

FROM YOUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS

Updates from Cornwall Archaeological Society's Area Representatives

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DECEMBER 2021

Issue 61

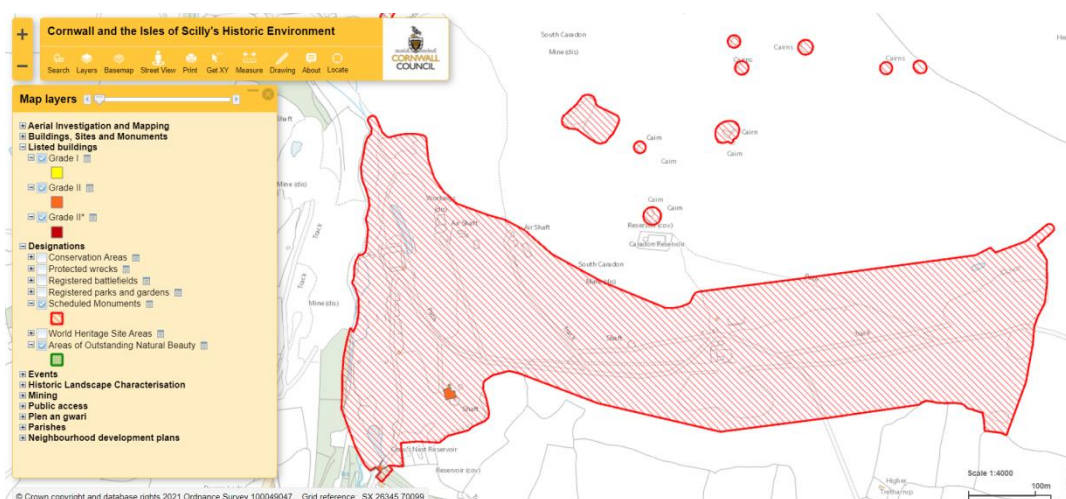
THIS MONTH'S FEATURES

- POINT OF COLLAPSE
- BAD CONDUCT
- LEAT LOOTS
- COTEHELE AT CHRISTMAS
- LOCK UNLOCKED

POINT OF COLLAPSE

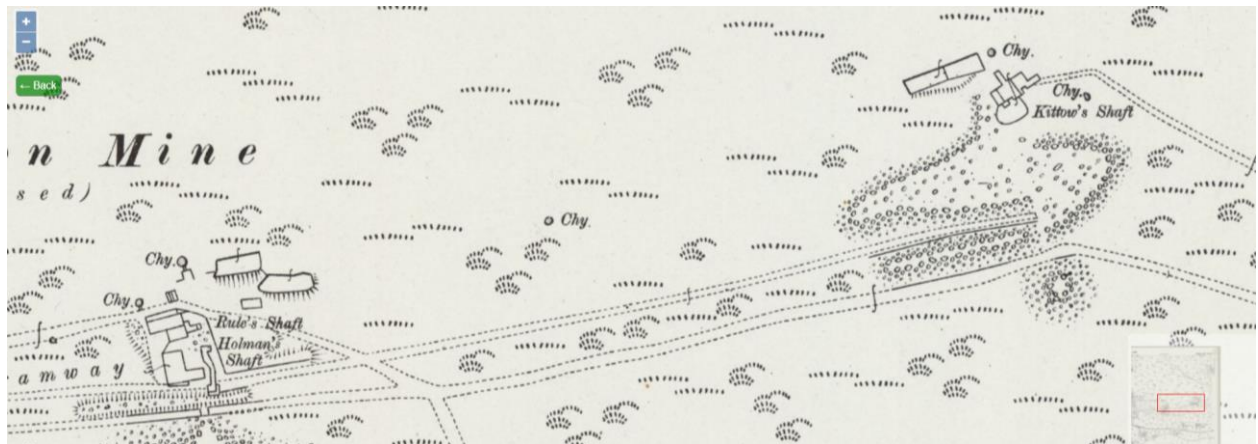
Iain Rowe is the Convenor for the CAS Area Representatives as well as the Representative for St Cleer Parish, which contains numerous remains from the mining years. Here he reports on some alarming recent shaft collapses in the Scheduled area of South Caradon Mine (HER 14000; Scheduled Monument 15556; SX 2669 6990; St Cleer parish). According to Heritage Gateway: 'South Caradon mine was in operation for copper from 1833 to 1870, and re-opened between 1883 and 1890, the richest and deepest of the Caradon group.'

South Caradon Mine



Kittow's Shaft SX 27388 69971

HER MCO58735



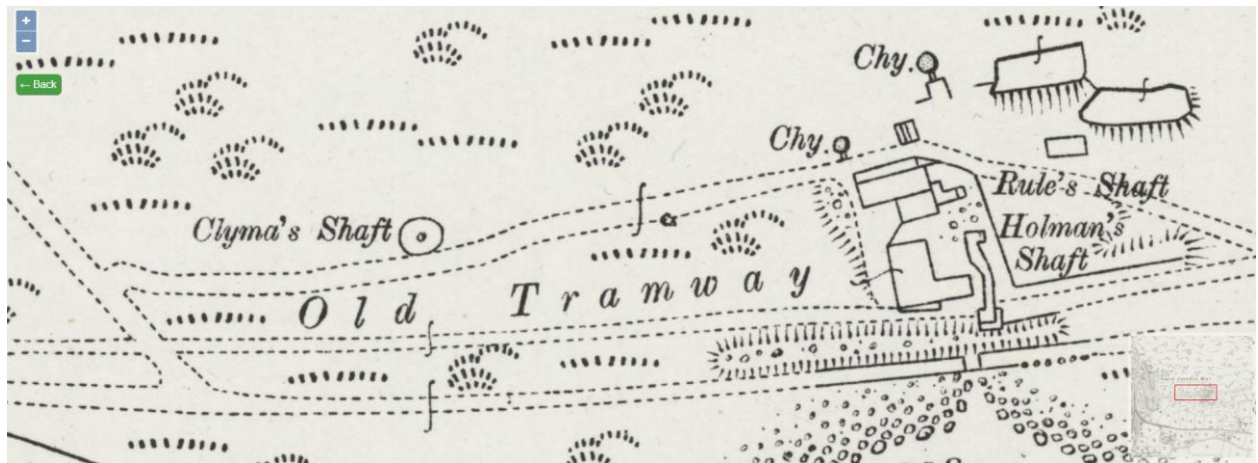
Located at the far-eastern end of the South Caradon mining sett it was worked with a 32 or 35 inch pumping engine and a 22 inch winding engine. The man-engine was removed from Jope's shaft (where, when it was erected in 1872 was the last of the 16 installed in Cornwall) overhauled and re-assembled here in 1884.

Known locally as *Three Shafts* or *Triple Shaft*, the one collar did, probably uniquely, serve three shafts running away underground to the north-west, north and south-east.

27th December 2021

The south-eastern shaft is now newly open; the northern shaft opened up in the last 5 years and the north-western shaft is dishing and threatens to undermine the protective fencing. The shafts are fenced, but the edges of the recent collapses are now very close to it.





Rule's Shaft sits hard by Holman's Shaft in the middle-east of the South Caradon Mine sett. Interestingly, and probably uniquely, these shafts serviced two lodes which almost met at surface but ran apart underground. Holman's on Caunter Lode which underlied to the south and Rule's on Kitford's which underlied to the north. Hence the two pumping-engine houses sit next to each other on the surface. Both shafts were though served by one winding engine powering two drums all situated to the north of the shafts. Rule's was pumped by a 40 inch engine and Holman's a 70 inch. The very ruined remains of the former engine house was stabilized by the Caradon Hill Area Heritage Project (April 2010 to December 2013). Whilst the latter was extensively rebuilt and strengthened by the project, using stainless steel rods to hold in place the loose masonry forming the famous "man in the mine" outline caused by earlier lintel removals. The tramway tunnel to the south of the house was also re-opened and stabilized at this time.

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Rule's shaft is now open due to a recent collapse. It was noted as choked by masonry following the part-destruction of the engine house in the past (Minions Survey, 1993 edition, p75). The shaft was fenced but this has been undermined by the collapse and new fence posts are being installed, the shaft meanwhile being protected by Heras panels. This referencing is also taking in the remains of the engine house and the area between it and Holman's shaft collar; it formerly circled only the shaft.



Collapse of shaft to east of Rule's enginehouse remains.

Photo: Iain Rowe



New run of fencing (new posts erected inside Heras panels) taking in much larger area than previously. Holman's enginehouse far left of picture.

Photo: Iain Rowe

Report and photos: Iain Rowe

BAD CONDUCT

Iain Rowe has also been concerned about an example of heritage crime at Craddock Moor Mine (HER 14023; SX 25554 70080; St Cleer parish). Historic England has produced this very useful description of heritage crime:

Heritage crime is any offence which harms the value of heritage assets and their settings.

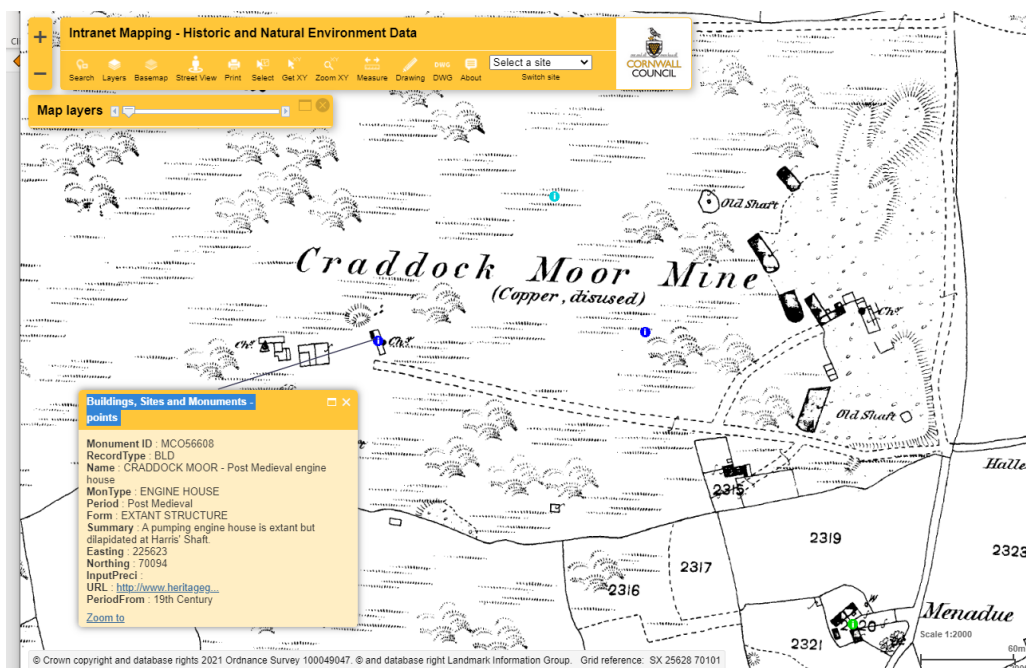
Some heritage assets are protected by specific legislation to prevent harm caused by damage or unlicensed alteration.

However, other crimes such as theft, criminal damage, arson and anti-social behaviour offences can also damage and harm heritage assets and interfere with the public's enjoyment and knowledge of their heritage. Heritage assets are sites which are considered to have a value to the heritage of England and include:

- *Listed buildings*
- *Scheduled monuments*
- *World Heritage Sites*
- *Protected marine wreck sites*
- *Conservation areas*
- *Registered parks and gardens*
- *Registered battlefields*
- *Protected military remains of aircraft and vessels of historic interest*
- *Undesignated but acknowledged heritage buildings and sites.*

Source: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/caring-for-heritage/heritage-crime/tackling/#:~:text=Heritage%20crime%20is%20any%20offence,heritage%20assets%20and%20their%20settings.&text=However%2C%20other%20crimes%20such%20as,and%20knowledge%20of%20their%20heritage.>

Iain notice that the lightning rod on the stack of the former mine engine at Harris Shaft, Craddock Moor Mine had been pulled down.



The lightning conductor had been pulled down the stack but was still attached to ground anchor.



Photo: Iain Rowe

Iain fears that the attempted removal of the lightning conductor has left the stack vulnerable to damage from a strike. Also, the copper conductor is in danger of being detached from ground anchor and removed or stolen.



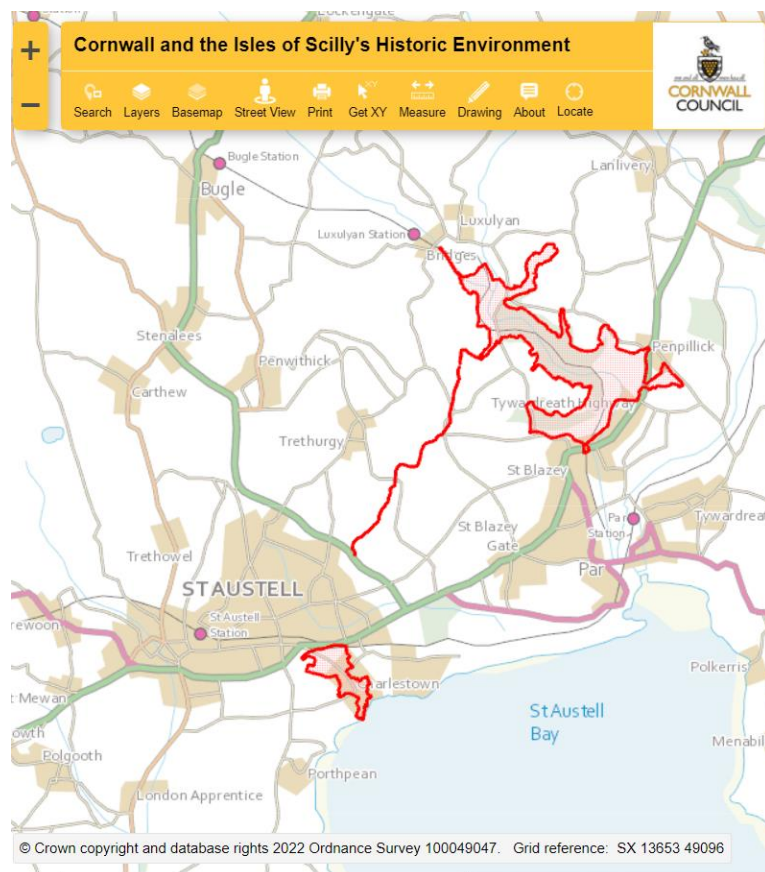
Upstanding conductor rod missing from top of stack.

Photo: Iain Rowe

LEAT LOUTS

Two days after Christmas, a worried member of the public contacted the Friends of Luxulyan Valley to report that a section of the Charlestown Leat near the Treffry Viaduct had water in it. So what, you might say – isn't that what leats are for? Unfortunately it is not that simple, so here is an explanation. Be warned, the subject of this leat (and others in the Luxulyan area) is complex, probably as difficult as the notorious Schleswig-Holstein question of the mid 19th century. Students of Lord Palmerston's foreign policy (and that is probably all the readers of this newsletter) will recall that he stated, with exasperation, that: 'The Schleswig-Holstein question is so complicated, only three men in Europe have ever understood it. One was Prince Albert, who is dead. The second was a German professor who became mad. I am the third and I have forgotten all about it.' As far as we know he had nothing to do with this watercourse but if he had, it is likely that he would have considered it to have been at least as perplexing as the case of the European duchies.

Here goes. All the events took place within Area 8 of the UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Charlestown Leat (HER 9675; SX 042 56; Luxulyan, St Blaise, Carlyon and St Austell parishes) between Luxulyan and St Austell is included in the WHS area:



Charles Rashleigh had the leat constructed in the 1790s. It took water from the Par River near Luxulyan, all the way to large ponds behind Charlestown Harbour. The water was used

to supply the inner harbour and to flush out silt. The leat continued in use until recent times but now only flows to any extent between Garker (near the Eden Project) and Charlestown. When J.T. Treffry developed Par Harbour, the Par Canal, and his tramway system, he constructed the Viaduct (HER 5062; Scheduled Monument CO1048; SX 0561 5721; Lanlivery and Luxulyan parishes) that bears his name. This was also an aqueduct through which his Carmears Leat flowed – originally to provide power to raise and lower trucks on his inclined plane above Pontois Mill. Since Treffry and Rashleigh needed the same water, a complex system of dividing the waters was agreed. Water was taken from the river at Cam Bridges and the joint waters flowed to a large stilling pond (reservoir if you prefer) to be divided. From there, the Charlestown Leat took a curving course while the Carmears leat water went in a straight line. At the western end of the Viaduct, a launder carried the Charlestown leat over the Carmears Leat. In the 20th century, a short section of the Charlestown Leat was directed through a large pipe starting at at Cam Bridges. Neither leat has flowed in recent years. For the good of the Viaduct (owned by Cornwall Heritage Trust) it is important that neither leat flows.

Imagine the surprise on 27th December when the launder carrying the Charlestown Leat was found to be full of water. There was a danger that the launder could leak or water could overflow into the aqueduct structure (to the right in the photo below).



Charlestown Leat launder at the west end of the Viaduct. Originally this took this leat over the Carmears Leat.



The leat just north of the viaduct wall and launder. It is usually dry.

Further south (downstream) from the launder, the water continued to flow. People who know the Valley were amazed. This was something that had not been seen for many years. A small section of the leat had been destroyed a few years ago near Trevanney Farm, so just how far did the revived leat flow? Well, not that far as it turned out. The Leat is a leaky vessel, not having been maintained for years, and the water departed at 2 points, the second of which flowed across a public right of way.



Water leaking from the leat (right) across Footpath 408/16/2 and off to the left down the hill towards the railway.



Water from another leak cascading down the hillside south of the viaduct

This flow was damaging the Leat (a historic asset), threatening a Scheduled Monument (the Treffry Viaduct) and was heading in the direction of the Par to Newquay railway line.

But why and how could this happen? Exploration showed that water was coming out of the pipe that used to carry a short section of leat:



Water emerging from the pipe that once carried a section of the Charlestown Leat.

A short walk upstream to Cam Bridges showed that water was going from the river into the pipe:



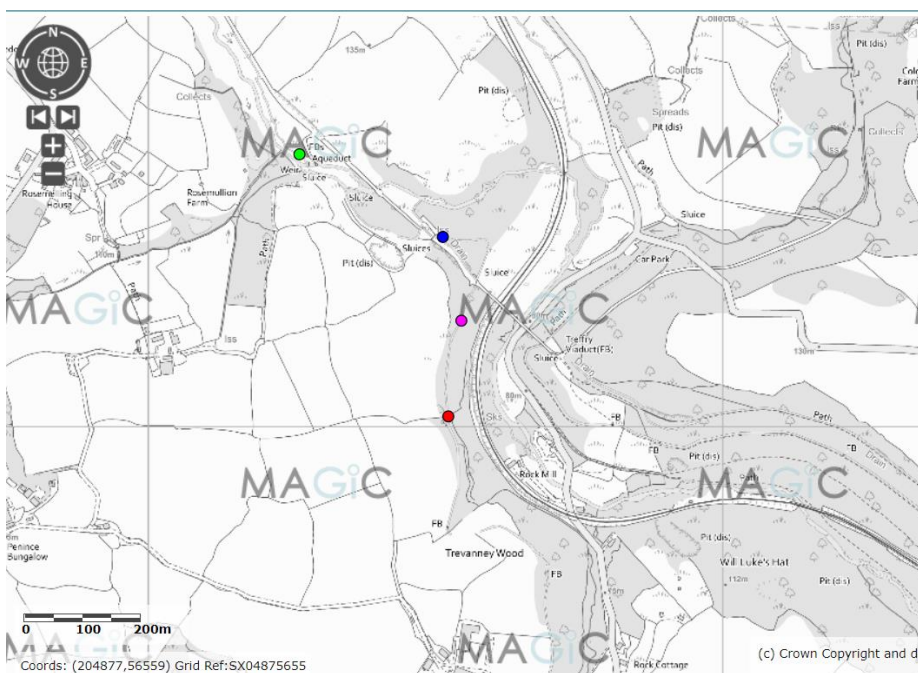
Water comes from the river at the bottom right. It can go left into the pipe or right, back to the river.

At first this was put down to a combination of a breach in the river bank and recent heavy rain. Yet if that was the explanation, why hadn't the Leat flowed during recent periods of even heavier rain? Luckily, there was an explanation. The beauty of the CAS Area Reps' monitoring is that regular monitoring of all sorts of historic features takes place. A photograph from March 2019 showed the start of the Leat pipe and it didn't quite match the one taken on December 2021:



March 2019. The entrance to the pipe is on the left but there is no board to stop water going back to the river.

A board had been fitted to the sluice gate preventing water from flowing back to the river and directing instead into the pipe. This map tries to explain the problem.



Green dot - water enters Charlestown Leat pipe north-west of Cam Bridges
Blue dot - water exits pipe south east of the settling/stilling pond and 'downstream' of the point where the Charlestown and Carmears Leats formerly flowed. There is water in the Charlestown leat from this point to just 'downstream', or south, of the footbridge over the leat south of the viaduct.
Purple dot - a leak from the leat flowing east down the hillside.
Red dot - the last leak emerges from the leat north of the kissing gate. South of that the leat was dry.

Huge credit is due to the swift actions of Chris Tigg and Joan Farmer of the *Friends of Luxulyan Valley*, and to John Smith for his help in explaining how the complex water management in this area worked. Cornwall Heritage Trust (owners of the Viaduct), Charlestown Harbour Company (owners of the pipe and leat), Cornwall Council Historic Environment Service, Cormac, the World Heritage Site office, Historic England and the landowner were quickly informed. The board has since been shifted so that it now blocks the entrance to the pipe and the Charlestown Leat no longer flows in this area. It doesn't seem that any major damage has occurred, probably because of the swift action of the Friends and Cormac.



The board now blocks the entrance to the pipe.

No-one knows who placed the board to make the leat flow again, or why. Maybe evidence will be found but until then it is important to keep an open mind. One thing is for certain: the pipe and sluice are going to be watched very carefully from now on. Historic watercourses here, and elsewhere, are very complicated, so interfering without knowledge (or permission) can lead to unexpected consequences, just as Lord Palmerston found with the Schleswig –Holstein question!

COTEHELE AT CHRISTMAS



Photo: Dave Burrell

That's enough of depressing stories about the ravages to historic features wrought by nature and man. Instead let's enjoy some pictures of the midwinter attractions of one of Cornwall's loveliest houses – Cotehele House (HER 6742.20; Listed Building (I) 60778; SX 4223 6861; Calstock parish). A.L. Rowse, a connoisseur¹ of fine buildings gave this description of Cotehele:

'Altogether this is the finest medieval house in the West Country, the most complete and least disturbed. It is like a small Oxford college with its two courts – not so small either for a house; it would have had a multitude of attendants in its great days, those of Sir Richard Edgcumbe, who fought for Henry VII at Bosworth.

'The noble hall is the finest I know in the West, equal to one at Oxford or Cambridge. The chapel is perfect, with its original screen, woodwork, wagon roof, coloured medieval tiles. From the time of Elizabeth I the Edgcumbes made their main residence at Mount Edgcumbe, more convenient for Plymouth. As a result Cotehele remained remarkably undisturbed. The rooms within retain early furniture, tapestries, needlework, armour, etc – a perfect treasure house.'²

¹ I hope readers appreciate how difficult it is to spell this word. Also, this is a chance to introduce a new feature to this newsletter: the footnote. The editor hopes that this will introduce much-needed gravitas and academic rigour to the publication. Should future copies of *FYOC*, dog-eared and stained with port and snuff, be discovered in the senior common rooms of the older Oxbridge colleges, the innovation will have proved successful. It may be presumptuous to hope that talk at High Table is dominated by the reports of CAS Area Reps but who knows what the future holds?

² A.L. Rowse's *Cornwall*, A.L. Rowse, 1988, Weidenfield & Nicholson.

Dave and Adrienne Burrell made a visit to Cotehele House shortly before Christmas and have shared these photos which capture the quiet of a midwinter day in this wonderful building.



Photo: Dave Burrell



Photo: Dave Burrell



Photo: Dave Burrell

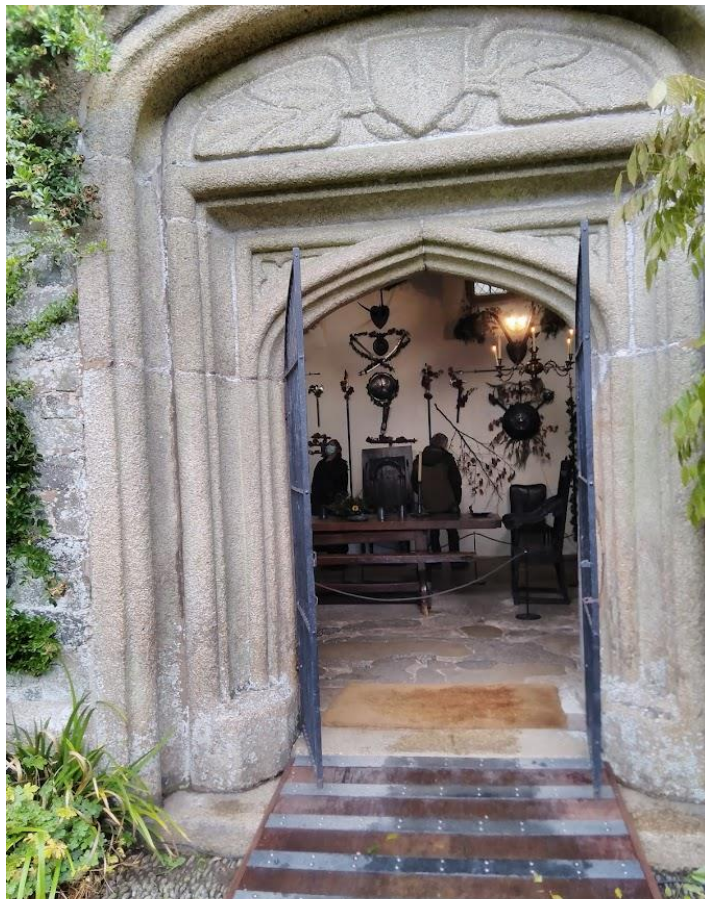


Photo: Dave Burrell



Photo: Dave Burrell



Photo: Dave Burrell

LOCK UNLOCKED



From left to right: Vicky Clift (Network Rail), Brian Oldham and Peter Murnaghan with the Community Licence.

Photographer unknown but hopefully they won't mind this being used!

Peter Murnaghan's efforts over the years to clear Lock 21 (HER 10183.38; SX 2420 6300; Liskeard parish) of the former Liskeard and Looe Canal have been very successful. Peter has not only had to deal with rampant vegetation but also the complexity of getting permission to work on the site, which is very close to the railway line. However, valuable work has been done with the aid of willing volunteers and, thanks to Peter's meticulous organisation, it has been done in compliance with the very important strictures about Health and Safety.

Now access to the site for further work is going to be much easier. Network Rail have granted a Community Licence to allow work to be done at any time, as Peter explains :

'What's a Community Licence? In simple terms, it means that we will have the right to work on the lock site, fully enclosed in a fence and safe from passing trains, rather than having to apply to Network Rail to enter their land to undertake the work. That was always a ponderous process, involving risk assessments, method statements, hard hats (as you know) and safety boots, etc. We now have our own combination lock of 'our' gate and we can

work on the site, whenever we wish, provided merely that we notify them, in advance, the names of volunteers on each occasion, for insurance purposes. No need for hard hats or steel boots and we have been given stock of nice new pink (!) tabards, in place of the old orange ones.

You will also have noticed that the vegetation is growing back again, so we will need to start thinking about another working party soon. Network Rail's fencing supervisor has yet to approve the final layout of the fence (the contractors erected it wrongly first time around!). And then the Community Licence will be issued. Brian Oldham and I have agreed that it makes sense for the licence to be issued to the Liskeard Old Cornwall Society, which is a more formal body than our loose association of volunteers.'

Area Representatives would love to hear from fellow CAS members, and the general public, about any feature of the historic environment in their parishes, whether a new discovery, something causing concern, or even just to answer queries. If you have any concerns, or new information, about any archaeological feature, please contact the Area Representative for the parish. If you do not know who that is, just look at the inside back cover of the latest journal, *Cornish Archaeology* 58, or send an email to arearep@cornisharchaeology.org.uk.

Roger Smith, 16th January 2022

