



LISKEARD ARTS

South East Cornwall

Chair's September Newsletter 2026

Greetings everyone, and welcome back to the autumn Arts Society programme.

I hope you have had a good summer, although much of it does seem to have been hotter than usual.

I'm pleased to report that our Society is set to benefit from some special support from the Central Office. The new Chief Executive, Ian Arnold, is very committed to helping local societies grow their membership and in the South West, we and North Devon are to get some targeted marketing support; and we will also be getting advertising on Classic FM! This should help us grow our membership back over the 100 mark, hopefully more.

We will be running our introductory offers to visitors and new members and I hope too that you will all do what you can to bring along friends who might then sign up to become members. You'll find on your seats a couple of our Programme trifold leaflets with two free meeting vouchers attached within. If you've run out of friends to hand a leaflet to, how about posting them through a likely looking neighbour's door!

I'm also pleased that we have things up and running with our new Secretary Lisa Clayden, and also her partner Paul Catley, who is going to shadow me with a view to taking over as Programme Secretary.

Our first talk of the autumn is on Tuesday 8th September with James Vaux talking on modern Scandinavian design, followed on 13th October with a lecture on Mediaeval Churches by James Wright. As ever our programme seeks to be varied, with something for everyone!

Best wishes
Ian
Chair

PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO PERUSE THE CONTENTS WITHIN – THERE'S A LOT TO READ!

- Our September speaker, James Vaux's biography and summary of his talk on Scandinavian design.
- Looking ahead:
 - *Reminder about the speaker and subject of October's talk.*
 - *Overview for our visit to St Petroc and St Neot Churches, 19th October 2026.*



- *Overview of the DDay on 25th November 2026, led by TAS Mid Cornwall with speaker Chantal Brotherton-Radcliffe leading us through "The Forensic Eye – Finding your Inner Connoisseur."*
- Overview of the 2027 Programme. This can be found towards the end of the newsletter, *pp 13 + 14*
- Creatives and Artists: celebration of Celia Lister's exquisite work displayed at June's meeting, *pp 4 - 6*
- Write up of our visit in June to Prideaux Place for the house tour and cream tea, *pp 6 - 11*
- Booking forms and more details for:
 - Visit to St Petroc and St Neot Churches, *pp 15 + 16*
 - DDay with Chantal Brotherton-Radcliffe exploring "The Forensic Eye – Find Your Inner Connoisseur, *p 17*

About the Speaker

JAMES VAUX



James Vaux is a researcher and lecturer specialising in Nordic arts, culture, design and history. His talks now focus on understanding art through its historic, cultural and political context. James aims to question conventional art world narratives about painters, designers and movements, to unveil the hidden forces that lie beneath great art.

James took a law degree at Oxford with First Class Honours and qualified as a solicitor before switching career into banking. He lived and worked in Scandinavia, immersing himself in the countries' arts, culture and history. James then gained an MA (Distinction) at UCL in Language, Culture and History (Scandinavian Studies). His dissertation was on Swedish design, and he specialised in landscapes, the Viking Age, politics and literature. He studied interior design and art history at the Inchbald School, Mid-Century Modern at Sotheby's Institute and electronic music at Point Blank.

He now lectures and provides study days focusing on Scandinavian arts and design and many other areas of Scandinavian history and culture.

SCANDINAVIAN MODERN Behind the Scenes

James Vaux

**Tuesday 8th September 2026
at 19:30**

Join us in Liskeard Public Hall from 19:00
Refreshments available

Guests are always welcome

Just why did Scandinavian Modern design become so popular in the mid-century and how did it turn from a revolutionary movement into just another style? And was there a dark side to it? Because lurking in the shadows was a Nordic project to change consumer taste and shape the model citizen using scientific experimentation and social engineering.



PH-Lamp (1958 version), Denmark



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Looking ahead:

Talk on 13th October

James Wright will be joining us to talk about "Investigating Mediaeval Churches"

Mediaeval parish churches are some of the oldest and most loved buildings in the British Isles. However, relatively few of them have been archaeologically surveyed and many unverified stories have grown up around them. This talk will look at some of the commonly repeated tales about the architecture of churches, which are widely assumed to be true, but which ultimately fall into the realm of folklore and myth.

Bookings are now OPEN

**Visits to ST PETROC Church, Bodmin and ST NEOT Church
to explore the enduring legacies of the Saints**

**Monday 19th October 2026
11.00 am – 3.30 pm**

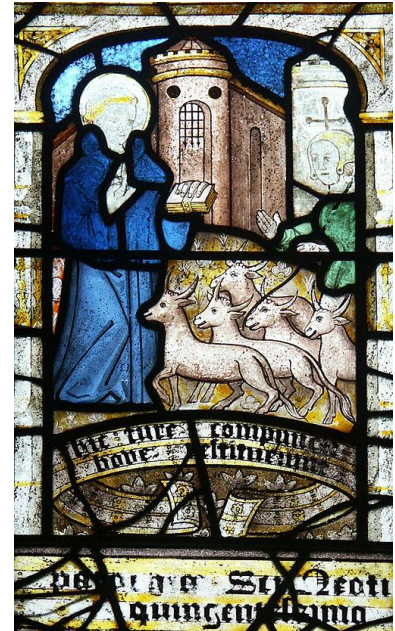
Cost: **£15** per person

Full details and the booking form can be found at the end of this newsletter, on our website, from the registration desk at our meetings or by email from

Mary Utton

mary.utton2@gmail.com

If you are interested in joining us but getting to Bodmin and St Neot's a problem, please contact Mary. She will do her best to organise car shares



© Detail of a stained-glass window showing St Neot (St Neot Church, Cornwall)



The Art Gallery of Jan Gildemeester Jansz

Adriaan de Lelie
Collection: Rijksmuseum

© This is a faithful photographic reproduction of a two-dimensional, public domain work of art.

Mid Cornwall & Liskeard's DISCOVERY DAY WEDNESDAY 25TH NOVEMBER

The Forensic Eye – Find Your Inner Connoisseur

How do the experts determine whether a piece is by master or pupil, master or copyist? What are the clues?

**9:30 am for 10:00 am – 3:30 pm
St Mary's Parish Centre,
BODMIN, PL31 1NF**

Speaker: Chantal Brotherton - Ratcliffe

Full details and the booking form can be found at the end of this newsletter, on our website, from the registration desk at our meetings or by email from Mary Utton

NB: TAS Mid Cornwall is in charge of this day. Booking form and payment must be to Mid Cornwall

Overview of the 2027 Programme

Looking ahead to next year you'll find the 2027 Programme sheet towards the of this newsletter.

Once again a mix of quality speakers and an extremely interesting range of topics. We've much to look forward to.

There will be hard copies for you to pick up from the registration desk. By handing the sheet out to prospective new members, this could be an ideal way of gaining their interest.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BEING PART OF OUR CREATIVES AND ARTISTS INITIATIVE? Don't forget to let me know

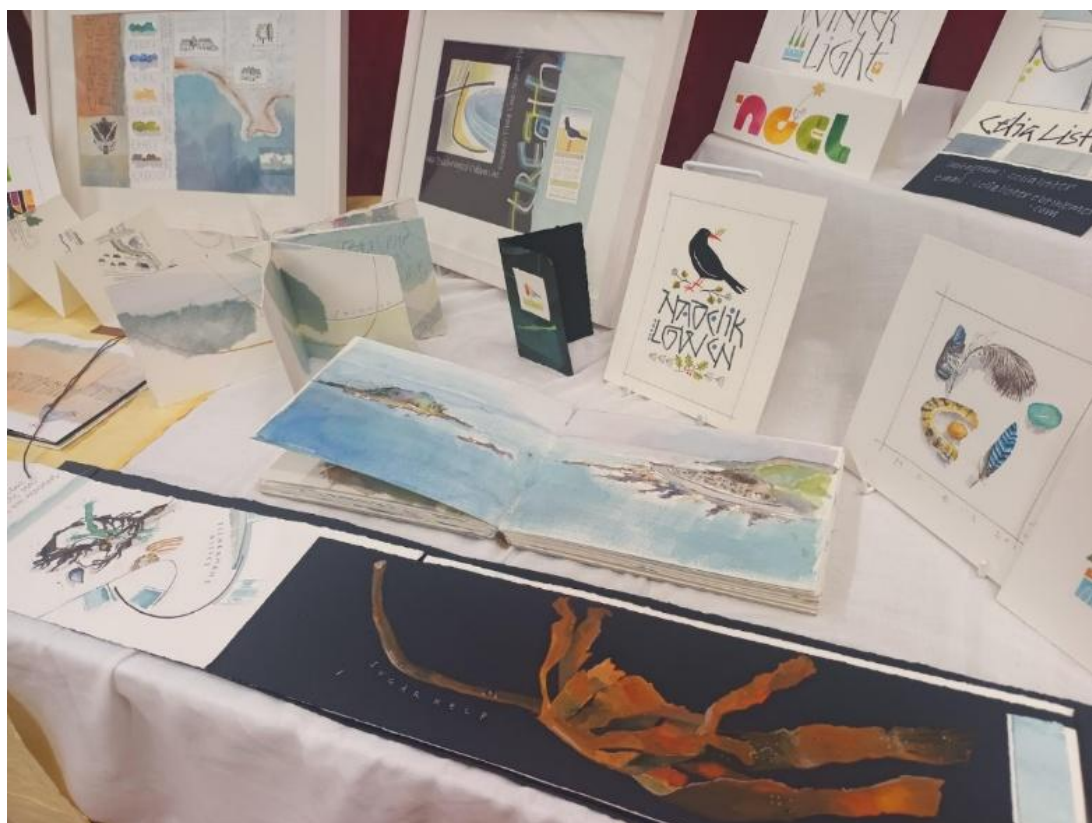
We are a diverse group of members. We are all appreciators of art but some of our members are also artists and creatives. I am delighted at how well this initiative has taken off. We have such talented artists and creatives among our members and such a diverse range of art; so far showcased has been paintings, sculpture and textiles.

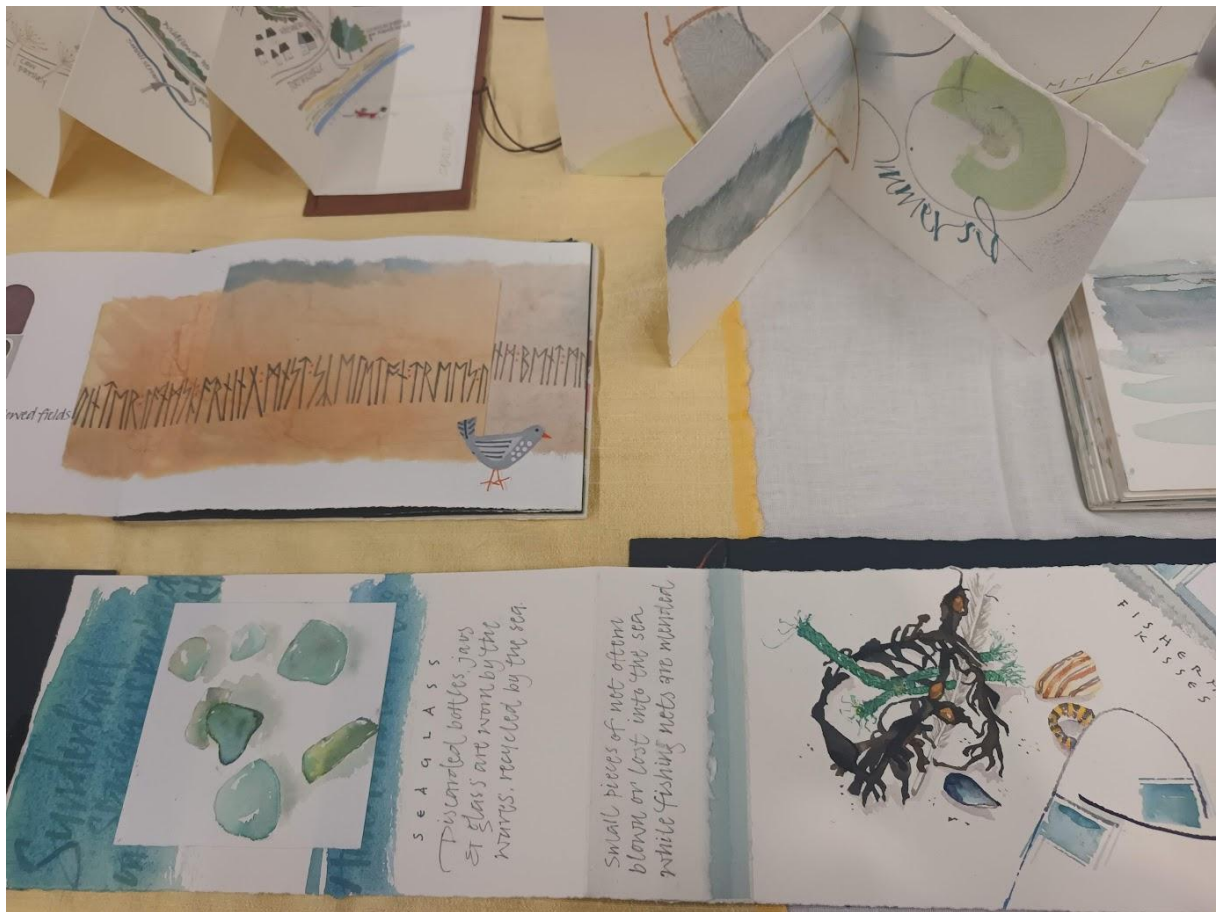
At our June meeting, it was **Celia Lister's** exquisite lettering and artist's book maker work that was on show. The quality is superb as commented on by those who stopped by to take a look. Everyone was very impressed and full of praise. Her work draws inspiration from what she sees around her, from the landscape and sea colours and includes references to the local language.



Celia stands beside her display of work, ready to share with members







Why don't you also come forward and be part of our creatives and artists initiative when you'll have the opportunity to showcase your talent whether it be painting, textiles, sculpture, print, photography etc. Please can you express your interest by emailing Mary at mary.utton2@gmail.com. We now need to cover October and November meetings. Please don't be shy! Many more of you will be equally talented and it's a joy to see such beautiful work.

LISKEARD ARTS VISITS PRIDEAUX PLACE

On Thursday 4th June 2026, 14 intrepid members made their way through heavy rain to arrive at Prideaux Place in Padstow for an 11:00 start. Unlike the previous week when there had been glorious sunshine, the weather didn't look too good. However, all was not lost, the rain stopped for those times when we needed to be outside and the sun even tried to shine on a few occasions!

A most enjoyable day, despite the weather. We had unhurried time to explore, an enthusiastic guide who took us round the house, and time too to meet up with fellow members. A lot has been done by the family to restore the house and share it with visitors, and there's still more that could follow. (Andrew)

Nicholas Prideaux secured the Padstow estate in 1535. However the Prideaux family can trace its origins back to the 11th century and William the Conqueror. The house is a combination of its traditional Elizabethan architecture (Nicholas Prideaux) with the 18th century exuberance of Strawberry Hill Gothic (Edmund Prideaux) and the work of Rev. Charles Prideaux-Brune in the early 19th century.



We gathered at the main door of the house ready for our tour which took place from 2:00 pm and was led by Erika, our wonderful and very knowledgeable guide. Unfortunately we weren't allowed to take any photos inside the house as it's still the family home.



One enters into the hallway through the original Elizabethan oak door and door lock of 1592. From here we entered the Dining Room which was the original Great Hall, remodelled by Edmund Prideaux in the 18th century. It has a mixture of Elizabethan and Georgian panelling. The next room is the one used daily by the family, the Morning Room. Within the room is a rare John Opie (1761 – 1807) self-portrait, left by Opie as a tip for the housekeeper!

Also of note is the pardon that forgives the family for crimes past, present and future. The Prideaux family backed Cromwell during the English Civil War. Fortunately before the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, Edmund Prideaux married off his sister to Sir William Morice of Werrington, secretary of state to Charles II and thus secured the pardon.

The Drawing Room is very light and airy with southerly views across the lawn. The Drawing Room wing was built by Charles Prideaux at the end of the 18th century in the Strawberry Hill Gothic style to celebrate his marriage to an heiress and in return for the inheritance he added her name to theirs to become Prideaux-Brune. Among the miniatures on show in this room is a bizarre relic of the Civil War, which on one side bears a portrait of Charles I and on the reverse a likeness of Cromwell. Nothing like hedging one's bets!



Other rooms covered on the tour include the Grenville Room which contains the dining room of Sir Richard Grenville, taken from his grand manor at Stowe, and the Library with over 6000 volumes and its stained glass window representing in heraldic form the history of the many heiresses the Prideaux have married. The Great Chamber has the original 16th century ceiling by the Abbott family of Frithelstock depicting the biblical story of Susannah and the elders. It had been hidden since the 18th century and its restoration was only completed in 1987.

There are so many treasures to see in the house – paintings, fine china, furniture and a fine astronomical clock made in 1800 by Caleb Boney of Padstow, but there is a warm, welcoming atmosphere within the house. It's certainly well worth a tour.

*We have been to Prideaux Place before but it was a very entertaining and amusing tour this time.... Disclosing information that we had not heard before..... plus a cream tea afterwards!
(Alan & Sheila)*

Prior to the tour our group were free to explore the gardens and grounds. Most of us made use of the tea room for our morning break before venturing out.

We thoroughly enjoyed it. When we arrived & saw the reception/tearoom area we thought the staff would never cope with us all. How wrong we were! They were all friendly, helpful & efficient above & beyond. From exploring the gardens & outbuildings to eating a delicious lunch & then having the house tour with an excellent steward everything went well. Thanks to you for arranging it, doing a deal with the rain gods & managing to herd all we cats! (Linda & Chris)



The views are quite spectacular and one can look across the park with its herd of fallow deer. It is thought to be the oldest in the country dating back to its enclosure by the Romans in 435AD.

A lot of work has been undertaken to restore the gardens to that which Edmund Prideaux in the 1730s, and his son, Humphrey, had designed. Edmund landscaped the gardens with hedged walks leading down from the entrance. His Grand Tour led to an interest in Renaissance art and on his return he erected several buildings to provide points of interest: a classical temple, an obelisk, a grotto and an exedra, a small stone arbour housing Roman funerary urns with inscriptions dating back to 50 AD. Humphrey refashioned the grounds in the English manner made fashionable by Capability Brown. In the 1870s there was an ornate sunken garden added in the Victorian taste. With enormous help from the Cornwall Gardens Trust much of the garden has now been restored.



The day ended with us returning to the Tea Room for a very welcome cream tea and an opportunity for members to talk to each other. A very enjoyable day.



Yes indeed, I did enjoy the LAS visit to Prideaux Place. How grateful one feels to the resident families who take on the mantle of keeping these houses and estates going for us to enjoy today. The exciting touch of history with the mention of the Roundheads and Cavaliers brought to life the difficulty of surviving such turbulent times and yet the property remains a gracious and beautiful home! I very much enjoyed the walk around the gardens, and the new planting ideas which I have stored away for future action at home. Finishing the day with a cream tea was a great idea which gave us the chance to meet and chat with various members of the Society, that I had not met previously, and found very interesting. (Cherry)

YOU MAY BE INTERESTED IN:

LISKEARD UNLOCKED 2026, Friday 11th to Sunday 20th September

As part of Heritage Open Days, Liskeard Unlocked will be celebrating EVERYDAY HISTORIES exploring working life through the ages. See behind doors that are usually closed and enjoy demonstrations of traditional crafts as well as walks, talks and displays. Details about the programme can be found online at <http://bit.ly/liskeardunlocked>

Flyers outlining the programme will be available to pick up from our registration desk on 8th September.

If you have any ideas, comments or queries or you can help us in any way please contact me.

Ian Tunbridge
Chair of Liskeard Arts
tunbridge.ian@gmail.com or liskeardarts@gmail.com

Alternatively contact Mary Utton mary.utton2@gmail.com

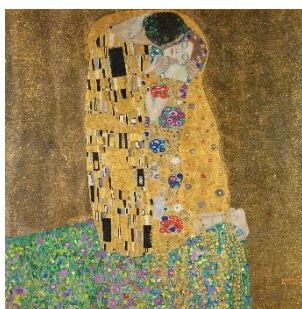


Opera singers.
Photo © Merlot Levert/Dreamstime.com

January 12th

Tim Mirfin - The Opera Singer Phenomenon - how do they make that noise?

That strange noise opera singers make, is it really necessary? Why and how do they make it? Is it something anyone can do? The talk is liberally illustrated with picture, video and sound, and a small (unstressful) amount of audience participation. Opera fan, opera sceptic or opera ignoramus, it will appeal in equal measure.



Gustav Klimt, *The Kiss (Lovers)*, c. 1907–1909.
Belvedere, Vienna

February 9th

Gavin Plumley – The Art and Culture of fin-de-siècle Vienna

Vienna around 1900, a capital of a vast empire and one of the most exciting artistic laboratories in the world, producing painters such as Gustav Klimt and Oskar Kokoschka, architects like Otto Wagner and Josef Hoffmann, the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, the composer Gustav Mahler and the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. How and why did the City of Dreams become a cultural hotbed?



Glass inlay reliefs, Egyptian, late 18th Dynasty. Photo
© The Trustees of the British Museum.
Shared under a [Creative Commons Attribution](#)

March 9th

Lucia Gahlin - Ancient Egyptian Artistry in Glass

The ancient Egyptians began making glass in the Eighteenth Dynasty (c1450 BC). The Egyptians were soon masterful at producing a range of object types in coloured glass - vessels, inlay, beads, amulets, figures and even headrests. Lucia examines the developments in glass manufacture from the New Kingdom (15th century BC) through to the Roman Period in Egypt (1st century AD).

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Beach scene. Chromolithograph after John Leech,
1865. Source: [Wellcome Collection](#)

April 13th

Bertie Pearce - “We are amused!” Victorian leisure from the parlour to the seaside via the nursery

Even though ‘work’ was the bedrock of Victorian progress and improvement, Queen Victoria’s reign saw the greatest upsurge in leisure pursuits ever witnessed. People earned more money and worked shorter hours and with the birth of the Railways and better health awareness, it was a golden age for the art of entertaining oneself and being an amateur in the true sense of the word.



Walter Langley, *Disaster Scene in a Cornish Fishing Village*, 1889. Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery.

May 11th

Alison Bevan - Drawn from the Sea. Cornish fishing industry 1880 - 2010

A key industry for Cornwall has been that of fishing. In the 1800s, vast pilchard shoals provided "meat, money and light all in one night". Using Newlyn School paintings, stories and photo images from an essay 'Newlyn: Fishing for a Living' by Vince Bevan, Alison explores the tragedy and hardship and the extraordinary spectacle of fishing in the late Victorian era, before bringing the subject through to the current millenium.

Photo Birmingham Museums Trust, licensed under CC0



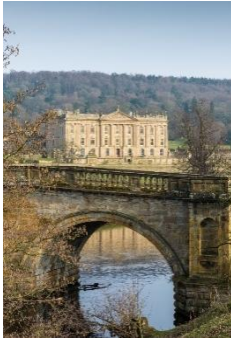
The China National Botanical Garden, Beijing.

June 08th

Timothy Walker - Garden Hunting in China

While many English gardeners have visited China to “collect” plants, few have gone to look for gardens. During a six-week trip Timothy visited gardens and met gardeners with a view to building bridges between Chinese and English horticulture. In addition to examining gardens and gardening, this talk looks at some of the wider cultural aspects of a country full of contradictions.

Photo © Xiaoyong/Dreamstime.com



Chatsworth House.

September 07th

Amy Lim - The Baroque Country House

Many of Britain’s best-loved country houses were created in the ‘Baroque’ period (c. 1660-1720). Visiting some of the most iconic houses of the period, including Chatsworth, Petworth, and Blenheim, we will meet the patrons who created them and look at some of the highlights of their sumptuous interiors, gardens and collections, addressing the question: what is ‘Baroque’?

Photo © George Cairns/Dreamstime.com



Photo © Angela Findlay

October 12th

Angela Findlay - Art Behind Bars. The role of art in breaking the cycle of crime, prison and re-offending

Working as an artist within the Criminal Justice System has given Angela unique insights into the destructive and costly cycle of crime, prisons and re-offending. Using images of art projects and prisoners’ art, she offers a deeper understanding of the minds, lives and challenges facing offenders. The process of creating art provides opportunities for offenders to develop necessary key life skills.



Owl from *Liber de naturis bestiarum* (The Aberdeen Bestiary), c.1200-1300. University of Aberdeen.

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November 9th

Jonathan Foyle - The Nature of the Beast: Understanding fabulous animals in Medieval Art

Medieval bestiaries are wondrously colourful worlds, blending fact with fiction, morality with mythology. They represent an understanding of the physical world, but also fulfilled the need for symbolic creatures to supplement biblical stories. What happened if you chased a bonnacon? What was a beaver's superpower? What did owls mean? In the course of an hour, we'll explore all these and more.



Richard Stone, *Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother*, 1986

December 07th

Jeremy Mainwaring Burton - The Queen Mother’s love of jewellery

The Queen Mother had so much jewellery to choose from over the course of her long life – Heirlooms of the Crown and a spectacular collection of her own, that it would be almost impossible to describe it all. Jeremy chronicles her passion for jewels by concentrating on a selection of items which are of particular gemmological and historic interest and have an intriguing story attached.

DISCOVERY DAYS, TRIPS and EVENTS

Information about the 2027 Programme soon to be finalised and published.

All meetings start at 7:30pm in the Public Hall Liskeard PL14 6BW. Refreshments served from 7:00pm

Non-members are welcome to attend all events. www.liskeardartsociety.org.uk



THE ARTS SOCIETY LISKEARD

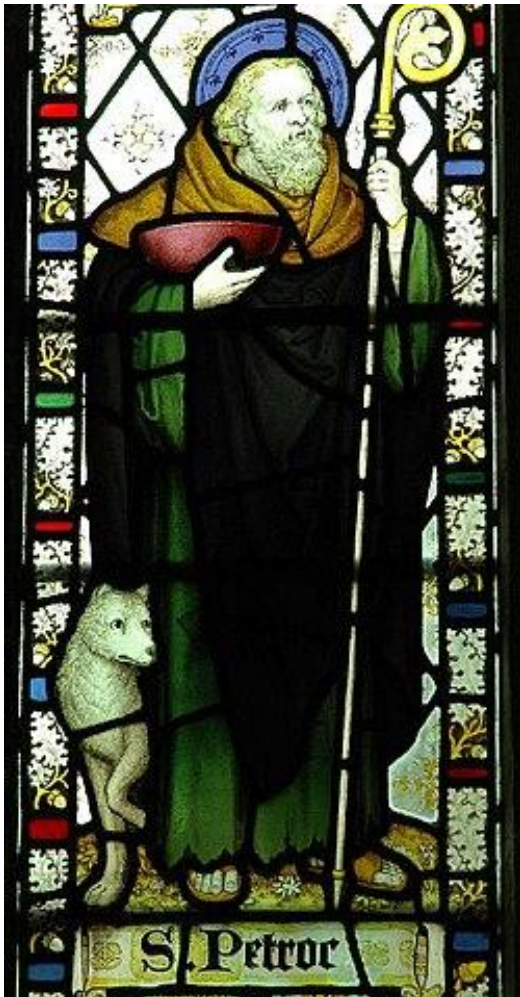
Visits to ST PETROC Church, Bodmin and
ST NEOT Church
to explore the enduring legacies of the Saints

Monday 19th October 2026

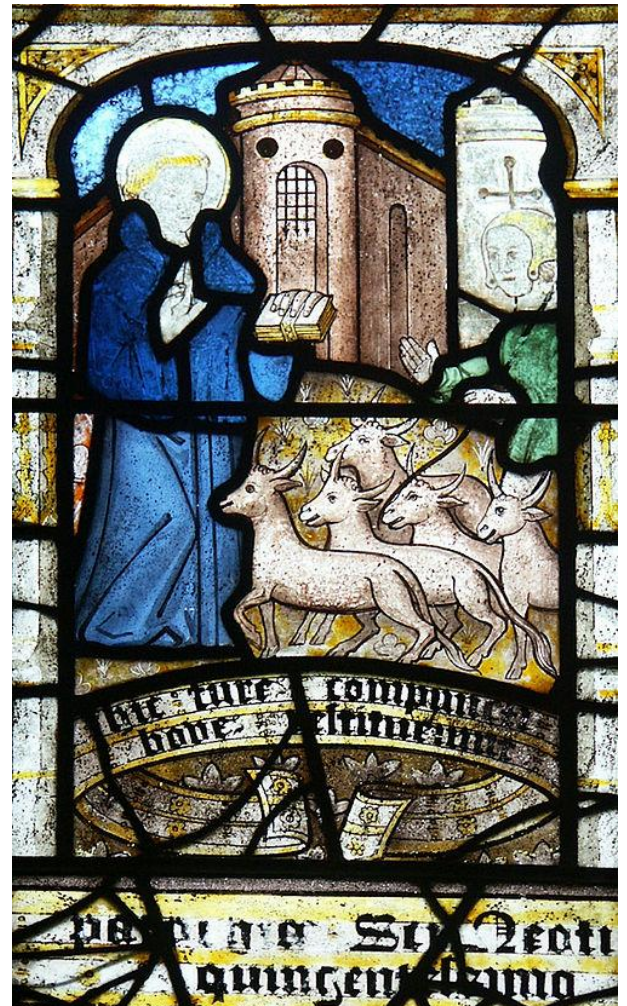
11.00 am – 3.30 pm

**Join local historian Evie Bond for an exploration of the saints of Cornwall,
with a particular focus on Bodmin, St Neot, and the enduring legacies of
Saint Petroc and Saint Neot.**

Together, we will visit the churches of St Petroc (Bodmin) and St Neot, two sites deeply woven into Cornwall's sacred landscape. Through a guided exploration and accompanying talk, we'll uncover the stories of the saints they are dedicated to and the communities that gathered around them.



© Detail of a stained glass window at Bodmin showing St Petroc



© Detail of a stained-glass window showing St Neot (St Neot Church, Cornwall)

Drawing on a wide range of historical and folkloric sources, Evie will explore the lives, legends and landscapes connected to Cornwall's saints — figures whose stories became deeply rooted in local memory, sacred sites and everyday life. From miracle tales and journeys across land and sea to the churches and holy places that still bear their names, this event offers a rich insight into Cornwall's early medieval spiritual landscape and the traces it continues to leave behind today.

Alongside a closer look at the histories of Bodmin and St Neot and their churches, the talk will also place these stories within the broader context of Cornwall's saint traditions, exploring how saints shaped identity, place and belief across the region.

Programme for the Day

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 11:00 | Participants make their own way to Bodmin.
Coffee on arrival at St Petroc Church (<i>still to be confirmed</i>). |
| 11:30 – 12:30 | Talk and tour of St Petroc Church. |
| 12:30 – 14:15 | Participants make their own arrangements for lunch in Bodmin before making their way to St Neot (<i>Unfortunately the London Inn, St Neot is shut on a Monday and St Neot has no other facilities</i>).
Participants to make their way to St Neot. |
| 14:15 – 15:15 | Talk and tour of St Neot Church |
| 15:15 | Final questions, look around the church, cup of tea and farewells. |

This event is ideal for anyone interested in Cornish history, folklore, sacred landscapes, and the deeper stories woven through Cornwall's churches and communities.

The cost will be **£15.00** per person. (*Min participants: 20; Max 25*)

Our Guide and Speaker **EVIE BOND**

Evie is a historian specialising in the early medieval period and the saints of Cornwall.

Her work combines careful research with accessible, story-led interpretation, bringing early medieval history to life in a way that is both grounded and engaging.



Booking and Payment

- By contactless/cash/cheque at a Liskeard Arts meeting.
- By **Online booking and payment**
 1. Please pay **£15.00 per person** (non-refundable) to:
The Arts Society Liskeard, sort code **20 68 10**, account number **70729515**, ref **Trip.SC**
 2. Then **email** mary.utton2@gmail.com
Subject: Saints of Cornwall trip
Message: how many places, how much you've paid, and your telephone number.
You should get a reply to your email within 24 hours, acknowledging your payment and booking.
- By posting this completed slip with your cheque for £15.00 (non-refundable payment) to
The Arts Society Liskeard to:
Mary Upton, Tregantle, Barn Street, Liskeard PL14 4BL
01579 345140, 07731380715, mary.utton2@gmail.com
If you give your email address (or send a sae), your cheque will be acknowledged in writing.

Please reserve me place(s) @ £15.00 per person (non-refundable)

NAME(S)

POSTCODE TEL NUMBER

EMAIL

GDPR: Your details will be retained only until the event has taken place, solely for Liskeard Arts to inform you of any updates about it.



THE ARTS SOCIETY MID CORNWALL and THE ARTS SOCIETY LISKEARD

DISCOVERY DAY

Wednesday 25th November 2026

in St Mary's Parish Centre
St Mary's Road, Bodmin, PL31 1NF

The Forensic Eye – Find Your Inner Connoisseur with Chantal Brotherton-Ratcliffe



How do dealers, auctioneers and museum staff determine whether a piece is by one painter or another? What are the clues to look for when deciding who painted the picture? Artists before the 18th century usually worked with a number of assistants, who were trained to reproduce the style of the master, so how can we distinguish between master and pupil, master and copyists? During this Discovery Day we consider clues and learn some tricks of the connoisseur. The day ends with a chance to try out your skills where you will learn to develop a discerning eye.



The Art Gallery of Jan
Gildemeester Jansz
Adriaan de Lelie (image cropped)

9.30 Complementary tea and coffee on arrival

10.00 Lecture: **Looking with the Eyes Wide Open**

We can stand for minutes in front of a painting and think we are seeing it, but how much have we noticed?

11.00 Comfort Break

11.30 Lecture: **Family likenesses significant characteristics**

How do artists reveal their identity through their work? Learn ways to distinguish individual artistic hands.

1.00 Lunch. Complementary glass of wine or soft drink is included. Pre-order below.

2.00 Lecture: Finding your inner connoisseur

Chantal will guide you through an opportunity to try out your skills, identifying artists in a "spot the artist", with a study of expert clues and give you a chance to try out your budding connoisseur skills of recognition.

Tickets £37 per person including lunch. Payment is due at the time of booking and is not normally refundable.

If you would like to reserve a place, please complete the application form below:

Please reserve me place(s) at £37.00 each including lunch. Please choose your menu option below, a traybake sweet is also included. Soft drinks, a glass of wine and hot drinks are free.

Please tick: (a) Winter Vegetable Soup with roll and butter ☐ or (b) Quiche Lorraine and salad ☐

Name Tel No.

Email Address

Please pay online via BACS to: The Arts Society Mid Cornwall, Sort Code: 30-97-28, A/C no: 00565928 reference: DDay, or pay by cheque to The Arts Society Mid-Cornwall. Please email your form to kerensabeer@icloud.com or post it with your cheque to Kerensa Beer-Robson at Hobbyfield, Trebetherick, Cornwall, PL27 6SQ.