On the 13th October 1819 he married Maria Gill and died on the 18th September 1831, aged 46 years. He lived in Fore St, and in 1841 Maria was still living in Fore St with 6 unmarried daughters. Their son, also Matthias died 8th April 1827 aged just 4 years old. Daughter Maria went on to marry a serviceman in 1848. Sadly the stone is badly damaged, and, as there is no mention of his son, you wonder whether the regiment paid for this memorial.

Research and photo: Sue Jewell

The travails of this beautiful building are likely to continue for a while yet; that's the bad news. However, there is considerable hope. Historic England, Bodmin Town Council, local people, St Petroc's Church, CAS and the Federation of Old Cornwall Societies have already helped to bring about improvements and are determined the building should not fall victim to further vandalism or natural decay.

Area Representatives would love to hear from fellow CAS members, and the general public, about any feature of the historic environment in their parishes, whether a new discovery, something causing concern, or even just to answer queries. If you have any concerns, or new information, about any archaeological feature, please contact the Area Representative for the parish. If you do not know who that is, just look at the inside back cover of the latest journal, *Cornish Archaeology 55*, or send an email to arearep@cornisharchaeology.org.uk .

Roger Smith, 2nd September 2018