

# PAF NEWS

A bi-monthly newsletter for the Friends of the Polperro Arts Foundation



Edward Frampton, 'When the sun sinks westward and bathes all things in gold' (1896)

## A Polperro art history collection

Welcome to the first issue of our newsletter for 2021.

In previous issues we have often referred to an exhibition of paintings from Polperro's long and distinguished history of attracting some excellent artists to work here - 'Polperro, Cornwall's Forgotten Art Centre' - to be held at the Falmouth Art Gallery in the Spring of this year.

Due to all the ongoing uncertainties that we have had to get used to the exhibition has been put off and is now planned for 2nd April to 18th June 2022. While the delay is regrettable it does allow more time for us as a community to think about and prepare for a possible project that could bring significant benefits to the village once the Falmouth exhibition is complete.



Claus Bergen, 'Polperro an der Kuste'

different artists, dating from the 1870s to the 1960s. A range of styles and techniques are represented as illustrated by a few examples on these pages. The framed-size of 12 of them are each more than 100 cm wide, the largest measuring 155 cm across.

Moreover David knows of other substantial collections in galleries and privately owned that could be borrowed from time to time. High-quality reproductions of paintings of particular interest could be added, such as Loudan's 'Fish Sale' (see below). With those numbers it is unrealistic to expect to find enough wall-space within the village for all of the paintings to be displayed at once; we could imagine regular rotations of the pictures to maintain people's interest.

Thus this collection of paintings, if it was set up, promoted and managed well, could in time become a significant new attraction not only for the local community and the 'passing trade' but also that would draw additional visitors to the village.

At risk of seeming over-ambitious, we could foresee a small cafe, slide shows, occasional talks, school visits and saleable reproductions of the paintings in various formats. While the Penlee Gallery is certainly in a higher league than Polperro could reasonably hope to achieve, it is worth noting that according to a recent survey it attracted 70 percent of all visitors to Penzance, so 'cultural tourism' surely thrives in Cornwall. Our own PAF gallery, the Ebenezer and other art sellers around the village could all expect to benefit.

There are two essential requirements before anything like the above vision could begin to become a reality: first, identifying and preparing a

David Tovey, the originator of the exhibition, is generously offering his extensive personal collection of paintings as a permanent display in Polperro.

David, you will recall, has been researching Polperro's art history for several years. He is writing a two-volume book on the history of art in Polperro up to 1960.

David continues to add to his collection but, as it stands, in January 2021 it includes 80 paintings by 55



Nellie Blacklock, 'Across the harbour'





Sidney Endacott, 'Polperro'

suitable space, not only for the exhibition but also for the safe storage of the pictures not currently on display. The village hall and the Rowett Institute are possible candidates. In either case, some minor construction work might be needed; but the exhibition space could still be available for any activities that would not put the paintings at risk such as meetings, social gatherings, talks, yoga classes and almost anything except ball games. In its initial discussions the Community Council has been supportive and possible sources of grant funding can be explored.

The second and at least equally important requirement would be to establish a core group of local volunteers to take responsibility for managing and promoting the collection. They would need guidance, perhaps from an established Cornish gallery, in practical aspects of gallery management; and they would need to commit a certain amount of time to the project.



Frederick Cook, 'Inner harbour, grey day'

In view of the delay in the Falmouth exhibition it will be some time before we will see any visible progress on the project, but even at this early stage it would be helpful to know roughly how many people might be interested in being involved. So we would appreciate **expressions of interest** from anyone who feels attracted to the ideas set out above. Please send your contact details to us through our website or the email address below. Thanks in anticipation!



Stuart Armfield, 'Bullfinches and blossoms'



## Restoring 'The Fish Sale'

Meanwhile work continues on restoring William Mouat Loudan's 1888 painting 'Fish sale, Polperro' which which we have reported on in previous issues of the newsletter. Conservator Alison Smith, based



near Penzance, has been busy removing the original discoloured varnish to reveal the wonderful tones and detail of the original. The canvas has also been lined to give additional structure and strength. The three pictures above show the progress that has been made from its badly compromised condition a few months ago (top left, note the hole near the top left corner), partially restored (top right) and as it now appears, prior to further cleaning and retouching before re-varnishing takes place. Alison hopes to complete her work by March this year, and the 168 x 169 cm painting is expected to be one of the main attractions at the Falmouth exhibition.

More information, including details of how to contribute to the restoration fund, is available on David Tovey's website [here](#).

## About the Foundation

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The Foundation was set up in 2001 to support and promote local established and aspiring artists and to increase awareness of locally-produced art and the long history of art in Polperro.

### *Our Team*

Currently we have eight exhibiting members all of whom live and work locally: **Barbara Ellis**, artist; **Sandy Horton**, glass; **Paul Lightfoot**, photographer, writer; **Sue Lord**, artist; **Charles Summers**, artist and fan-maker; **Babs Taylor**, artist; **Tracy Watts**, graphic designer and illustrator; and **Lisa Woollett**, author and photographer. **Jacky Humby** is our secretary.

### *What we offer*

- We **exhibit** an extensive, evolving collection of local art works in our gallery in the Polperro village hall.
- We arrange and host occasional **events** for the benefit of local residents and visitors.
- We circulate this free **newsletter** six times each year; email us to suggest others who might like a copy.
- At these links you will find freely-available examples of our work as [screen-savers](#), [desktop wallpaper](#) and in other formats to bring a taste of Polperro and its art to your home computers, tablets and phones.

### *Support us*

Maintaining and running the gallery is expensive and we need your support. Please click here to make a donation through [PayPal](#), visit our website at the link below for other options or let us know if you would like to join us as an artist, Friend or volunteer. Thank you for any help you can give!

### *Contact us*

For the time being we are of course closed. We intend to re-open as soon as regulations permit. Meanwhile please contact us by email

[<polperroarts@gmail.com>](mailto:polperroarts@gmail.com) or through our website: [<www.polperroarts.org>](http://www.polperroarts.org)

