

# SALTASH AND DISTRICT OBSERVER

Your only truly "local" newspaper ...

February 2012 - Issue 235

Incessant trumpet of trade; armoury of fearless truth without fear or favour ...

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## UP TO 3,500 NEW HOMES FOR SALTASH – LOCAL VIEWS SOUGHT

A substantial expansion of Saltash to include an additional 3,500 homes across the open land at Broadmoor and Latchbrook has been put forward by Cornwall Council as a possible housing growth to support economic growth and help deliver some of Cornwall's affordable housing needs.

Residents have been invited to express their preferences for either such widescale development or for a more modest expansion of a further thousand homes within the next twenty years.

The two alternative options are described in Cornwall's core strategy discussion paper 'Planning Future Cornwall' and were set out at a recent one day exhibition in the Guildhall.

The Town's population currently stands at 16,400 and currently 43% of its working population commutes to Plymouth. The plan seeks to ensure that Saltash should be more self sustaining and an employment centre in itself. An employment land review estimates that over twenty years the local Gateway Community Network Area (including Saltash and

Torpoint) could gain 200 office jobs, 400 industrial jobs and a further 1,000 – 1,500 associated jobs.

A number of potential industrial sites are identified in 'Planning Future Cornwall'.

These include currently undeveloped land in existing industrial estates at Moorlands Lane and Saltash Parkway. An extension to Tamar View and mixed use industrial and residential sites at Latchbrook and Broadmoor Farm are also put forward.

While 168 homes of the new housing target could be provided within the existing built up area the plan envisages a number of green field sites for development dependent upon whether the 1,000 or 3,500 new homes target is sought.

Smaller sites limited to housing development are put forward to the West of Pill Lane adjacent to the by-pass,

to the East of Pill Lane by Salt Mill Park and East of Wearde Road, close to the school and adjacent to Churchtown Farm Wildlife Reserve.

More substantial areas for housing and mixed development are put forward for Broadmoor Farm. This would infill the entire green field site between the Liskeard Road, the Callington Road, and the Stoketon Cross to Hatt Link Road if the higher housing option was adopted. For the lower housing option only the southern half of this is suggested.

The green field area West of the Latchbrook around Wadgeworthy Farm and stretching towards Trematon is also put forward for housing and mixed development though with the suggestion that only the Northern section, closer to the A38 should be considered.

Improvements to road structure at Carkeel, to include a footbridge, a possible park and ride scheme at Broadmoor, and a one-way system through Fore Street are also included in proposals as to how the infrastructure of Saltash should adapt to expansion. Primary schools currently would be unable to cope with increased numbers, the relocation of the secondary school might need to be considered, and four more G.P.'s, and a relocation of the Ambulance Station would be required for health needs, Cornwall planners suggest. Proposals include a new community centre, shop and open land.

An eight week consultation on Cornwall's planning strategy, including a total county-wide growth of 48,000 homes over twenty years, is now underway to conclude on 2nd March.

Those who did not attend the Guildhall exhibition can obtain full information and the chance to put their own ideas forward through calling at the County's One Stop Shop in the Library, calling 01872 224283 or logging on to [www.cornwall.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/ldf)

These views on the strategy which will have a major impact on Saltash, Cornwall, and the lives of ourselves and our children, will be included in the final document which Cornwall Council will submit to the Secretary of State for examination.

## Katie Wowed the Judges



History and RE Teacher, Katie Boothman, has been named one of 4 UK Innovative Teacher winners at Microsoft's UK headquarters in Reading. Only into her second year of teaching, Katie wowed the judges with her VCT (Virtual Classroom Tour) featuring the work she has done to enhance the use of new technologies across the History Department at saltash.net community school.

A group of Year 9 students, calling themselves the 'HIT Squad' has been given the responsibility of coming up with a range of ways in which ICT can be used to improve the students' learning experiences, making the lessons as engaging as possible in History and other Humanities subjects.

As a result of Katie's UK success she will be attending the Microsoft European Innovative Teachers' event, to be held in Lisbon, Portugal, in March. Joining her will be deputy headteacher at saltash.net, Dan Roberts, who has been invited to attend as a judge. Dan, a previous worldwide Innovative teachers' winner, has been selected as a result of the outstanding contribution he has made, and continues to make, to the UK Partners in Learning Programme.

James Edwards, teacher of ICT and Business Studies at saltash.net, was also a UK finalist at the Innovative Teachers' event. His work on the use of 'Kinect' in the classroom also impressed the Microsoft judges and, although not selected as one of the overall winners, the Microsoft team have asked him to be a lead presenter at the national BETT technology show to be held at Olympia in January.

Speaking after the event, Microsoft's Innovative Teachers programme Manager, Stuart Ball, said, "I want to thank saltash.net for their commitment to the Partners in Learning programme. The staff and students continue to make valuable contributions to this programme which adds to the

outstanding reputation the school has within Microsoft and across the globe."

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### Spring Walks....

Our gorgeous countryside is inviting you to see it at its best. All around are a network of footpaths, bridleways and lanes to explore. To enable our readers to experience the very best of our countryside, The Saltash and District Observer's own publication "A Quality of Life" is still available and crammed full of local walks, strolls and other leisure ideas. Visitors can particularly benefit, discovering so many of our local delights within its pages. I will deliver your copy locally free of charge, or you can purchase it from **The Bookshelf** in Fore St Saltash

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& our PL12 community  
For Observer readers  
From Councillor Derek Holley  
Pill Ward *Saltash*

I hope you know about the small display in the Guildhall entrance. I make no apologies for reminding you about this, -because, quite simply, this is the most important Saltash consultation we will take part in for the next twenty years. This is one consultation that will be listened to! It is about what happens to the land all around the outskirts of Saltash. Should it be allocated for housing, industry or just left alone because it is beautiful? There is one map there which shows blocks of land, each one with a letter and number. We want you to say "this bit should never be built on at all" or "this bit might be suitable for industry" or "this bit is OK for houses". Add your comments and there are lots of other questions if you wish. On top of that there is another critical question we want you to answer...that is how many new houses should there be? Basically we have to have a minimum of 1000 houses as Cornwall has to have 48000, but one scenario has us having 3500 units. The Council working group wants you to answer "No more than 1000", it is up to you. The critical areas you should comment on include A7, which is the far bank and hillside across the Latchbrook leat. A6, the hillside fields below Saltash.net on the banks of the Lynher and A5, the bank of the Tamar below North Pill. These are the most scenic areas. The Working Group that first looked at it considered A2 which is across the Carkeel roundabout on the other side of the garage to be the best place for mixed use of housing and industry, but it is up to you to consider what use the areas should be put to. I am not too proud to beg you to go and have your say, if you go with a partner fill in separate forms. You have about two weeks left from when you get this paper....up to March 2nd. You can also look at the Cornwall website and comment there. Thank you.

Street cleaning: there are two workers who constantly clean our streets and they do a good job but do not have enough time to do all the streets often enough. Many of us still sweep and pick up occasional litter from the pavements outside our own houses and you might like to do the same. I do, I put on gloves or get a dustpan and collect it as I know our street just can't be cleaned all the time. There is just no money to do it. Everybody used to help in

this way at one time. If we all did it would make a huge difference to our town. Please help.

I am sick and tired of saying in this column "this is to save money" .....but here we go again....waste and recycling collections. From April a new system of a box for glass along with different bags is coming in. The old bag system will change and now the remaining stocks are being used up so don't worry if you can only get blue bags, for example. Just use them up, labelling if possible. The new system has different colours which should be fun. Red for cans and plastic bottles, orange for cardboard and blue for paper (the same). Simple. What is not so simple is that garden waste collection is changing too. White bags are out but you can use up those you have. In come wheelie bins, optional, if you want them. Trouble is you have to buy them (£18, or cheaper for a small one) and then buy a years permit (£23.50, for a whole year or cheaper for a small bin, and cheaper still for half a season). I have just calculated that if you now use the system regularly it could work out cheaper each year. Until each street has at least one wheelie in it the garden waste lorry won't collect from that street, I am afraid, so you may have to save your clippings for a week or two, or be the first to get a bin.....

This is not about Cornwall saving money but it is almost certainly going to help you. If you have a NON- emergency police call to make, the number you always had to ring was a long one, which nobody could remember. Now all you have to do is dial 101. That's it. 101. An actual example of real progress! Deaf and hard of hearing can text 180001 101 or you can also email to 101@devonandcornwall.pn.n.police.uk

People are talking about early daffodils etc. Mine have still got their heads down but I wish you all a pleasant, floriferous spring.  
*Derek Holley Cornwall Councillor, Pill.*

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Throughout the area swings are being removed because of a safety problem, they will be replaced either repaired or new

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**SHERYLL MURRAY MP WRITES...**



I visited the Royal Navy Command HQ in Portsmouth at the beginning of January with other Cornish Colleagues who, like me, have signed up to the Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme.

The scheme was set up by Sir Neil Thorne to enable MPs and other politicians to get an insight into life in our armed forces from the sharp end. The scheme is privately funded and I have been given the honorary rank of Lt Cdr.

I will be taking part in many visits to Royal Navy and defence establishments over the course of the next year and I hope that the experience will serve me well to better understand and therefore represent many of my Constituents who work in Devonport Naval Base and Dockyard or are serving in the armed forces.

I was really impressed by the new Type 45 Destroyer which we were shown around and pleased to see that the accommodation on board is more spacious than previous warships.

I was also shown three of the sections of the new Aircraft carriers being constructed in Portsmouth and was amazed at the size of these. It certainly made me realise the scale of the project.

I hope to write a little more about my adventures with the scheme in future columns.

**Shirley's Full English is Now Available to Everyone from 7.00am**

Such has been the popularity of the tempting menu in the "Two Bridges" since Shirley and Tony have been hosts there that by popular demand Shirley have now extended her food service to her more recently acquired Saltash local 'The Railway.'

And so popular are Shirley's super breakfasts with her bed and breakfast guests that she is now making them available to one and all. "The Railway" now opens from 7am so that everyone can start the day with Shirley's "full English" guaranteed to set one up for a full day of work or leisure activities.

"The Railway" is now open for food from seven through until 3pm. Already lunchtime customers are enjoying selecting from a wide choice of snacks including sandwiches, baguettes, burgers and jacket potatoes, through to full and satisfying meals.

These include tasty steaks cooked to order as well as such firm favourites as crab salads, curries and liver and bacon. All ages are catered



The Managers and Staff welcome you with a smile

for in the family menu with a choice of children's meals, while senior citizens can enjoy their Tuesday specials. All can share in the superb carvery on Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays.

Although food service stops in "The Railway" at 3 pm Shirley's superb cuisine continues to the enjoyed in 'The Two Bridges' from midday through to 6pm. On Wednesdays the extended food service continues from six until nine with the popular 'crazy steak night!' this being especially appreciated by singles since it coincides with Shirley's special singles evening - a chance to socialise and meet new friends.

With families especially in



Diners unanimously vote 11 out of 10 for the food

mind a special Mother's Day menu for Sunday 18th March is likely to prove popular and for those wishing to give mother a special treat early booking at 'The Railway' or 'Two Bridges' is advised.

**Essa Files...**

A NEW Saltash organisation designed to help young adults establish themselves in the town is inviting potential members to get involved. Saltash Young Professionals Network hopes to attract 18 to 39-year-olds who live or work in Saltash or the surrounding area and are keen to meet others and gain new opportunities.

Childcare worker and town councillor, Meryn Killeya, 25, said: "Saltash is a fantastic place to live and work but many young people find themselves employed in Plymouth. If they're not working in Saltash they can find it difficult to meet others in the town, especially if they did not grow up here.

We thought it would be helpful to set up an informal organisation allowing young professionals to network, socialise and meet people at events and speaker meetings. We want the network to develop organically and welcome ideas and input from anyone who thinks they might like to get involved."

The group is inviting anyone interested to like its Facebook page in order to be kept up to date with events and the organisation's progress.

Former Mayor of Saltash Adam Killeya, a 30-year-old teacher who moved to the town in 2005, said: "It is open to anyone over 18, regardless of employment status, who thinks they would enjoy the chance to meet new people, attend social events or benefit from networking and business opportunities."

You can find the page by searching Facebook for 'Saltash Young Professionals Network'.

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## From The Mayor's Parlour...

If you have seen us out and about this year, you may have noticed that the Mayoral chains are looking extremely bright. They were sent for cleaning during the first two weeks of January which is normally a quiet time and meant that we were able to take a short break. The deputy Mayor and Mayoress, Martin & Maggie Gee attended the U3A showcase in our absence and enjoyed the visit.

Since the return of the chains however, it has been "business as usual" and we have attended the opening of the Saltash Music, Speech and Drama Festival and the presentation of the Mayor's Drama Award. It is always a pleasure for us to attend the festival each year and as usual, the standard of performance is extremely high. We were also entertained by the Plymouth Area Police choir at their recent concert at Saltash Wesley and were delighted by their performance and also that of David Cotter, a young man who plays the guitar beautifully.

We were also invited to the opening of the new Training Kitchen at Saltash College which was a real treat. Not only did we sample some delicious canapés but also had a tour of the kitchen. It is a great space in which the trainees will be able to reach their full potential.

Also, with food in mind, I was invited to attend the annual lunch at Janeva Court and was able to meet some of the residents as well as the Manager. It is a wonderful environment in which to live and I was made most welcome.

We have had two visits to the Saltash Scout Headquarters this month. Firstly, to award three cubs, with their Chief Scout award. The boys had worked extremely hard to gain this award and are now ready to move up to Scouts. Having been involved with Scouts for many years, these events always bring back happy memories of my Scouting days! Secondly, was the first cutting of the turf for the new Scout HQ to be built at Latchbrook. After many years in Windsor Lane and then at the Community Centre, the new

building has been long awaited and it is an exciting prospect to know that the Scouts will, once again, have their own HQ.

We also received a very warm welcome at the Saltash Sailing club where we had the pleasure of presenting the awards to the sailing cadets. Many of the young people, we recognised from other organisations and Saltash.net Academy and it is always great to see young people being involved in community activities. We are so fortunate in Saltash to have so many organisations to choose from and it is so good to see so many of our young people achieving their goals and the interest and enthusiasm that they display is really wonderful.

The main priority for the Council this month, has been working on the precept for 2012/2013. This is the budget for the year and determines where the council will put to best use, the council tax which is allotted from Cornwall Council.

This year will be a very exciting one for all of us as we have several special events to look forward to.

As you will have seen already, the Olympic Torch will be passing through Saltash on 19th May and we have a team of Councillors working on a programme for the day's events. We are hoping that everyone will get involved and enjoy this historical day. A programme of events will be published nearer the time.

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee will also take place this year and we are in the planning stage at present. It is hoped that residents will join in the celebrations and have fun, further details to follow.

And, of course, this year The Celtic Cross will be erected for all to see as they enter or leave Saltash. What a year to look forward to!

Finally, my Mayor's Ball will take place at the China Fleet Country Club on Saturday, 31 March. If you are able to join us, we would love to see you there. Tickets are available at the Guildhall. Do join us if you are able.

*Cllr. Colin Oakes  
Town Mayor*

## Photo Display Portrays Group's Love of Cornwall



**E**vocative photographs of Saltash with other Cornish Towns on display at the Ashtore Rock Community Centre on Waterside were the result of a project by a newly formed local self-help group 'Crafty Creations.'

The group who range in age from 30's to 80's welcomes anyone aged eighteen and over and keen to improve their health and wellbeing.

The group who range in age from 30's to 80's welcomes anyone aged eighteen and over and keen to improve their health and wellbeing. Crafty Creations in one of several such groups in Cornwall which arose from an NHS health promotion as part of its health trainer services. Joint work with Cornwall College followed and the group of diverse individuals wishing to socialise while holistically improving their quality of life and health came into being. At present there are twelve members meeting monthly.

Their activities are decided upon at the meetings and may include any form of creative art work using a wide variety of materials. At one meeting it was agreed to put together a photographic display to portray what Cornwall meant to each member. Through it they hope to raise the therapeutic wellbeing of those who view it by exhibiting the beauty of the county in which they live.

The photographs of Saltash together with others of Bude and Newquay were professionally mounted in a photomontage by Cornwall University at Falmouth. Local health trainer Marcia Henning welcomed Beth Mitchell of Community Health Development, Maggie Satterthwaite of the adult guidance team and volunteers Penny Evans and Yvette Colwill to the opening of the Ashtore display, all of them having been involved with the promotion of the Crafty Creations group.

Anyone interested in becoming involved is welcome to call at the meetings held in the Burraton Community Centre on the last month of each month between 1 and 3 pm or call Maggie on 077 9549 6623

## View Planning Proposals at Library

Planning applications, which can be examined at the Guildhall during opening hours, should also be available for the public to inspect at the Town's Library, Saltash Town Councillors have suggested.

This would not be possible since this would set a

precedent for other Towns, Cornwall Council replied in a response described as "ridiculous" by County Councillor Derek Holley.

So that all local residents, including those who are normally at work during the usual opening hours of the Guildhall, can view plans for planning applications which might affect them, all plans before the council should be brought up to the Library for viewing on Saturday mornings and returned to the Guildhall for Monday, it was suggested. Town Councillors hoped that this could be put into effect.

## Conundrum Corner

Taking the initial letter to the one word answers to the following nine questions can you re-arrange them to make a nine-letter word?

- 1 Which character carried the First Aid Kit in the Television series Dad's Army?
- 2 Basmati and Arborio are types of which food?
- 3 Which is the only sign of the Zodiac not represented in pictures by a living thing?
- 4 The World's four highest volcanoes are in which South American mountain range?
- 5 Who is the central male character in Emily Bronte's Wuthering Heights?
- 6 On which River does the Scottish city of Perth stand?
- 7 Whose Symphonies include three known as The Great, The Tragic and The Unfinished?
- 8 Which Royal House ruled throughout the 16th century in England?
- 9 Entomology is the study of which creatures?

Answers on page 7

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## Livewire Win Community Funding

The popular Waterside youth club 'Livewire', renowned for its music facilities, has been awarded £1,000 from the Town Council from its Community Chest Fund. The money is being put to enhancing the Club's toilet facilities.

Other applications for Community Chest funding from the Saltash Blind and Partially Sighted Club, Cornwall Council Playing Fields Association and Spectrum were rejected by the Town Council's Policy and Resources Committee. In each case it was considered that the applications did not meet the criteria for Community Chest funding.

All of the applicants were to be advised as to the reasons for this and that this fund is available only for specific projects and not for ongoing work and general expenses.

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# Prestigious New Premises for R & A Carpets & Beds

The New Year saw one of Saltash's longest established businesses move into newly built prestigious premises ideal for showing off to full advantage their vast range of carpets and beds.

Since R&A Carpets and Beds established themselves in Saltash in 1982 many local families have come to depend upon them for household requirements over three decades, paying regular visits to their former warehouse adjacent to the Co-op car park.

They have moved just a few yards into the largest of the shop units that makes up the new Keast Mews development facing an attractive piazza with seating that overlooks the precinct linking the spacious Co-op car park to the heart of Fore Street.

Peter and Kate, well known to hundreds of local customers as the faces of R and A are delighted and thrilled to be there, and their enthusiasm has been shared with the previous customers who have already visited them in their new showroom.

With over 250 rolls of carpet always in stock, R&A have long been among the three largest stockists in Cornwall. In addition to the variety available for inspection there is an almost limitless selection of virtually

any carpeting available which can be chosen to order ready for delivery usually within two days.

Between them Peter and Kate have developed two decades of expertise available to every customer and they are always pleased if asked to advise

and to help the customer select from what can be a bewildering choice, the ideal floor covering for the required purpose.

Whether it is a top quality Axminster or Wilton for the reception rooms or a harder wearing carpet for hall, kitchen or children's



playroom, R&A will always be able to ensure the perfect match for the room required. Free measurements and 'without obligation' quotations can be arranged for anywhere within the area.

Then, once an order has been placed the expert team of professional fitters will arrange an appointment to lay to the highest standards a carpet or other covering guaranteed to enhance any room.

All varieties of floor covering are available to view in the new showroom including vinyl and flutex which can also be cut to order and professionally fitted.

There is also a selection of rugs and accessories such as 'rugstop' to prevent creeping rugs.

To cater for increasing demand R&A have also over the years developed an increasing range of beds and bedding also now available for inspection in the new showroom.

All sizes and varieties of beds are available in stock or speedily obtained to order.

These can be enhanced through R&A's wide range of comfortable mattresses, which can be sold separately, as well as an attractive choice of bedding.

As they near the end of their thirtieth year of service to Saltash Peter and Kate are deeply proud to know that with their newly acquired premises they can continue to offer their unique personal and professional service, such as can be acquired only from an independent and locally owned business, into a fourth decade here in the heart of Saltash, conveniently sited between the Town's main street and main car park.



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# Children Discover Saltash Before the Bridge



## Light Relief from Dark Days for Old Cornwall Society

The famous British stiff upper lip has been renowned throughout history during which we have made light of the darkest days. Even during the grimmest years of human history, the first World War, every effort was made to maintain morale at the front and back at home through a series of postcards exchanged between those actually enduring the horrors of war and their families and sweethearts back in 'blighty'.

Saltash Old Cornwall Society had those desperate days brought vividly back to life when Mrs Di Lawer, kindly stepping in to replace the advertised speaker who was unwell, described 'The Lighter Side of World War 1' through a commentary and display from her wide collection of period postcards.

From the gung-ho excitement of 'a few cavalry charges and we'll all be home for Christmas' through gradual realisation of the war's realities the cards showed the changing perceptions of war while always loyal to the period cry 'Are we downhearted/No!' The cards also aimed to boost recruitment, sneer at the 'conshies' and increasingly encourage women their women into doing war work and making sacrifices on the home front.

We have been inundated recently with films and broadcasts on what was

claimed to be 'the great war to end all wars.' None could have brought it so vividly to life as these poignant postcards through which the Tommies and their loved ones tried to laugh and joke as men fell in

millions in Flanders Fields.

Martin Lister, Saltash Old Cornwall Society Secretary, thanked Mrs Lawer for sharing with members these most moving fragments of living history.

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Saltash without a Tamar Bridge was a near inconceivable concept to local primary school children who attended a display of old ferry photographs at Saltash Library.

Year five students from Brunel School were first asked by John from the Ashtorre Rock Community Centre, who had organised the display, to envisage the ferry that had served the Town for centuries until fifty years ago. When a model of the last ferry, together with model cars, was produced there were comments of "cool" and "awesome."

The children were then encouraged to imagine life in the ferry days and suggest the reasons that their grandparents and previous generations might have had for crossing the Tamar. They then took question sheets and examined the array of photographs which had been mounted at Ashtorre for the fiftieth anniversary of the last ferry in Autumn 2011 and which had since been transferred to the library.

Pupils from St Stephens School were due to experience the same look back at pre-bridge Saltash on the following day.

Interest and amazement were evident as the children were introduced to the workings of the steam-powered chain ferries.

"We are most grateful to the team from Ashtorre for entertaining and educating the children in this way," Saltash's Librarian told the Observer.



### Two Bridges to Pillmere

Linking Pillmere to the Town by means of two more foot and cycle paths is being held back by the need to purchase land and circumnavigate a tree.

Two bridges have already been built to cross the valley separating the estate. One is currently in storage at Stoketon, the other has been used elsewhere, in Liskeard, a concerned resident was informed during public question time at Saltash Town Council.

If the land could be secured a footbridge if not a cycle bridge, could be put in place and some pruning of the tree might ensure another route through to North Road.

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## The Winter Sun Shone on the Georgian Façade of Trematon Hall

Saltash Bookshelf brought Readers and Writers together at Trematon Hall

Locally and nationally renowned writers gathered as the winter sun shone on the lanes and the Georgian facade of Trematon Hall. The second literary festival organised by "Saltash Bookshelf's" Jill Male, following the successful summer event at Pentillie Castle, again attracted a sell-out gathering of book-lovers who appeared unanimous in enjoying the day's events. Three well known writers gave talks and answered questions from readers throughout the day. They also mingled with guests over a sumptuous buffet lunch, where they were also joined by local Saltash historian and writer Bruce Hunt.

### Cornish Novelist

#### E.V. Thompson

*A World of experience for the Book man of Bodmin Moor*

"Before you think of writing go off and live a little." Cornish novelist E.V. Thompson, who quoted this advice from Ernest Hemingway, had certainly followed it. He outlined to his audience his path to becoming a writer which began with wartime evacuation to Oxfordshire as a neighbour of Hitler's admirer Unity Mitford, from there he joined the navy, serving in the Far East, before service in Bristol Police's Vice Squad where he learned the writer's requirement, "An ability to see people not as a

stereotype, not as they think they should be, but as they really are."

Spells in careers as varied as Rhodesian Airline Security, the Hong Kong Narcotics Police and a cleaner in a Cornish China Clay pit followed before the spell of the ivy-clad engine houses and flower-filled gardens of deserted miners' cottages gripped him and he began researching his popular series of historic novels, romances and thrillers most, but not all, with a Cornish setting.

Having concluded around forty novels and several non-fiction books he described himself as "Set in the way of life that I honestly believe is second to none."

### Amusing Anecdotes

*Amusing anecdotes of Maritime misadventures*

Failing English 'O' level examinations twice would not seem the best of starts for a writer, publisher and distributor of books all with a sea bound setting. Mike Critchley of Liskeard based Maritime Books kept his audience amused with his maritime misadventures commencing with his time at Dartmouth which included crossing a snowbound South Hams in his underpants, his trousers stuffed with sand. Following his commission as an officer, his experiences included threatening Icelandic Fishermen on weekdays, during the Cod Wars and drinking socially with them at Weekends. He told tales of Malta, the Far East and the Mediterranean where he served alongside a Greek officer subsequently court martialled for abducting a minesweeper to take his bride on honeymoon to Corfu.

His service career completed with serving in the Royal Navy Public Relations Office he went on to become Prince Charles' Press Officer before what appears to be the most dangerous duty of all, harbour master at Looe, defending himself against an irate Welshman unable to find a parking space.

Many of his naval reminiscences are included in his most recent book which he was promoting and signing.

### Best-Selling Novelist

"I preferred reading" recalls Best-selling Novelist

"I was never going to be a writer - I had no desire to be a writer - I always just wanted to be a reader." So said one of Britain's most popular lady novelists whose tales, mostly with a Westcountry setting, are published in sixteen languages.

Marcia Willett only took to writing at her husband's suggestion when the collapse of his business had left them destitute and her only previous training had been as a ballet dancer. Her first reaction was, "why when there is already so much to read?"

However, her background of family readings by her mother, her childhood delight at seeing the shelf loads of books in Bristol Library, and her constant dreaming ("As a child I was always asked, "Who are you today?") had, "by osmosis" apparently given her the gift of writing fiction.

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## U3A

Our usual general meeting was replaced by a Show Case this month, when almost all of our interest groups put on displays to demonstrate what U3A does.

This show was opened by the Deputy Mayor Martin Gee with his wife Maggie, who, after visiting all of the displays, expressed their surprise at the range of the activities within U3A. Now that the monthly meetings are held at Wesley Church we have much more space and the displays were spread over three rooms, allowing visitors much better access to them. With twenty one interest groups already formed ranging from walking, painting and astronomy to singing, scrabble and theatre, there is something for everybody.

The afternoon was deemed to be a great success. Fourteen new members were enrolled and more application forms handed out.

Next month's meeting will be on February 9th "Captain Edward Hawkins, Superintendent of Prisons and Prison Ships" will be the subject of a talk by Barbie Thomson.

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## Inner Wheel

Once again club members decorated a Christmas tree in the Church of Saints Nicholas and Faith in the Inner Wheel theme and colours. It was one of the many exhibits and the exhibition was well attended by the public.

During December our president Nancy and six members attended the Inner Wheel Christmas Lunch at the Carlyon Bay Hotel, St Austell.

On December 13th we celebrated the start of the Christmas Season at President Nancy's home. Delicious food, provided by members and a glass of wine got us in a festive mood. We were joined by our Rotarian partners, some of whom had been manning the Rotary Christmas Sleigh that evening. The weather was variable and the sleigh had to cancel some trips. Even so, our members helped when we could. We joined the Rotary club at their Christmas Dinner at The Weary Friar, Pillaton, on December 21st, where we had a very enjoyable meal and sang a few Carols.

In January some of our members joined the Rotary club in a visit to the Houses of Parliament. We were met and welcomed by our Member of Parliament, Sheryl Murray. We were then given a conducted tour of the Houses. Later that day, we had a tour of Big Ben and some our members climbed the 334 steps to the Clock Towers Belfry and heard the Great Bell, also known as Big Ben strike the hour. This was quite an adventure and we thank the Rotary club for inviting us.

## Benefit Advice Withdrawal Threat

Cornwall Council is proposing to withdraw the specialist advice to benefit claimants offered each Thursday at Saltash Library.

"This is an absolutely horrific proposal to withdraw a vital service during times of economic stress and when it is most needed," Deputy Mayor Martin Gee emphasised when County Councillor Derek Holley urged the Town Council's support in opposing this move.

There is a constant queue of claimants and prospective claimants keen to speak to a specialist each Thursday, the council was advised. They expressed concern that since the Cornwall Council "One Stop Shop" was established at the Library with promises of assistance on every subject of interest to Council Tax payers, its services have been gradually eroded, with the loss of face benefit advice being potentially the most serious.

The Town Council unanimously agreed to oppose the loss of this service.

## A Tale of Two Letters

*Penny Post portrayed a Cornish Victorian Melodrama*

"Dear Mr O'Dogherty, I am in a most unhappy state of mind not having heard of my beloved uncle's arrival at Talvans - he left here last Wednesday....."

The Penny postal system had been newly established that year, 1840, when Miss Sidney Montgomery of Dublin wrote to express her extreme distress at her beloved uncle's apparent non-arrival at Landrake.

The preservation of one of the first penny black stamps to be posted and of an even rarer Landrake

penny post hand stamp sent in reply to this heartfelt message has resulted in an early Victorian romantic mystery having been uncovered by John Harper of St Germans together with Saltash Heritage who co-incidentally held the other link to the mystery of Uncle James Hick's disappearance.

James Hicks had evidently travelled safely by sea from Dublin to Plymouth. His niece confirmed in her frantic correspondence to Mr O'Dogherty that she had received a letter from him dated 6 am the previous Friday confirming that he was taking breakfast at "The Barbican, a commercial and family inn." The waiter there had advised him to proceed by water to St Germans and he assured his niece that he hoped to reach Talvans that evening. There is no reason why he should not have done so, Talvans was, and still is, a farmhouse less than half a mile north of Landrake. Burnt down in the 1980's the shell of the building to which James Hicks was bound still remains.

Miss Montgomery's desperation at her uncle's failure to confirm his safe arrival appears totally out of proportion to a sense of family duty. "I am almost out of my senses at the idea of some accident having occurred to him and if I do not hear before Saturday I shall set off in the steamer for Plymouth and remain at the Barbican until I hear from you," concludes the letter held by Saltash Heritage as an early example of postal history.

Its existence was ascertained by John Harper after he had read the reply sent from Talvans three days later bearing the penny black stamp introduced that year and probably the earliest extant Landrake penny post hand stamp. The envelope's reverse shows "Devonport/Aug 23/1840."

This reply, which evidently crossed with that from Miss Montgomery, is reassuring. Mr Hicks assures his niece that he has written to her "every day but yesterday" and that he is "in hopes that I would get one today saying when you would leave Dublin that I might be on the look out for you." It had evidently been pre-arranged that "uncle" and "niece" should travel separately from Dublin and meet up in Landrake. Mr Hicks had given her "every information that you might select your route to come" including alternative sailings to Falmouth.

"All friends are very anxious for your arrival, and none more so than your most sincere and affectionately J Hicks" he concludes. He also adds intriguingly that he was going to Treluggan to see "the old family mansion." Now known as Treluggan Manor this property also still exists at St Erney, south of Landrake, above the River Lynher up which Mr Hicks had been advised by the waiter to sail.

So it may be safely assumed

that Miss Montgomery and Mr Hicks were soon to be reunited in the rural tranquillity of mid 19th Century Landrake. But a number of questions still remain.

Were they indeed uncle and niece and was this the full extent of their relationship? Certainly Miss Montgomery appears to show the concern of a lover rather than a dutiful niece.

Since they had evidently pre-arranged to travel from Ireland to meet at Mr O'Dogherty's home at Landrake why did they travel separately at several days interval? Did they stay in Landrake or travel on together, or indeed were they eloping in order to marry?

Considerable research by Mr Harper has produced no definite answers.

We do know that Richard O'Dogherty continued to live at Tolvans. Mr Harper has discovered a letter written to him in April 1845 requesting that he forward a supply of turnips, together with those of a Mr Blake, if suitable, by boat to the Victualling Office (in Stonehouse?).

Tolvans in 1840 was owned by Francis O'Dogherty and leased to George Blake. Richard O'Dogherty, the recipient of the desperate letter, evidently also lived there.

Treluggan, "the old family mansion" of James Hicks was a farm and quarry owned by the Duke of Cleveland, leased to Richard O'Dogherty and occupied by Philip O'Dogherty.

Miss Sidney Montgomery was recorded as living with her relations at 14 Richmond Place, Dublin, the address from which her anxious letter was posted.

But there is another intriguing twist to the tale. In 1842 Mary Catherine Blake (nee Dogherty), wife of George Blake the tenant of Tolvans, gave birth to her third child, a

daughter. She was christened Sidney Montgomery Blake.

So what became of the original Miss Sidney Montgomery following the reunion in Landrake with her 'beloved uncle'? There is no record of her having married in Britain or Ireland.

Painstaking detection by Mr Harper however, has traced a Sidney Montgomery to the United States where the 1850 census shows her as having been born in Ireland in 1816 (thus aged 24 in 1840).

She was by then living in Brookline, now a suburb of Boston Massachusetts. She lived in the home of Joseph Gardner, a merchant, sharing it with his large family and also with a "James Doherty".

Could this be beloved Uncle James, previously "Hicks"? Did familial disapproval of the relationship led them to fleeing Ireland separately for a tryst at his family home, Landrake, and subsequently to start a new life in America?

Unless further information comes to light, perhaps from any descendants living in Cornwall, Ireland or the United States, we may never know whether the tale of Miss Montgomery and James Hicks, or Doherty, had a happy ending following the panic which ensued after his voyage from Ireland to Landrake.

This early usage of the penny post together with remorseless research and the co-occurrence of the correspondence's survival gives a tantalising glimpse into what appears to be a true life Victorian melodrama.

Mr Harper wishes to thank staff at Saltash Library and Callington Library researchers as well as Saltash Heritage for help in uncovering this apparent true life Victorian Melodrama.

*Martin Lister*

## Rotary Youth Speaks competition

The annual Youth Speaks competition took place at saltash.net community school on Wednesday 25th January. Organised by the Saltash Rotary Club, with assistance from Mrs Jude Hollyman, PA to the Headteacher at saltash.net, the event was attended by 5 Junior Teams from Burraton Community Primary School and Sir Robert Geffery's Primary School, as well as two Intermediate Teams from saltash.net.

Hosted by the current President of Rotary, Mr John Smith, the competition showcased an excellent range of public speaking skills with the young people choosing an eclectic range of topics to debate, including a consideration of Olympic athletes as role models and the controversial issue of Cornish independence!

The winning teams, who will progress to the area stage of the competition, were Team 1 from Sir Robert Geffery's comprising Charlie Potts (Chair), Jamie Williams (Speaker) and Alanna Harrison (Vote of Thanks) and Team 2 from saltash.net - JJ Harding (Chair), Luke Carter (Speaker) and Gabriel Grocombe (Vote of Thanks).

## Olympic Spirit is Sweet-Wrapped at Ashley's

The Olympic spirit has already struck a Saltash hairdresser's salon six months before the torch is due to pass through the Town.

Ashley's of Trelawney Road have traditionally boosted the seasonal spirit of customers and staff while challenging the artistic ingenuity of their clientele through their charity Christmas sweet-paper art competition. The challenge is to work on a set theme using just sweet wrappers and the Christmas 2011 topical theme was "Olympic 2012". The winning montages and models proudly displayed in the salon were first, "Horse-rider" by Christine Barwell, second "Surfer" by June Hutfield and third "Synchronised Swimmer" by Jackie Austin. Highly commended was "Boxing" by Margaret Webb.

As always last year's winner was invited to switch on the Ashley's Christmas tree lights, the honour falling to Tracey Courts the launched the salon festivities. Staff dressed to represent Olympic competing countries and a quiz was held, won by Avis Darlton. The other winners were Help for Heroes and Cancer Relief who will share the £189 raised.

Mary of Ashley's concluded, "Thanks to all customers and staff who entered into the spirit of our regular seasonal fun and helped ensure an enjoyable month as well as an excellent contribution to two worthwhile causes."

Clientèle can now start preparing for Christmas 2012 with its theme "Hobbies and interests."

## Planning Changes in Historic Area Opposed

"It was a sad blow when the last of three proposals turned down by our Town and County Councils, had their decision overturned by an Inspector based far from the area and with no local knowledge," said Essa Road resident following the granting of permission for two houses in the garden of a neighbouring property.

They were especially incensed at a further application to vary the permission granted by the Bristol-based inspector going against the recommendation of Saltash Town Council and decision of Cornwall Planners.

The applicant was entitled to seek to vary the proposed development Saltash Town Councillors accepted. However, concern was expressed as to the loss of garden space in this historic area of Victorian and Edwardian villas. The Council was particularly concerned that two separate accesses were being sought close to what residents described as a dangerous corner of Essa Road where it joins King Edward Road.

They recommended refusal of the proposed amendments to the two new dwellings on the basis of traffic and safety, over development and loss of amenity space, and increased overlooking from a window.

## Fundraising in support of Help for Heroes

Students from saltash.net community school recently supported a parent of a Year 8 student in his attempt to raise funds for 'Help for Heroes'. The school raised £200 by way of a non school uniform day for Mr Shaun Ingram who set off for Mount Everest Base Camp in Nepal on the 4th November. Personal Assistant to Headteacher, Jude Hollyman, received a telephone call from Mrs Ingram on Tuesday 15th November with fantastic news that after a gruelling trek and some nasty illnesses, the group of 30, made up of wounded members of our armed forces, Veterans and family members of service personnel lost or wounded in recent conflicts had made it to Base Camp!

A cheque presentation was made by Headteacher, Mrs Isobel Bryce to Mr Ingram and daughter Zenna, prior to his departure at the beginning of the month.

Together with the support of friends, family and the local community, Mr Ingram has managed to raise in excess of £2,000 to help support our wounded.

## CARE HOME'S BURNS NIGHT GOES WITH A HIGHLAND FLING.



Residents from a Saltash care Home were transported to Scotland for their Burns Supper last Saturday.

Staff at St Annes Care Home in Saltash organised a banquet and celebrations to mark the birthday of the famous Scottish poet Robert Burns.

A Saltash Highland dancing Group entertained resident of St Annes with various Scottish dances. Then they included staff and residents of the home to join in.

The Haggis was piped in, in the traditional manner by David Parry followed by Charles Ballantyne addressing the haggis with the Selkirk Prayer, watched by his son Ian. Charles has lived at the home for two years.

Charles commented that "he enjoyed the social events that the home puts on, you never get bored because there are lots of activities put on for us". Home manager Halina Morton stated that being in a care home does not mean you have to give up the social events in life, and organising these events is a pleasure to do for our elders.

Our next event will be "Time for a Cuppa" morning in aid of Dementia UK on the 27th February 10 -12 everyone welcome

## Conundrum Answers:

Answers: 1 Godfrey 2 Rice 3 Ltr 4 Andes 5 Healthlife Ian. Charles has lived at the home for two years.

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## Rock and Jive Come Alive for Heritage Helpers

The age of rock rolled again as the fabulous fifties were relived at a party given by Saltash Heritage to thank the many who have helped them throughout the past year. All of those who during that year had performed the vital roll of stewarding and welcoming visitors to the Town's museum were warmly thanked by Heritage Chairman John Parsons as he welcomed them to the annual stewards' party in the Guildhall.

Following a pasty lunch the stewards were firstly entertained with a jive demonstration as an introduction to the music of the 1950's. Many may have recalled their own teenage efforts with a washboard as a four piece skiffle band brought back some fifties favourites. A Marilyn Monroe lookalike sang solos of the era while piano solos recalled the age of Russ Conway and others.

The stewards were also told of this year's special exhibition planned for the museum on the theme of 'Communication'. Exhibits, loaned and gifted, are still welcomed and Mr Parsons told those present that as well as anything to do with radio, early television, post and other forms of communication he is particularly seeking an ear trumpet!

Anyone able to provide one on loan or as a donation, or any

other suitable communication related exhibit or else willing to offer a few hours to steward in the museum this Spring and Summer is invited to contact 01752 847800.

## Historic Inn Demolition Opposed

The proposed demolition of the former Waterside Inn and its replacement by a block of five apartments with ground floor garaging has been recommended for refusal by Saltash Town Council.

The 'Waterside,' formerly the 'Wheatsheaf' is a late eighteenth century inn and stands adjacent to the Waterside Conservation area. It played a role in English legal history when former landlord Henry Goodman led a group of Saltash fishermen in a long-running legal battle against the

Saltash Borough Council concerning the ancient rights of oyster dredging. The fishermen were triumphant and the judgement in their favour dating from 1882 is still cited as a judicial precedent.

Saltash Heritage wrote objecting to the proposed demolition on the grounds of the building's history and character.

Refusal was recommended by Town Councillors due to the loss of a building of importance to the history and aesthetics of the conservation area and the design and (missing) of the proposed four storey building being out of keeping with the conservation area. There was also concern as to loss of employment providing commercial space, there being hope that it might re-open as a hostelry given suitable investment and improved economic times. There were also concerns as to flood risk for the proposed development.

### Community Speedwatch

Speeds checks in designated areas of the Town will be conducted by previously vetted members of the Community.

While there has been some red tape to be overcome, local Police Community Support Officers anticipated the scheme should be operating shortly, PCSO Tom Cornwell told the Town Council. He added that further volunteers were welcome for future such projects.

Crime during December had shown an increase over the same period the previous year with 73 reported crimes as against 62. The mild weather, in comparison with the ice that kept people home last season, might be part of the reason.

The Christmas month saw eight dwelling burglaries, four thefts from motor vehicles, five criminal damage to vehicles, four damage to dwellings, fifteen other thefts, one theft from a shop and two drink driving offences.

The number of eight burglaries from dwellings, up the usual one or two a month, concerned Town Councillors. A number of them were from rural areas around Saltash, PCSO Cornwell confirmed. He added that rural, as well as urban areas were actively encouraged to set up neighbourhood watch schemes, such as that recently established in Hatt, and the police would be pleased to help and advise on these.

## The Bishop of Truro Presents Awards and Certificates at saltash.net's



### A Level Presentation Evening

The Right Reverend Bishop Tim Thornton, or Bishop Tim as he prefers to be known, was the guest of honour at saltash.net community school's annual 6th form Presentation evening held on Thursday 5th January in the main hall. Bishop Tim congratulated all of the students on their excellent A Level results and on the superb contribution they had made to the life of the school and to the local community during the time they were in the 6th form.

Headteacher, Mrs Bryce, and Head of 6th form, Mr Scantlebury, both added their thanks and congratulations and wanted special mention to be made of the support and encouragement given by the parents who play a key part in helping the students achieve their very best.

Following the presentation of A Level certificates, special Awards were given to the following students:

**WARREN MEMORIAL AWARD 2011**

**Christie Rosser**

**AWARD FOR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT 2011**

**Charlotte Cole and**

**Laura Randall**

**AWARD FOR ACADEMIC ENDEAVOUR 2011**

**Nikita Brocklehurst**

**AWARD FOR SPORTING ACHIEVEMENT 2011**

**Tom Riley**

**JOHN BULLER AWARDS 2011**

**Mark Rapson,**

**Jenny Goodman,**

**Philippa Yellop,**

**Tom Prideaux**

**Jonathan Wingfield-Hill**

First class Musical entertainment was provided by ex Year 13 student, Tom Prideaux and ex student, Shaun Olver. They performed 'Paradise' by Coldplay and A Team by Ed Sheeran, to a very receptive audience.

Speaking after the event, Mrs Bryce said, "This was one of the best presentation evenings we have had. By scheduling it for the start of January, rather than before

Christmas, more ex students were able to attend, as they were still home from University. Bishop Tim was an excellent, entertaining and thought provoking speaker. He spoke to our A Level students last year as part of their General Studies programme and everyone was very impressed, so it was good to be able to invite him back again to the school."

Mr Scantlebury added, "It was a very challenging year for the 6th form students with the competition for University and other Higher education placements intense. I am so pleased they achieved high levels of success in their A levels last summer and have been able to proceed in their careers of choice."

## Saltash Leisure Centre

into fitness

Welcome to a great way of keeping fit, staying healthy & most importantly, having fun!

### Membership

Saltash Leisure centre offer a range of memberships to suit your needs, and that offer great benefits in using the facilities regularly. Please call to speak to an advisor today or come in for a tour of our facilities and see what we have to offer.

### Swimming pool:

25 meter **25 metre pool with side learner pools**

**Adult swimming lessons**

**Junior swim lessons**

**Fitness Suite:** State of the art fitness suite with cardio and weight training equipment.

There are also fully qualified instructors

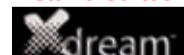
**Dance Studio:** (inc) 'Zumba'

**Birthday parties:** We offer a whole host of party options to help you celebrate your little ones special day.

**Coffee shop:** We have lots of meals on offer, including daily specials, healthy and vegetarian options.



### New To Saltash Leisure Centre...



4 X-Dream bikes are the newest pieces of equipment to enter the Fitness Suite. They are without a doubt the most attractive products providing the 'wow' factor for both our adult and junior members, allowing them to interact with the gaming experience whilst at the same time providing a great fun workout.

Assistant Manager Lee Russell



Visit your local leisure centre



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