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SALTASH AND DISTRICT OBSERVER

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Cornwall and Devon MPs Work Together to Tackle the Future of the Tamar Crossings

Today, Anna Gelderd, MP for South East Cornwall, and Fred Thomas, MP for Plymouth Moor View, met with the Minister for the Future of Roads at the Department for Transport to discuss the Tamar Crossings. This meeting focused on the essential role of the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry in connecting Cornwall and Devon, and the urgent need for government support to secure long-term funding and accessibility for these vital crossings, which are central to local communities and the economy.

Anna Gelderd MP highlighted the importance of government involvement, noting the challenges posed by the current and proposed toll increases, stressing the significant impact

on residents who rely on these links daily to access employment, education, and healthcare services.

Following the discussion, Anna Gelderd MP commented:



Photo Mary Crawford

Anna Gelderd MP and Fred Thomas MP Meet with Roads Minister to Address Tamar Crossings' Future

"The Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry are lifelines for our communities, linking South East Cornwall with the rest of the country. I'm committed to finding a solution that keeps these crossings accessible, reliable, and fit for the future. I want to ensure existing services are maintained and that local infrastructure that works for locals. I'll continue to fight for our residents and voice your concerns."

The meeting marked an important step in advocating for long-term solutions that will benefit the local residents, businesses and the wider economy, including the crucial tourism industry that the South West benefits greatly from.

Fred Thomas MP said: "I

know many residents in Plymouth rely on the Tamar Crossings. Labour is committed to keeping transport accessible and sustainable. We're working together to find the right balance between maintaining current services and protecting residents from future toll rises."

Advocating South East Cornwall's views on the Tamar Crossings was Anna's first action after being elected, and she remains dedicated to finding a sustainable solution that maintains services, works for local residents and businesses, and benefits the local economy. Fred Thomas MP also continues to advocate for a solution that benefits local residents and boosts the economy.

New Play Areas Open in Saltash



Photo Mary Crawford

Molly enjoying the new play park equipment

Resident Emily told the Observer that her daughter Molly has become a regular visitor to the new play park, where she has made many new friends and become far more confident. She didn't get to meet many children before the park was built, it's wonderful that there is now a safe place to enjoy hours of fun while getting to know more people in the area where we live.

See page 7 for story

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Social Services Department

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Social Services Department

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adultcare@cornwall.gov.uk

Highways Department

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*Town Messenger
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Cornwall Councillors/ Wards

Saltash Essa ED

Cllr Hilary Frank
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Saltash Tamar ED

Cllr Sheila Lennox-Boyd
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Saltash Trematon

& Landrake ED

Cllr Martin Worth
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From the Mayor of Saltash

It was so lovely to see so many people at the Wesley Church and on Fore St for Remembrance Sunday, and then again on Armistice Day at 11am on 11 November. What really impressed me that there were so many young people in attendance wearing poppies and holding Rosemary for Remembrance. I asked two little boys. who were with their dad, why they were wearing poppies, and they both knew quite knowledgeably what they represented.

I found it all quite emotional especial when the two new benches were blessed in St Nicholas and St Faith with all the missing names of those who died in conflict from Saltash were at long last finally given their recognition.

With a tear in my eye, I lay a wreath from us all in Saltash on the 06.35am Poppy train to Paddington for the remembrance service in London.

We will remember them.

I love Christmas, no I don't



have my decorations up yet, but I love the lights, the atmosphere, carols, children's nativity and Christmas pud! However, this year especially, when finances are tough for many people, and with the growing population of homeless people, its good to try and give a little back, maybe to our local foodbank or the Community Kitchen, also to our Baptist and Wesley Church who do great work for the local homeless, and Christmas lunch for those alone this year.

Saltash Town Council is really busy, finalising our precept (budgets) for 2025/26 in line with our business, and neighbourhood plans. We are also eagerly waiting to see if our funding application has been successful for the new play park and sensory garden on Jubilee green. We hope that this will be the start of many

projects on the Waterside area that the Town Council can Lease from Cornwall Council to make it a welcoming and lovely area for residents and visitors to enjoy.

We are also looking to find ways of enhancing Fore St with more planters, seating, wayfinding and possibly markets early Spring next year.

Of course, we are also looking to finalise taking over our beloved Victoria Gardens, which is going to take a lot of work from our Service Delivery Team, who do an amazing job around our town.

The Saltash Health Action Group, which I chair, are at long last seeing some light at the end of the tunnel. Talks with Derriford Hospital, also NHS Integrated Care East Cornwall, with providing more services in Saltash, like phlebotomy, to save us going over the bridge for a blood test, Virtual nursing care, as everyone knows you recover better at home, and other services we may be able to provide in our home town.

I love meeting you all, and our young people in the schools, I can't wait to start helping with the lantern making for our Christmas Festival.

Please continue to say hello when I'm out and about.

Warmest Regards to you all

Cllr Julia Peggs

Mayor of Saltash 2024-25



Meet Your Councillor

*Councillor
Matt Griffiths
Essa Ward*

When I wrote my article this time last year, we were in the throws of putting together Saltash Town Council's business plan. I was delighted that this was ratified at the meeting of full council in March. A significant moment as the business plan is the first of its kind for Saltash Town Council as far as we can tell.

The business plan is for the three-year period April 2024 to March 2027 and is published on the Saltash Town Council website. In addition the website also provides regular updates on how it's progressing i.e. are we doing what we said we do and outlining any changes we've made. The job of monitoring the business plan is primarily the responsibility of the Town Vision Sub-Committee, which I'm pleased to Chair. In addition, we



are also monitoring the environmental impact of Saltash Town Council's operations and projects. This is important to ensure we're all doing our bit to address the climate emergency.

This strategic planning work is an area I really enjoy as a Councillor. As Benjamin Franklin famously said, 'fail to plan, plan to fail'!

I'm also enjoying being part of the Saltash Healthcare Action Group. We're really persevering with this to ensure health services are available locally in the community for Saltash residents rather than having to travel further afield. It's not an easy task to move the NHS

juggernaut but I'm pleased that thanks to the persistence and evidence building from this proactive group, practical improvements are being made with more to come. Watch this space!

Lastly, and probably closest to my heart, is the work we do to support young people in the town. As a Town Council, you'll have seen we're improving play parks and have continued to increase the budget for the delivery of professional youth work. Livewire and The Core are recipients of this grant funding in 2024/25 and continue to provide creative, warm and safe spaces for young people day in day out, This and the other excellent activities provided by youth organisations within the Saltash Youth Network is something to be really proud of. It's pretty unique and much needed in these challenging times to support the next generation. Very best wishes to you all and see you around the town!

Cllr Matt Griffiths

Missing Names of War Dead Remembered on Remembrance Day

The names of seventy seven 'forgotten' war dead from Saltash were read out at this year's Civic Service of Remembrance together with all of those whose names have long been commemorated on the town's war memorials. Thanks to the efforts of two local men these seventy seven names are at last publicly inscribed on two benches adjacent to the borough war memorial by St Nicolas and St Faith church.

It was in 2016 that local historian Peter Clements was asked to research how many Saltash men lost their lives in the Battle of the Somme, that year being its centenary. He uncovered ten names but surprisingly only seven names were on the memorials by St Nicholas and St. Stephens' churches. Intrigued by this Mr Clements did further research to discover a surprisingly high number of omissions from the memorials.

The placing of names on local memorials was something of a random process, immediately following the war. Those who subscribed to the

memorials could be sure that their loved ones would be included, those who could not do so might have names omitted. In all 44 new names from W.W.1 and 33 from W.W.2 have now been carved into the two memorial benches. One name was previously omitted as he was missing, having been taken as prisoner of war by the Japanese and his wife did not want his name included at the time as she hoped he might still be alive, sadly this was not so. Other names were omitted as they died from war related causes after the memorials were completed. Former R.N./R.M. Commando Barry Brooking became aware of the missing names and spent some years urging the Town Council to remedy the omissions. He eventually succeeded and was delighted to be present for the short blessing of the granite benches. He said afterwards 'Mission Accomplished'. Following the remembrance service at Wesley Methodist Church and the parade through the town, for which the turnout of the town's youth organisations was outstanding, the benches were blessed by the town vicar Re. Laura Bushell



Hawke, wreaths were then laid on the memorial and on the two new adjacent benches with the promise that 'We Will Remember Them'

Your Town Council & Wards

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Cllr Julia Peggs

Deputy Mayor.

Cllr Rachel Bullock

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E: enquiries@saltash.gov.uk W: www.saltash.gov.uk

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John Noakes One of Life's True Gentlemen



We recently celebrated the 100th birthday of resident, John Noakes with family, friends, residents, and Saltash Mayor and Consort Julia and Geoff Peggs. As the oldest surviving veteran of the 13th Royal Hussars, John was visited by one of its current officers, Merlin, who presented a book about the regiment. John joined the 13th following the end of World War II when his Renaissance regiment disbanded. John is a lively asset to Abbeyfield Saltash, he enjoys regaling stories from his past. John also has the greatest sense of humour and is one of life's true gentlemen.

News from the local General Practices & East Cornwall Primary Care Network

ECPCN is the network that covers the seven Practices Oak Tree, Old Bridge, Port View, Quay Lane, Rame Group, Roscdean and Saltash Health Centre. We want to make sure our primary care system works for you and you understand the changes and improvements that are being made nationally to the NHS. It is undoubtedly a challenging time and we are working hard to ensure the right services are there for you.

We have recently created a GP clinical hub at Liskeard Hospital (closely followed by St Barnabus at Saltash) for single ailment treatments ready for the winter season. All our Practice staff are trained to ensure you get the right service at the right time. This means that Practice teams may ask you about your condition and get you to a healthcare professional that is best placed to help you, which could include GPs, Nurses, Physiotherapists and Care navigators amongst others.

We are working with our Patient Participation Group on these initiatives and will provide more information and updates in future editions.

Please contact us at <https://eastcornwallpcn.co.uk/>

Chamber Chairman Peter Ryland Keeping us Updated

There is a lot going on in my world at the present time, and finding the time to manage it all is a challenge many of you can probably relate to, especially with Christmas just weeks away. One small blessing was that we didn't have our monthly Chamber meeting in November, as I had to postpone it due to the fact that many of us who would have attended needed to be at another meeting. The other meeting, however, enabled funding to be secured for Saltash Town Team, so it was time well spent.

Over the past few weeks, however, I have made the time to speak with various Chamber members, who are eagerly looking forward to the Christmas Festival on Saturday 7th December. Although the Festival is organised under the umbrella of the Chamber, the real credit goes to two Chamber members, Hilary Frank and Aaron Monk. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them both for their tremendous effort to ensure the day is enjoyable for everyone. Arrangements start with fundraising, as costs for aspects like road closures, entertainment and fireworks quickly add up. Without external funding, the Chamber simply couldn't afford to run the event as we do not have

the financial resource to fund it. We are grateful to Saltash Town Council for their generous financial support, and to Saltash Scrapstore for sponsoring the Lantern Parade again this year. However, we are always in need of more sponsors, public donations and support through raffle ticket sales. From the crowds on Fore Street, it is clear the event is greatly loved - please help us to keep it going.

In addition to chairing the Chamber, I am also Chair of Saltash Town Team, a forum comprising Town and Cornwall Councillors alongside representatives from Community Enterprises and the Chamber of Commerce. Together, we are working to enhance the shopping experience in and around Fore Street. We have been steadily progressing with ideas I have mentioned here before, and early in the New Year you will see some of them take shape. Working collaboratively with forum members, a great deal of my time has been spent on moving these plans forward. I am always open to new ideas,

and recent discussions with town centre retailers have brought some fresh suggestions. Please do get in contact with me if you have constructive thoughts on improving the shopping experience on Fore Street. Furthermore, Town Team meetings are open to the public should you wish to attend.

Another major focus that has taken a lot of time recently has been addressing financial challenges at Community Enterprises, where I am a director. Many of you will have seen our SOS campaign to raise funds. We rely on grants and donations to fund the activities we run, and while we have resolved immediate issues, rising costs for heating, lighting, refrigeration, rent and rates remain a constant strain. We are always looking for new sources of funding, and rely heavily on our volunteers. So every donation of time or money helps, and we are deeply grateful for any and all support.

Finally, may I wish you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year, and remind you of these key dates:
1. Christmas Festival in Fore Street: 7th December
2. Free parking in Saltash public car parks: Saturday 7th and 14th, and Monday 23rd December

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Practically Perfect Lantern to Lead Parade

Saltash Chamber of Commerce is proud to be hosting the Saltash Christmas Festival on Saturday 7th December, an event that promises plenty of festive cheer and community spirit. Alongside a bustling street market from 1pm to 6pm, the day's highlights include Santas on Bikes arriving at 1pm and a Santa Fun Run across the Tamar Bridge at 2:30pm, gallantly organised by the Tamar Trotters Running Club. With 200 runners decked out in Santa suits, it's sure to be a festive dash of red!

At 4:30pm, children from Saltash primary schools will join Redeemer Church to lead outdoor carols, setting the mood for the Lantern Parade to weave its way up Fore Street. The Parade will be led by an umbrella lantern created by students at Saltash Community School, based on a winning design by student Faye Nicholls. Funded by Creative Kernow's FEAST programme with financial support from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, this 'practically perfect' lantern will debut in the Parade before

featuring in the school's production of Mary Poppins next year.

This year's Festival has been made possible by a generous grant from Saltash Town Council. And thanks to an equally generous donation from Saltash Scrapstore, lantern-making workshops are being held in the town's four primary schools. Children in each school are joyfully creating their very own lanterns, and are looking forward to lighting up Saltash as they carry them, proudly, in the Parade.

Lead organiser Hilary Frank

Essa Voices

**Dreaming of a Green Christmas:
Cornwall's Net Zero Wishlist**

As Christmas approaches, Cornwall is unwrapping a £24 million investment in net zero projects - a gift to its future and to the planet. This

shared her gratitude for the community support that is bringing the Festival to life: "With a spoonful of generosity and a sprinkle of creativity, we are creating something truly special together."

Local businesses across Saltash are ready to welcome people with unique items and festive treats that make shopping locally a pleasure. It promises to be a 'jolly holiday' for the whole community.

funding, part of the £137 million Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Good Growth Programme, is managed by Cornwall Council and supported through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Approved in December 2022, the programme aims to tackle environmental and economic challenges across Cornwall, with funds to be allocated by March 2025.

Over £10 million has been directed toward projects focused on reducing carbon emissions, including 149 decarbonisation plans, which are forecast to cut more than 49,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e).

One recipient is Secure Innovation, formerly known as Spinnaker International, based in Saltash. Known for harnessing satellite technology to track and protect valuables, the company used part of its £600,000 grant to install solar panels and electric vehicle chargers. These upgrades generate nearly two-thirds of the company's energy needs, and support staff in adopting greener commuting options, giving back to both the environment and the community.

Another recipient is the Net Zero Methane Hub, awarded just over £245,000 to pilot methane capture and repurposing on six Cornish farms, including a site in Saltash. Methane, with a Global Warming Potential 86



Councillor Hilary Frank
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times greater than CO₂ over a 20-year period, is produced in significant quantities by cattle during digestion. The technology being rolled out will capture this methane and convert it into renewable energy, highlighting the potential for Cornwall's agricultural sector to play a key role in contributing to the net zero goal.

A report on the Good Growth projects was published last month, just as I returned from a visit to Cardiff, where I supported a delegation from Himeji City in Japan on a visit to learn more about the Welsh government's plans to become zero waste, zero net carbon by 2050. Wales' achievements are nothing short of transformative. Since 1999, the recycling rate has surged from under 5% to an impressive 65%. Repair Café Wales has been funded to expand the network of repair cafes to 119 communities across Wales, and investment from the

Welsh government has enabled the network of 'Libraries of Things' to expand to 23 sites.

Perhaps most impressive is the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, enacted in Wales in 2016. This law requires all public bodies to follow seven legally binding wellbeing goals, and to consider the long-term impact of their decisions on future generations. With clear links to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, public bodies in Wales are all required to improve wellbeing and to work better together as well as with residents and communities. It left me wondering: why don't we have similar legislation here?

As Christmas reminds us of the joys of giving, it's important to remember that as well as being a gift to future generations, investments in net zero must also deliver tangible benefits today. Energy-efficient homes, support for struggling households, collaborative working and meaningful community involvement are as critical as the headline innovations. Progress should be measured not only in tonnes of CO₂e but also in the wellbeing of the people who call Cornwall home.

So: wishing you all a hopeful, green Christmas! And here's to making Cornwall's New Year as bright and sustainable as its ambitions.

St Barnabas Looks to the Future Under New Chair

At the AGM of the League of Friends of St Barnabas Community Hospital held on 18th November, members approved a new name for the organisation: the St Barnabas Charity for Community Healthcare. Matthew Lindeyer, a long-time Saltash resident who recently retired from the Royal Navy, was elected as Chair.

Matthew paid tribute to outgoing Chair Barbara May, acknowledging her leadership through the challenges of Covid, the closure of the Minor Injuries Unit, and NHS changes. He highlighted the charity's renewed focus on patient support, community engagement, and healthcare innovation, aligning with the nationwide drive to deliver care closer to home.

The charity's renaming reflects this shift, marking a move away from traditional fundraising towards advocacy and the development of community healthcare initiatives. Matthew expressed his commitment to ensuring the charity continues to add value to the community and meet local needs.

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SANTAS ON BIKES 13.00 | SANTA FUN RUN 14.30
CAROLS ON FORE STREET — 16.30
LANTERN PARADE & FIREWORKS 18.00

This event is made possible thanks to grants from Saltash Town Council and Saltash Scrapstore

Politics is all About Making Choices

For the past eight years, I have chosen to serve South East Cornwall as a Liberal Democrat Councillor and Parliamentary Candidate.

I have relished every part of these roles: talking to people on the doorstep, helping with individual pieces of casework, standing up for my community, and campaigning for changes to national policies. I am particularly proud of raising the profile of the issues that matter most to local residents: clean, affordable energy; affordable housing; safety on the A38; and the cost of the Tamar Tolls.

However, these achievements have come at a cost. A thousand individual decisions to attend meetings or spend time campaigning have meant sacrificing precious time with my family. I even cut short a family holiday in Cumbria to lead a protest march across the Tamar Bridge! When my wife was offered a job as headteacher of a special school in Nottinghamshire, we lived apart for two years so that I could continue working for the community here in Cornwall.

On 22nd May, Rishi Sunak made two very questionable choices: first, he stepped outside without an umbrella; then he called the election that resulted in a landslide Labour victory.

On that same day, my wife was offered a job running a special school back in Cornwall.

Had I won the election, we would have faced living apart once again—a sacrifice we were willing to make if it meant I could serve South East Cornwall in Parliament.

But the voters made a different choice. They backed a Labour candidate who promised 'change.' Four months later, there is still no sign of new funding for the Tamar Crossings or the 'fair deal' promised for Cornwall Council. Whenever our MP has been asked to choose between doing what's right for Cornwall or following Labour party orders, she has chosen her party first.

Now my wife has been offered an even more senior role in education, based in London. This time, I have decided to put family first and move there with her.

This means I will not stand for re-election to Cornwall Council next May, and I will shortly step down as the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.

I respect the choices that others have made, even when I could see the harm the consequences might cause to the community I love. I offer my sincere apologies to those who may feel I am letting them down with this choice, but I hope they can understand and respect my decision.

OAKLANDS COMMUNITY CENTRE

LITTLE ACORNS CHRISTMAS CRAFT

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Christmas is Coming!

As part of Christians Against Poverty (CAP), it won't surprise you that, as Christians, we love Christmas! However, winter and Christmas itself can be really challenging for many.

Together with local churches across SE Cornwall and the whole of the UK, CAP provides free debt advice and other services, alongside emergency aid to households struggling to heat their homes and afford food, so if you need help, please contact me – timsquires@capuk.org. I run this free help out of Saltash Baptist Church and we have plenty going on over this next month if you are lonely or fancy getting out and about. Check out our website and facebook page for more information on all of the following free events:

Youth and Children's Party

11th December, 4pm

Carols in the Playground

11th December 6.30pm at Bishop Cornish School

Baby and Toddler Party

12th December 10am

Nativity

15th December 10.30am

Interactive Christmas Journey

16th to 21st December

Carol Service

22nd December 10.30am

Christmas Day Service

25th December 10.30am

Christmas Day Meal

25th December 12 noon
More than ever, the values of Christmas – like kindness, being a cheerful giver, and spreading hope and joy in your community – are so important. Maybe you can be a light to others in need this Christmas and bring someone along to one of the events above.

Here are a few other ideas too:

Host a Christmas open house for neighbours and friends

Volunteer for a local charity

Make Christmas hampers to give to those in need

Encourage people to seek free support

Help provide emergency aid - visit capuk.org/winter

Finally, thank you for reading these columns and here's wishing you all a great Christmas!

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) is a UK charity working with over 800 affiliated churches to deliver debt help, budgeting guidance, support to find work, life skills education and more. Visit capuk.org to find out more.

Saltash Old Cornwall Society

At their recent meeting, the Saltash Old Cornwall Society (SOCS) were suitably entertained by the lecture given by their President, Sue Hooper MBE, when she delivered a very interesting and informative talk about the Doyenne of British pianists the late Dame Moura Lympany.

Dame Moura was born in Saltash on August 16th 1916 during the Great War, when Moura's Mother went into labour on her way to Cornwall to visit Moura's grandmother who lived in Newquay.

Sue echoed that it was a most fortunate event for Saltash that Moura was born in the town rather than Newquay where her birth place was planned.

Sue added that Saltash indeed, boasted other famous women such as Mary Newman the 16th Century first wife of Sir Francis Drake and Ann Glanville the famous Saltash and national celebrity Victorian rower - plus more recently the 20th Century Moura Lympany.

The Society heard that when Sue was Mayor of Saltash in 1991, she had the privilege and pleasure of inviting and hosting a visit to Saltash that Moura made. It was thanks to Sue's friend, concert manager, the late 'Mr Music Man' the founding member of the Plymouth Music Trust, who had invited Sue and her husband John to his concert which was staged at the Plymouth Guildhall featuring Moura.

Following a positive

conversation with Charles and Moura, Sue invited her to perform in Saltash to benefit Cancer Charities, which was close to Moura's heart. Moura graciously accepted the invitation and performed free of charge to an enthusiastic audience at the Saltash Wesley Church on November 19th 1991.

A few days before the concert Sue and John had located the address in Saltash of Moura's birth and as a special surprise took her there, moreover to the room of her birth.

At the concert recital, Moura executed with great aplomb, her remarkable virtuoso piano skills to a capacity audience, giving a breath-taking recital of Chopin's works, for which she received a well-deserved standing ovation. The concert raised £1,500 Cancer charities, including Leukaemia in Children Trust.

Sue further conveyed how appreciative she was to have negotiated the free loan and conveyance of the Steinway Piano from the Plymouth Theatre Royal and further, free accommodation for Moura by the Plymouth Copthorne Hotel management. Sue enthused that both Establishments were very generous and charitable.

At the lecture, members learned that Moura had made her professional debut on the 8th August 1929 at the Royal Hall, Harrogate, and since that time had become a world-famous pianist and an honoured name in music through her concerts, recordings, television and



radio.

At the age of twelve Moura appeared as soloist in the Mendelssohn G Minor Concerto under the baton of Basil Cameron; which was followed by a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music.

At a concert conducted by Sir Adrian Boult, Moura played in Paris immediately after the Liberation, when at night gunfire could be heard around the City. Moura was one of the first foreign pianists to tour the Soviet Union after WW2.

Moura Lympany had a remarkable repertoire, playing over sixty concertos and a vast range of piano music from Scarlatti to Schoenberg. She made recordings of three concertos by Rachmaninov as well as 24 Preludes and the complete set of Waltzes, Preludes and Nocturnes of Chopin.

As a fellow of the Royal Academy of Music, Moura was made a Dame in 1992 following many other honours from the UK and other parts of Europe.

Moura travelled the World delivering recitals and Concerto performances, many in aid of Cancer Charities. (In her lifetime, Moura had two mastectomies).

Dame Moura Lympany passed away in France on March 28th 2005 at the age of 88. Dame Moura was a valued honorary member of the Steinway Artist family for over 56 years.

Through her elegant performances and her sought-after recordings, she influenced more young pianists and piano aficionados than even she may have realised. Moura will be remembered in Saltash as a unique virtuoso and legend, who was one of the few pianists to play over 40 Concertos; and performed in public for over 75 years.

Moura was the honorary Patron of the Saltash Speech and Drama Festival from 1991 until her passing in 2005.

Sue concluded her lecture

Sustainable Saltash

A regular column on changes Saltash residents are making to confront climate and ecological breakdown

Sea potatoes, dead man's fingers, five bearded rocklings. Not items found in a cauldron at Halloween, but living creatures that can be found between the tides on our own shores.

We have been aware for some time that our seas were in difficulty. We also knew that this was largely hidden from the gaze of most humans, with the obvious exception of those in our communities who depend on the ocean for their livelihood. Out of sight and out of mind for most people, compared with the more visible struggles of land-based creatures. As with any challenge, the motivation to engage is born of understanding, knowing what it is we are trying to protect and sustain.

We had the opportunity this summer to attend a guided rockpooling session. It was incredible. With the help of a knowledgeable guide, we saw dozens of creatures in a small area of rocky shore. Species I haven't heard of, some of which I was surprised to learn were even alive. Squirts that live in colonies that look like a single animal, sea spiders, fish, starfish, sponges, isopods, worms of every variety- many with legs and some without, and more crabs than I knew existed. There are hundreds of species of seaweed, and what you see changes depending on where you are.

The experience was transformative. It is staggering how many individuals live in even a

small pool if you know where to look. It is a breath-taking glimpse at an intricate web of life that is all the more awe inspiring for being so unusual and fresh. The fragility of this environment is given clarity, and the struggles it faces come into focus.

We have benefited hugely from that day. The ocean no longer feels distant and alien, it feels closer and more incredible than we ever realised. It also feels connected to us and to our lives just a few miles distant. We are inspired to be more involved with it and to work to protect it- and there are so many opportunities for an individual to do so. Beach cleans, citizen science, campaigning, even just taking an active interest in proposals for development in marine environments.

If this sounds like an experience you would like to have, there are plenty of organised events that you could attend. Try The Rock Pool Project in Plymouth, or Looe's Marine Conservation Group. Both run regular events through the year where you can have a glimpse of the marvel that lies below the high tide mark. You won't look back, and I guarantee you will take a keener interest in our seas as a result.

Marc Bramham

This column is a conversation starter for our whole community. If you have comments on the subject, ideas of your own or suggestions for future content, please do get in touch at sustainable.saltash@protonmail.com

Saltash Tunnel Switch-off Delayed

National Highways has postponed the start of upgrades to the Saltash tunnel. Construction will now begin early next year, with the tunnel closed in both directions on weeknights only for the first few months. The 'Switch-off', when there will be no tidal flow operations in the tunnel or over the Tamar Bridge, is due to start next summer, and is expected to last for five months.

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Exciting New Play Areas Open in Saltash

Two new play areas have opened in Saltash allowing young children up to 12 years of age to have fun, socialise, enjoy the outdoors and stay fit. Work to regenerate both Honeysuckle Way and Grassmere Way play areas on Pillmere housing estate has been completed through the installation of a wide range of new equipment.

Grassmere, the larger of the two sites provides equipment for children up to 12 years of age including swings, one for use by children with special needs, two tower climbing frames with slides, adventure trail and traverse wall. The site also benefits from wet pour safety surfacing allowing the facility to be used all year round.

Honeysuckle Way, aimed for use by children aged 7 and under has a new tower climbing frame with slide, swings, spring riders and playboards. Both areas are enclosed for safety and provide picnic benches for families to use and enjoy.

The project has been possible through £75,000 of grant funding awarded from Cornwall Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) fund with a further £20K of funding being allocated by Saltash Town Council.

Saltash Town Council, who established a working group who oversaw the project, issued a statement, "We are delighted with the new play areas which have really improved play provision on Pillmere, an area of Saltash that is home to many families, some of whom have been travelling substantial distances to use alternative facilities. We really appreciate the support of Cornwall Council's CIL funding to allow this project to proceed. Through Saltash Town Council, we will be promoting and maintaining the new facilities."

The ribbon was cut on the Grassmere Way site on Wednesday 30th October by Mayor of Saltash Councillor Julia Peggs marking the start of a new chapter for children on Pillmere.

Both play areas were designed following extensive community consultation with residents of Pillmere last September whose



Photo Mary Crawford



Photo Mary Crawford

priorities have been incorporated into the final designs. Over 100 surveys were completed demonstrating both a need and enthusiasm for new facilities. The survey responses indicated that two thirds of children would use the new play areas either daily or several times a week.

Creative Play, an experienced and skilled contractor were selected to carry out the works following a tender process. They designed both play areas on the back of the community feedback, completed the works on time and to budget and with the minimal of inconvenience to local residents. Simon Turvey, Area Sales Manager for Creative Play said, "We are delighted to have worked with Saltash Town Council on this project and to have made such a difference to children's lives on Pillmere. By transforming these areas from tired spaces into fantastic play areas, we have created an opportunity for children to have fun, socialise and develop important skills such as coordination and balance."

The Chairman of Pillmere Community Association Iain Gdanitz who worked in partnership with Saltash Town Council on this project and who along with colleagues and councillors, delivered over 600 leaflets to houses across Pillmere said, "It's really exciting that this project has now come to fruition and that young children and their carers have exciting and smart new play areas to use providing hours of free fun and exercise." Olly Monk, Cornwall Council cabinet portfolio holder for housing and planning, said: "The Community Infrastructure Levy allows us to raise funds from new developments and pass this on to community projects making a real difference. With this funding we are able to support many



Photo Mary Crawford

worthwhile schemes and organisations working to improve facilities for their communities. The Pillmere project will give young people access to opportunities for exercise and fun, fitting with our aspirations for creating healthier and safer lives as well as vibrant and supportive communities."

Annual Governance and Accountability Return

Saltash Town Council have published their Annual Governance and Accountability Return. The documents are on display in the town's noticeboards during October and are available on the website indefinitely.

The documents can be located here www.saltash.gov.uk/financeandprecept.php

The return shows the Town Council's responsibility for ensuring there is a sound system of internal control. Saltash Town Council are pleased to confirm it has met all areas of responsibility.

Pete's Point of View ...

The £40 billion tax raid in the Budget, together with the decimation of the farming industry, which will likely lead to higher food prices and an increased carbon footprint on foodstuffs being imported, have all been well documented, so no need for me to comment further.

What I do find misleading, however, is the claim that a working person will pay no more in taxation. Not directly, perhaps, but indirectly for sure. It is reported that a well-known supermarket will be paying an additional £73 million per annum in National Insurance contributions. Where will that money likely come from? You've guessed it, higher prices at the checkout, affecting every working person in addition to struggling families and hard-pressed pensioners.

On a more positive note, Remembrance Sunday was marked here in Saltash with the traditional service, held at

the Wesley Church, followed by a Civic Parade down Fore Street and on to the War Memorials adjacent to St Nicholas and St Faith Church. Newly installed at that location are two memorial benches which carry the names of the fallen from the two World Wars, which until now have been missing from the existing Memorials. War Memorials have in the past been funded by public subscription and it was decided that on this occasion also, members of the public would have the opportunity to contribute, with Saltash Town Council picking up the shortfall. My thanks to all those who have contributed to the installation of the benches, whether it be financially, supportive or by hard work and determination. Another shining example of the community spirit we have

here in Saltash.

Santa is on his way and he has asked me to give a big thanks to Peter, Chris and the team at Sleep and Hill Motors, who have made extensive and necessary repairs to Santa's sleigh, to comply with Elf and Safety. Peter has been so kind and carried out those repairs as a fantastic gift, both to Santa and the local community. Santa's friends at Saltash Rotary Club also owe a huge debt of gratitude. Yet another shining example of the wonderful community spirit we have in Saltash. Merry Christmas Peter and Chris. I'll be back next month, in the meantime do take care and stay safe.

Pete Samuels.

Any views expressed are personal views and not that of any organisation with which Pete is associated.

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Just Thinking Aloud

Once upon a time (well, nearly four years ago) I began to think about making more use of buses locally, and consequently less use of my car. I'd like to claim that I did so for unselfishly principled reasons, but that would be an almighty fib. Anyway, on my 80th birthday I sold the car and entered wholeheartedly into the world of public transport, a taxi or two with the estimable MB, and kind friends who offer me lifts. It works!

Not only do I save money, but I also come across new friends – which is what one does when sitting at the stop outside our Co-op waiting for the no.2 which may or may not be on time. Actually, I don't live all that far from that stop. The ride itself used to take a maximum of five minutes, followed by a downhill walk of another five. Magic! I'm not lazy. It's just that "Speedy" is no longer my middle name.

After some time, the bus

company decided to change the route. Instead of just having a couple of stops or so to my destination, I discovered that something I initially called "the scenic route" became the only route and my ten minutes became thirty. Well, alright, I did meet some different fellow passengers, and I am no longer normally pressed for time. So that's ok then, isn't it? Well, possibly, but the beggars have now decided that we poor punters deserve yet another change, with the result that what was originally a maximum of ten minutes now sometimes approaches forty. Still – mustn't grumble – my bus has a better frequency, timetabled for every quarter of an hour (except for when they turn up on each other's heels, thus leaving an extended gap!).

Enough of that. I now grovel. Last month I misled you about Fore St and bookshops and their owners. Indeed, there was bookshop life on our main drag before Tracey's Bookshelf, and I am grateful to a long-suffering reader for kindly and politely

putting me right.

Finally, Bob strays into controversy. Beyond innocent comments on the recent SE Cornwall election, I need to share with you my take on the reaction of political leaders worldwide to the election of Mr Trump (again!) as President of the United States. In most of their remarks I find it difficult to discern honesty. Why do so many politicians in positions of power find outright truth to be so worrying? Why does it frighten them so? Me? On the subject of Trump, I'm with Ed Davey:

"This is a dark, dark day for people around the globe. The world's largest economy and most powerful military will be led by a dangerous, destructive demagogue. The next president of the United States is a man who actively undermines the rule of law, human rights, international trade, climate action and global security. Millions of Americans – especially women and minorities – will be incredibly fearful about what comes next. We stand with them." **Bob Munro**

Council Support Initiative for Homeless in the Town

At the Full Town Council meeting held on 3rd October the Town Council pledged its support for a new initiative to help homeless people in the town.

The initiative is the idea of Saltash Wesley Methodist Church and Saltash Baptist Church who support homeless people daily by providing food, clothing and washing facilities. The two churches provide a crucial link between those experiencing homelessness and Cornwall Council and St Petrocs, a homeless charity.

The two organisations are seeking to provide temporary housing in the town which will be run by a homeless organisation and offer a safe, warm place to stay and counselling and advise whilst a permanent home is sought.

Mayor of Saltash Councillor Julia Peggs said "Whilst this is a long term ambition the Town Council are pleased to support the initiative and would welcome a local service in the town for those experiencing homelessness."

Major General Commemorated on Anniversary of Battle

A Saltash man acclaimed as 'one of the brightest men and bravest generals that Cornwall has produced' was commemorated 125 years after he fell in battle. The commemoration took place by the memorial erected to him in Saltash and of the hundred or so present many represented the family members and office holders present in 1901 when the column in memorial to Major General Sir William Penn Symons KCB was unveiled in Victoria Gardens at the top of Fore Street.

The event was organised by ex Royal Marine Barry Brooking with Miss Beverly Gordon and Councillor John Brady. Mr Brooking gave an outline of General Penn Symons background and army career. His family had lived at Hatt House near Saltash over many centuries and he was related to William Penn the founder of Pennsylvania. His father served as Recorder of Saltash. William, or 'Uncle Penn' as his family affectionately remembered him, opted for a military career and served throughout the world over thirty-six years.

He was on active service in the Zulu wars as featured in the classic movie 'Zulu' and subsequently in the Second Boer War. It was in one of the opening battles of that war at Talana Hill that, while riding to the front line to assess the situation, he fell victim to a Boer sniper. He died three days later in hospital as prisoner of war, accorded full military honours by the Boers who sent a message of commiseration to his widow. Britain was shocked at the first loss in this war of such a senior and well admired officer. It was said that a low moan ran around the House of Commons at the announcement of his death and his

friend Winston Churchill spoke movingly of his energy, humour and enthusiasm.

A hundred and twenty five years later by his memorial in Saltash the Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall Sir Edward Bolitho KCB joined the Mayor of Saltash, Lord Mayor of Plymouth and many other local dignitaries as as the prayers of his former regiment the South Wales Borderers were read by Captain Chris Keegan, from its successor the Royal Welsh Regiment. The memorial was blessed by Rev Laura Bushell Hawke, Saltash team vicar, and Rev Simon d'Albertson, RN chaplain of HMS Raleigh which was itself represented by a team of sailors. This was followed by a singing of 'Penn's' favourite hymn, Onward Christian Soldiers.

Wreaths laid included flowers from Hatt House

before 'Uncle Penn's' great great nephew Heugh Symons spoke in praise of his illustrious ancestor and thanked all of those present for attending. The Lord Lieutenant then led one and all over to the Wesley Church for refreshment.

The following Sunday Mr Brooking read the eulogy to Major General Penn Symons in Botus Fleming church, the parish church where his family had worshipped over four centuries, where his widow is buried and where there is a memorial window to him.

At the conclusion of his eulogy Mr Brooking proclaimed what was a favourite saying of General Penn Symons, 'Good luck have thou with thine honour — ride on!'

Martin Lister

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Saltash Catholic Church Events

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