



# Newsletter

## Cornwall Heritage Trust

*Helping to Safeguard Cornwall's Heritage*

Newsletter 41      July 2010

Dear Members

Our Trust is in its 25<sup>th</sup> Birthday year and I would like to say that we have organised a break in proceedings to celebrate the work done on Cornwall's behalf since 1985 - but we are so busy that any such revelries are still a distant thought. Well, perhaps not entirely as I struggle to design a celebratory document which will both justify our existence and become part of our publicity material for future years.

CHT has never blown its trumpet too loud, preferring to work quietly and efficiently, supporting good initiatives, good research, broad educational programmes, efficiently managing properties, providing measured advice and comment and taking action where necessary to help secure Cornwall's often fragile heritage.

We are enviably served by formidable trustees whose wise counsel is respected for its understanding, knowledge and integrity.

But we are all getting older! Several trustees have retired over the past few years and some of us are all too aware

that we have been making decisions for nigh on twenty years. To ensure the health of the Trust we are actively seeking 'new blood' to ensure that our vital work continues. All new trustees are task oriented and this is proving to be very beneficial.

It is difficult for a Chairman to blow too loud a trumpet lest he be accused of it being his own, but some long-serving trustees have been gracious in stating that our Trust continues to work very efficiently, and this story is repeated by outside agencies with which we co-operate.

Our property management and education programmes are formidable examples of this continuing development and efficiency.

We are now planning the launch of a publicity campaign as we do recognise that a reticent to always seek acknowledgement for our efforts in this ever developing 'new world' may not always be appropriate for Cornwall or our future.

Clare Jacques, a new trustee helping John Welham with his Education programmes, will take the lead in producing both poster publicity and redesigning our standing

displays which are increasingly requested at local and county events. In tandem with this Brian Salmon is helping John Welham with the design and content of a brand new website; now close to completion. An important element of this website will be the information for schools including educational visit material - which often we can support with both financial and physical help. Schools are appreciating this and I venture to suggest that we may be better known by schools than we are by the general public!

The Trust must improve its membership base. You, our loyal supporters, get little for your membership fees except the knowledge that your Trustees work very hard to ensure that the aims of the Trust are met. During its existence the Trust has built an enormous reputation for sound counsel, effective action and, I believe above all, integrity. We hope that our actions speak for all these principles. Indeed, those of us who might be accused of maverick tendencies sometimes receive internal wise counsel!

We would be so grateful if you could help us in our distribution of new publicity material when it is produced which, hopefully, will be early in 2011. It will be designed to encourage new generations to explore and support our work for if we don't do this we will stand culpable of failing to ensure the continuing health and work of our Trust.

Life continues to be 'interesting' in the developing world of the new Cornwall Council. The severe budget constrains both locally and nationally always raises the fear that heritage will become a sacrificial lamb and already we are finding that we must raise the voice of conscience to ensure that we are heard and not ignored in the hope that we will continue to be heeded.

One accolade for our new Council is that it has ensured that the Historic Environment Advisory Group regularly meets, is challenged to be forthright in its advice and ensure that its words are considered. I'm sure that we are not the only Cornwall heritage organisation which is grateful for this. If we highlight one problem then it might be the storage of records - there is an urgency for new, larger and updated premises which cannot be ignored for too long.

Lastly, it would be wrong of me not to pay a tribute to the 35 years of service given by Nick Johnson, our recently retired County Archaeologist - a title I know he held with immense pride. Nick is nationally admired and has often been described as a County Archaeologist head and shoulders above his peers. We do wish him a long and happy retirement in the knowledge that he formed and led a unit of our Council which is the envy of the country.

Tony Blackman  
Chairman

## New Cornwall Heritage Trust Website

The new website is under construction by Mat Ripley of Yadabyte, working closely with trustees who have some innovative ideas about the new site could offer the Trust. In particular it will have the following key features:

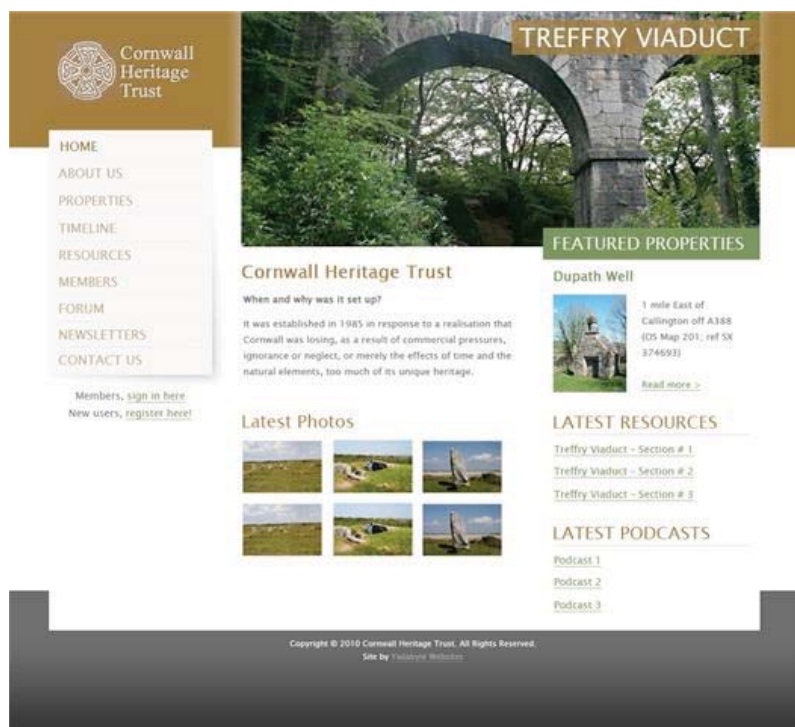
- More information about the sites, including picture files
- Podcasts, downloadable audio guide to sites that you can take with you when you visit.
- An interactive timeline of Cornish history that provides authoritative but accessible resources to help explain Cornish history and put the CHT's sites into context.
- A reorganised school-resources area making it easier to access teaching materials by Key Stage and subject.

- The ability to join and manage membership of the CHT online
- The facility to use PayPal to pay subscriptions
- Regularly updated news about CHT activities and campaigns
- A forum in which members can discuss issues
- A schools Area in which schools can leave messages and feedback after visits to our sites
- Downloadable Newsletters and other CHT reports on our activities
- Links to other important websites

There are many other possibilities under discussion, which a flexible website would allow us to create quickly and easily.

It is hoped that the new site might be "live" by the time of the Annual General Meeting in October 2010

John Welham



Proposed new front page of our website, showing some of the new features

## **Spargo's Confession by Donald Rawe**

Imagine the port of Lodeneck (Padstow) in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century: six shipyards building schooners, barques and brigantines to trade with Ireland, Scotland, Scandinavia, France and England. A young lad, son of a local sea captain, is introduced to the second most important trade of the port - the introduction of uncustomed goods of contraband: the fruits of smuggling.

Now in his 60s and the venerable Rector of a Cornish parish, James Spargo has a conscience to satisfy. In this book he tells the story of his involvement with the Free Trade, the adventures he had in evading the Revenue men, why he was imprisoned in Bodmin Goal, how he married the Squire's daughter and got to Oxford to become a parson.

This is Donald Rawe's salty, down-to-earth recasting of the vogue in Cornish romantic stories stemming from Daphne Du Maurier's Jamaica Inn and Winston Graham's Poldark series. It lifts the lid on the true economic necessities of avoiding the cruel duties imposed not only on wines, spirits and tobacco, but the very necessities of life - salt for preserving fish, sugar, tea and clothing materials.

Firmly rooted in Padstow's history, this is the story that will entertain, instruct and delight all who live around and visit the camel estuary.

*Extracted from and printed here by kind permission of the Cornwall Advertiser.*

*The following review is from the Western Morning News.*

## **Passionate patriot's book is a cracking yarn full of originality and enthusiasm**

To claim that Donald Rawe is an ardent Cornishman would be a gross understatement.

An articulate, passionate patriot and bard, he is Padstow to many and Lodeneck to most. His bardic name gives another spelling Scryfer Lanwednoc (Writer of Padstow), so take your choice.

Spargo's Confession, his latest novel, is launched this week.

"It may be my last, after publishing 152 books for many authors since 1970," he said. "And this one has been 20 years in the making. A lot of work has gone into it."

This is only his second novel but he is celebrated for his poems in the Cornish language, his tartan, his theatre productions and a wide range of writing.

With mariners on both sides of the Rawe family, links to customs and excise, and several years spent in Australia, he has knowledge and experience of many aspects of his *Spargo's Confession* story.

A cracking yarn, full of originality and the enthusiasm that readers associate with him, it tells of the Reverend James Spargo, who takes up his pen "to confess my past misdeeds and unlawful exploits".

Today we have a sneaking Cornish regard for those who bring back the baccy and the grog from continental holidays because, in a small way, it smacks of our heritage. This story is set between 1810 and 1822, when smuggling was not only a way of life but a necessity of life.

As a lad, Spargo heard the vicar thunder against "free trading" and declare that this would sink the culprit "into the mire of dishonesty and immorality that will surely damn him".

Yet his skilled mariner father said moral considerations were all very fine for those who could afford them - but life in Cornwall was very hard.

His Irish mother was even firmer, who accused the reverend of wanting to "take the bread out of the mouths of half-starvin' children".

What a dilemma for the boy.

The author, now 80, brings in a large slice of local history in the remarkable stories of the Rowlands, local nouveau riche merchants who over-reached themselves, and of the Devereaux, genuine gentry. All Cornish life is here.

And what was the "confession" of the title? By using the proceeds of the great Cornish smuggling industry in his younger years, and his contacts, James, from his humble background, was educated at Oxford, married his Devereaux sweetheart and became a parish priest. He had little difficulty defending his trips to the French coast to earn a living.

The story races along. James first went to Roscoff as a mere "gally monkey" with his father, taking Cornish "fermaids" and returning with a contraband of pipes of port and casks of brandy.

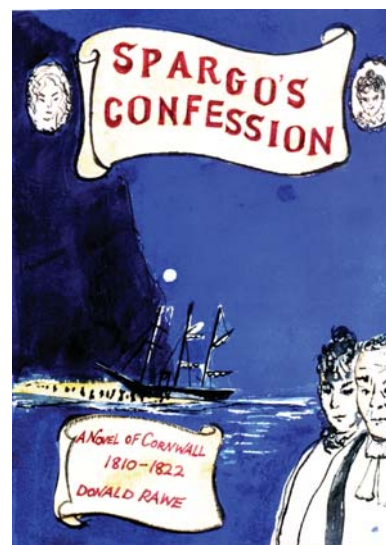
The author traces social history with his stirring story of the hard times facing the local tenant farmers, of the huge chasm between rich and poor, of

celebrations at the "big house" and crisis times galore.

As a mature Captain Spargo, caught by the more powerful excise men, he is close to a long spell in jail after trial at Bodmin. His ship was impounded and destroyed. He finds love and marriage with Lucretia Devereaux and a new life, as the Rowlands empire crumbles. So he writes of the exciting illegal years of contraband, now a widower and respectable clergyman.

Cornish at home and Cousin Jacks abroad will delight in this historic drama, filled with colour and the salty flavour of the sea, as well as the class divisions of local life.

Spargo's Confession, a novel of Cornwall by Donald Rawe is published by Lodenek Press, Woodlands, Bodieve, Wadebridge, Cornwall PL27 6EY at £9.95.



*"A great tale of esturine romance, smuggling and seafaring reminiscent of Crosbie Garstin. His best novel yet"*  
Bert Biscoe - Cornish poet and activist

*"Rawe is a hero of the Cornish Revival"*  
Cornish World

## **New Hon. Treasurer Required**

Are you a retired or semi retired accountant? Or just good with figures?

Looking for a part time interest which is important and fulfilling?

Cornwall Heritage Trust is looking to recruit a new Hon. Treasurer as the current officer is retiring at the end of the year.

Do you know of anyone who would fit the bill and be interested to join this team of friendly volunteers actively working for the heritage of Cornwall?

If so please contact Mrs Sue Marriott in the first instance for more details on 01208 873039 or email [info@cornwallheritagetrust.org](mailto:info@cornwallheritagetrust.org)

## **Visit to Carn Euny by Penryn College and Constantine Primary School**

On 15<sup>th</sup> June Carn Euny played host to another successful school visit funded by the Tanner Trust's 2009 donation to our education fund. However, this was no ordinary school trip, as it broke new ground in the way that our sites are being used by schools.

Using teaching resources downloaded from the CHT website, Advanced Skills teacher Lucy Chapman from Penryn College, working with Education Trustee John Welham, devised a programme in which Year Nine Gifted and Talented students from Penryn College acted as teachers for a couple of days, firstly leading lessons for Year Six students at Constantine School on the day before the visit and then leading the activities at Carn Euny itself.



*Enjoying the sun and lunch at Carn Euny*

Amongst the activities undertaken by the primary students were mapping the site, making a t.v. documentary about the site, exploring the lives of Iron Age people through the artefacts they would have used and, of course, exploring the mystery of the fougou.

The students also had the chance to explore the nearby hillfort Caer Brane and to enjoy the stunning views from Sancreed Beacon, another CHT site, on one of those beautiful West Penwith days in early summer when skylarks and buzzards are soaring, the sky is blue and just a gentle breeze reminds you that you're not that far from the sea.

Liz Brand, Head teacher of Constantine Primary School, commented

*"The children had a fantastic time and all agree it would be great to do it again with next years class.*

*Thanks so much for all your hard work and do thank John again if you are in touch with him."*

The CHT supported this visit to the tune of £1000, paying travel and teacher-cover costs from the Tanner Trust's generous donation to our education fund last year. The Trust is able to support any visit to our sites by schools, colleges and other groups. Contact John Welham at [john\\_welham@hotmail.com](mailto:john_welham@hotmail.com) if you would like to discuss possible ventures.

## **Cornish Pioneers of Ballarat**

Extract from a book researched by  
Lillian Dell and Joy Menhennet

### **Martin Hosking 1841 - 1893**

Martin Hosking was born on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 1841 at Lelant, Cornwall, the son of Martin Hosking and Ann Rowe. He lived in Cornwall until he was 20 years old and being lured by stories of the gold discoveries at Ballarat, he left his sweetheart behind and set sail to Australia in February 1863.

He commenced work as one of a party working for the Band of Hope, Little Bendigo. He did so well that he sent for his sweetheart, Susan Richards, from Penzance and they were married at Emerald Hill, Victoria in 1866.

His luck changed, and for the next five years work was very scarce and he was heavily in debt. His wife Susan saw an advertisement for a "Town Missionary" in the Ballarat "Star" newspaper. She encouraged him to apply for the position and at the age of 30 in 1872 he was chosen for the role.

He stood in the open air and preached; he went into bar rooms and talked to the drunken men and women and held prayer meetings among the girls in the "houses". In 1874 the Rose Hill Wesleyan Church was bought and made into a Mission Hall at the cost of £180. By 1877 Martin Hosking had a Sunday School with a staff of 24 teachers and every evening he had some sort of function, as well as holding open air meetings, cottage prayer meetings and young men's debating parties.



*Rose Hill Wesleyan Church, Ballarat*

He was a bearded man of average height with magnetic eyes and a powerful musical voice. When preaching he made many jokes, told quaint Cornish tales and clinched his arguments for living a better life with many apt quotations. He had a wonderful memory. His Mission Hall became the centre of hope to many people on the verge of utter despair.

Martin and his wife Susan had 9 children - 3 girls and 6 boys between 1868 and 1888. His home in Ballarat was a busy place. Tons of flour, hundreds of loaves of bread, lots of meat, fish, vegetables, parcels of clothes, boots and bundles of bedding were left by kind hearted folk. Martin and his children took them round to the homes of the poor.

Day in day out he toiled to raise the fallen and to bring comfort to the distressed for seventeen years and then his health broke down. In 1889 the good people of Ballarat organised a Rest Fund to give Martin Hosking a holiday.

A berth was taken for him on the mail

ship "Britannia" and over the nine months he was away he visited England, France, Egypt and Palestine returning to Ballarat by Christmas 1889.

He returned to work with his old perseverance, but his health broke down again. He gradually grew worse until in 1892 he became so ill he could not even hold a pen. He died on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1893 at the age of 52 and was buried in the Ballarat New Cemetery.

His funeral was one of the longest seen in Ballarat; the streets were lined with thousands of people. There were also thousands at the cemetery before the funeral procession arrived. The citizens of Ballarat erected a beautiful monument to Martin Hosking's memory.



*Martin Hosking 1841 - 1893*

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# Annual General Meeting

Sunday 10 October 2010 from 2.30 p.m.  
at Chacewater Village Hall

A busy afternoon commencing 2.30 p.m. with refreshments followed at 3.0p.m. with

**The Dr John Rowe Memorial Lecture given by Mr Robert Evans**  
**An illustrated lecture on the History of the Pentewan Railway**

A fascinating railway. Originally built as a horse drawn tramway to carry china clay from St Austell to Pentewan harbour, it was converted to a British narrow gauge locomotive line in 1874 and ceased working in 1919.



*the Pentewan Railway at work*

following questions from the floor at approx. 4.0 p.m. there will be

**the presentation of The Sir Richard Trant Memorial Award**  
**Heritage Champion 2010**

(come and discover who this year's winner will be)

and to round off the afternoon:

**the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting chaired by our President**  
**Lady Mary Holborow DCVO, J.P.**

Car park a few yards away

Put the date in your diary

We look forward to welcoming you all

## Postcard from a Lostwithiel Garden

Living on the edge of town, my garden looks out onto open land, low lying with large patches of marsh land and many scrub willow trees.

These trees are a nuisance in the Spring when the whole area is covered, like a layer of snow, with the willow "fairy" seeds. But they are also a boon - because they provide shelter and habitat to a large number of birds. It is a wonderful garden for many different kinds of birds, and we encourage them to visit by feeding them in a variety of ways; fat balls, peanuts, seeds and corn for the pheasants.

Yes, we are lucky to live near the Boconnoc Estate which breeds birds for shooting, and a number of escapees have set up home around the area! For the past four years or so we have had regular visits from a cock bird - distinctive because he broke his leg, which mended by itself - but he is easy to identify because one leg is fatter than the other!

He comes every winter and brings his "ladies" with him; this year five hens were loyally following him around, and when the corn tin rattled they came to feed like chickens! Then - breeding season over - they all disappear into the jungle which has grown up in Spring and we never see any of the offspring. They just stop coming until the following autumn when the job of rearing is over and food is hard to come by.

But this year, what a surprise! One Sunday morning we were catching up with jobs in the garden when suddenly - out of the undergrowth - some tiny little chicks appeared! Three in all with mum proudly leading them into the garden.

A truly wonderful moment - she brought her three chicks to show us. I am sure she was showing them off and they were very, very timid - but able to fly so a couple of weeks old.

Reading the RSPB facts it says that they usually lay between 7 to 15 eggs in a clutch. So she either didn't do too well or she lost some on the way! She has been a few times since, and then yesterday - only one chick! They didn't stay long and she flew away with the last chick in tow.

There is a big black cat in the area - about the size of a black panther (!) and I've actually seen it take a wood pigeon one time! It had better watch out from now on if it gets in my sights - that's all I can say!!

SM



*Three little chicks -  
and then there was one!*