

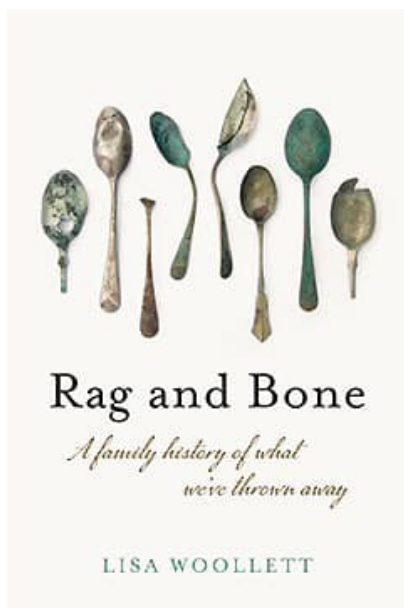
PAF NEWS

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

Rag and Bone, a family history of what we've thrown away



Welcome to our second PAF newsletter. In this issue we are featuring Lisa Woollett's new book, **Rag and Bone**, published by John Murray, which is due out on 2 July 2020. Here's what Lisa has to say about it:



"My first two books, *Sea Journal* and *Sea and Shore Cornwall*, were inspired by beachcombing finds that were mainly natural, from sea fans and mermaid's purses to by-the-wind sailors. Increasingly though, I'd found myself picking up more of the man-made flotsam, most of it plastic.

At the time, as well as beachcombing, I was also mudlarking on the Thames on occasional visits to London, where I was born. As the fine Thames mud is such a wonderful preserver, my foreshore finds ranged from medieval jug handles and Georgian buttons to bone combs and the mouths of delicate mouth-blown apothecary vials.

Prompted by my growing collection of discarded shore finds, I kept returning to a branch of my family that included dustmen and scavengers. I knew that over the generations they'd moved downriver from Water Street beside the Thames in central London,

out to the estuary and eventually the sea. For someone keen to spend as much time as possible searching the shore, this suggested an irresistible route.

I began to sketch out an idea. From the objects I found on a series of shore walks, I would trace a history of consumption through what we've thrown away, intertwined with a history of my own family.

Unsurprisingly, trying to make sense of it all has been quite a journey. The walks took a year and it felt oddly appropriate that by the end of winter, the Thames finds I'd hauled back from previous centuries were swamped by beach plastic. Time and again, I caught myself thinking how astonished my dustman grandad would be at the contents of our bins today.



Over the coming months, when I would otherwise have been out giving book talks with a peculiar suitcase, I'll use my [blog](#) to introduce some of my finds and the stories behind them."

There is more about the 'Travelling Museum of Finds' [here](#) and reviews of *Rag and Bone* [here](#). The hardback is available to pre-order at [Waterstones](#), [Foyles](#), [Blackwells](#) and [Amazon](#). Best of all, particularly in these difficult times, do use local independent bookshops, such as the excellent [Book Shop Liskeard](#). And in more good news, congratulations are in order for Lisa's recent Arts Council grant which will help towards work on her next writing project, which we will look forward to.

Sandy's glass

Sandy Horton originally trained in textiles followed by courses in architectural stained glass. After completing a post-graduate diploma at Central St Martins, where she won the William De Morgan prize for glass, Sandy developed an interest in fused glass and other glass techniques. Now living and working near Polperro, Sandy produces glass that is inspired by the light and patterns of the Cornish land and seascapes; "Winter Dawn" (right) and "Low Tide" (below) are two among many examples.

An important part of Sandy's work is that it can be appreciated whatever the light levels by using a variety of transparent and opaque glass. Each piece is unique and usually goes through three or four firing processes to create different textures, relief or colour.

After a career as a college lecturer Sandy enjoys teaching and working on community projects: "Some years ago I led





a school project sponsored by The Worshipful Company of Glass Sellers of London to commemorate the Great Fire of London of 1666. I worked with students from the City of London Academy Islington to produce work that illustrated the visual drama of the fire - the burning, the flames, the smoke and the sky. We won first prize!"

Sandy often assists Tracy Watts, another longstanding PAF member, to run workshops in Polperro; and she is a regular judge at the annual Sand Sculpture competition for Plymouth College of Art students.

"My latest body of work draws upon the light, patterns and colours that surround me. I enjoy working directly with glass to capture a response to a time, mood or place. When creating my pieces an important part of the work is not only colour, but also building texture and relief in the kiln together with the layering of different glasses. I take pleasure in the challenges that glass offers, and take full advantage of 'accidents' that occur in or out of the kiln creating unintended, but often exciting effects. I frequently incorporate

agricultural objects or found timber to truly connect my work to Cornwall."

See more of Sandy's work on the PAF website at the link below and on her own website [here](#).

From the history books

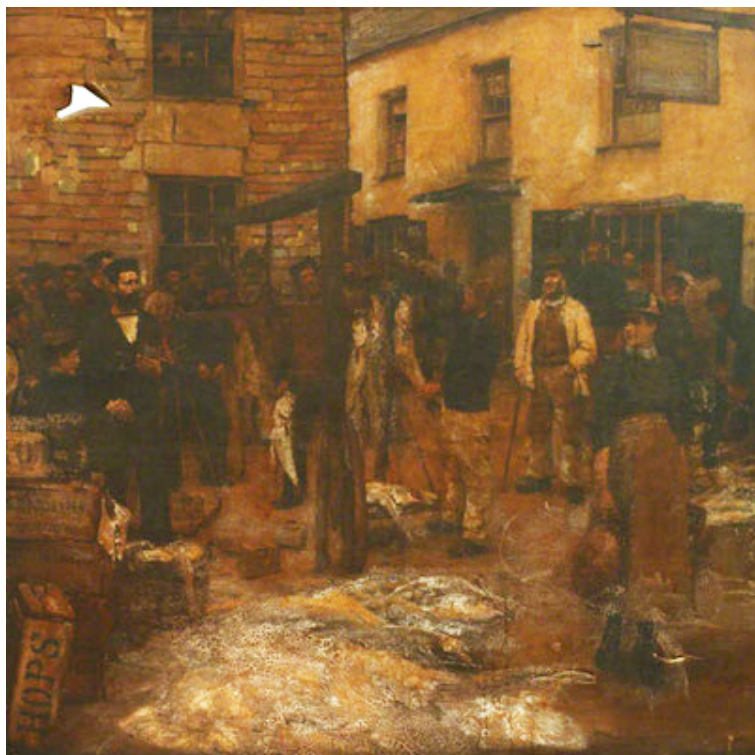
One of the most significant pieces in Polperro's art history, and one of the largest at 168x169cm, is "Fish Sale at Polperro" by William Mouat Loudan. It shows some quite striking local characters attending a sale of fish near the Bark House and the Three Pilchards pub adjacent to the inner harbour. As the art historian David Tovey explains on his [website](#), the painting caused a stir in 1888 when it was presented at the Royal Academy's exhibition and an engraving based on the painting was published in the *Illustrated London News*, boosting the popularity of Polperro as an artists' destination. David hopes to feature Loudan's work as part of his exhibition of Polperro's art history in the Falmouth Art Gallery in the Spring of 2021.

In 1919 the artist donated the Fish Sale to the village in the custody of the newly-established Rowett Institute, which remains its registered owner. The painting hung in the Rowett Institute until 1988 when it was transferred to a storage area of the Royal Cornwall Museum in Truro for safe-keeping.

Unfortunately the future of this important work is now in question. The painting is badly in need of extensive restorative work not only because of the inevitable effects of ageing over the last 130 years

but also because it has been badly damaged, including a large tear which is clearly visible in the RCM's recent photograph (right). And it needs to find a permanent home, ideally where it can be enjoyed regularly and safely by the people of Polperro. These requirements are connected. The availability of any grant funds for the restoration would almost certainly be conditional on a prior agreement to put the painting on public display.

In subsequent issues of our newsletter we will report progress on fund-raising, the restoration and longer term plans for Loudan's Fish Sale at Polperro.



News from the gallery

Although the gulls are missing their chips and ice cream snacks, in many ways life for Polperro's other residents is following its normal peaceful, enviable course. The weather has been consistently wonderful, there is thrift on the cliffs, foxgloves and red campions are in the hedgerows, crimson whistling jacks have popped up in the gardens, fulmars swoop gracefully around Downend Point, a few boats are moving and kayaks and paddle boards have appeared in the harbour.

Beneath the surface things are not so rosy and the lockdown is creating serious challenges for local businesses and organisations, including the PAF. Since 21st March the gallery has been closed as have most other business premises within Polperro, and the village remains largely empty except for socially-distanced queues outside the few essential shops that are open. Government assistance has certainly helped but longer term issues remain to be addressed. Some interesting discussions are under way, watch this space for further developments.

A raffle

As noted in our previous newsletter the raffle for a framed print of Sue Lord's painting "Ducks on the way to 'The Props', Polperro harbour" is still open. The picture is on display in the Polperro Post Office where tickets will be available until 31st July when we will arrange for the draw to be held. It's a chance to own a great piece of Polperro art while helping the PAF through a financially difficult period. Many thanks for your support.

About the Foundation

The Foundation was set up by a group of talented local artists in 2001 who were keen to continue the long tradition of promoting the arts in Polperro. We have arranged and been involved in many art and musical events and activities ever since. Find out more about us and our past achievements on our website at the link below.

Our Team

Currently we have seven full members all of whom live and work locally: **Barbara Ellis**, artist; **Sandy Horton**, glass; **Paul Lightfoot**, photographer and writer; **Sue Lord**, artist; **Babs Taylor**, artist; **Tracy Watts**, graphic designer and illustrator; and **Lisa Woollett**, author and photographer. Four guest artists have work displayed in the gallery: **Rosamund Jane**, artist; **Charles Summers**, artist and fan-maker; **Nicola Sweetzer-Sturt**, artist; and **Brian Trudeau**, wood and glass sculptor. We also have an invaluable group of volunteers: **Chris Starnes**, **Helen and Peter Hickey**, **Frieda Hill** and **Jacky Humby**.

What we offer

- We **exhibit** an extensive, evolving collection of local art works in an attractive and convenient setting in the middle of Polperro.
- We arrange and host occasional **events** for the benefit of local residents and visitors. Our website lists the many events and activities that we have hosted and supported over the years.
- We will circulate this free **newsletter** six times each year; email us at the address below to suggest others who might like a copy. Future issues will feature work by our members; our own events and other events from the local art scene; plans for 'open studios'; and more 'from the history books'.
- We offer 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

Renting, insuring and maintaining the gallery is expensive and we need your support, particularly during this extremely difficult period. Please click [here](#) to make a donation through [PayPal](#) or visit our website at the link below for other options. Thank you for any help you can give!

Contact us

You will always be welcome to drop into the gallery when we re-open, meanwhile contact us by email or through our website: Email: polperroarts@gmail.com Website: www.polperroarts.org

