



Morrab Library Newsletter, November 2015

We are now approaching the end of 2015 and it has been a lively and interesting year for Morrab Library, with a newly amended Constitution and a smaller Committee which now meets every month throughout the year.

Without our army of regular volunteers the Library staff would find it very difficult to run the Library – manning the desk, helping to digitise our collections in the Photo Archive Room, dealing with our book collection, cleaning stock, to name but a few of the ways in which our volunteers support the Library. We are extremely grateful.

Our fund raising this year has brought us in £6000, including our recent Craft Fair, which realised £838 and our last Book Fair £1400. Thank you to all of you who supported these events and to Sue Nebesnuick and Mark Penrose (both Committee Members) for organising these occasions, which bring many new people in to the Library. Our stall advertising the Library will be at the Country Market on 26th November 2015, at the Acorn.

This year the Committee have regrettably had to consider our income, namely Membership Subscriptions and Room Rentals. At present, our Life Membership

is 101 and paid-up Members 465 (Aug 2015) – bringing in approximately £12,000. But for example, our heating and electricity bills for the year is £8000, with insurances at £5000. Without £42,000 annually from the Myner Trust, and many generous donations from our own members, we would find it almost impossible to pay salaries and maintenance bills. Thus, from January 1st 2016 the following subscription rates will apply:

Membership		£30 per annum
Life Membership	Under 65	£500
Life Membership	Over 65	£300

Room Rentals will accordingly increase to £20 per half day session.

The Myner Trust have been informed of these new arrangements.

I must mention to you all – which many of you might have noticed – a recent Cornishman article stating that the Morrab Library is included in the list of devolved items from Cornwall Council. When this takes place in 2017, all contractual arrangements that Cornwall Council currently hold with Morrab Library will be transferred to Penzance Town Council. Thus, the Town Council will be our new landlords! I have received this in writing from the Mayor, David Nebesnuick.

I would like to update you on our recent interior and exterior work. We have monthly checks on the flat roofs and at last have persuaded Cornwall Council to carry out tree surgery work on the Turkey Oak, to the eastern side of the Library. Both squirrels and branches etc. have caused blockages in the drainage system! We have also acquired a wheelchair ramp for future use, and installed new lighting throughout the Library, removing all the antiquated strip lights. We received £9000 from the Myner Trust to employ damp-proofing experts to completely re-vamp the Newspaper Room, which we are so grateful for. After this we renewed the windows in the Newspaper Room with new glazing and framing, after which Mark Penrose (our H&S Officer on the Committee) re-decorated it throughout. Mark also applied, with me, for a £9000 grant from Heritage Lottery to buy new heaters throughout, the ramp, new lighting and re-decorating the front door etc. We hope in the future to repair the ceilings and re-paint the stairwell also. Our next biggest out-lay will be the

exterior decoration of the Library, as the original windows are in a poor state of repair.

Be assured that we are constantly aware of our responsibilities to keep the Morrab Library healthy – both financially and physically.

I am in the Library Tuesdays and Fridays, so please do contact me if you have any concerns or suggestions, where you can also receive my email address.

I have asked our Liaison Officer, Jenni Pozzi to update you on the progress the volunteers have made in the Photographic Archive over the year, as follows:

PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE NEWS, November 2015

The 'big' news since our last update, is that Cornwall Heritage Trust has now granted us £3000 to re-research, repackage, scan and deliver online the Stanley Opie archaeological collection of glass negatives. Tom will spearhead the project and train others in the group. It was proposed that he work on the collection on Wednesdays and Fridays, starting on 25th November. The money will largely be spent on archival quality storage materials, Tom's fee as project leader, and the online launch. Anyone wishing to collaborate on this very exciting work (and look at some lovely pictures) should speak up now!

The Photo Archive will soon have it's own bank account. Approximately £800 is currently to our credit and into it will go all proceeds of sales and £82.50 per month from the Denis Myner Bequest.

Mary has stressed the importance of all volunteers adhering to the days we come in and ring in advance to say if we can't. It is essential that the Library staff know who is in the building in case of emergency, and they don't search for folk who aren't there. The whiteboard rota is in the Photo Archive Room – please make changes as necessary, including new arrangements for work on Opie.

Anna has been doing lots of work with Margie to update and refine our admin arrangements and has provided a folder and wire racks which are now 'Admin Central'. We agreed we need to refine the charges for the supply of prints

according to size and resolution; £5 per image being too blunt an instrument. We have discussed the photocopier being used for prints. It cannot accommodate glossy photo paper but we agreed it could be used for matte reference prints using the paper Katie has researched and that we should charge £1 per image for this. It was left unresolved as to whether we should use Olivers, on Market Jew Street for out-printing, or buy new inks for our good but old printer. The question of using Photoshelter to outsource all our printing for sale, at a cost of approx. £10 per month has been raised by Tom. We all agree that this would be a good idea and Jenni will present the idea to the next management committee. If given the go-ahead, Anna and Helen have volunteered to set this up. We also agreed that we did not have to produce prints on the day. Our leaflet also endorses this. We could however encourage people to have their pictures dispatched immediately electronically.

We have now scanned 1,780 images and have given ourselves a little pat on the back for the good rate of progress we are achieving. We have agreed to prioritise negatives which are rarer and more vulnerable than prints. The systems are working well, but Tom has reported that he would need to make some modifications to Omeka, the database we are using to save the images and information to.

Jenni has purchased a new display board which had its first outing at the Craft Fair on 14th, with pictures chosen and captioned by Glyn and Alan. £40 was raised from the sale of spare prints on Fair day.

Glyn has raised the subject of new acquisitions, pointing out that all the other archives try hard to encourage the donation of pictures and they successfully continue to grow their collections. We have all agreed to come up with ideas for this, starting with our own membership and the website.

A new and thorough Acquisitions Policy will be top of our next meeting's agenda, together with a new pricing policy.

Finally, on Anna's suggestion, Mary and Tom have been invited to give a talk at the Rotary Club on 17th March 2016. A small cash donation is normally forthcoming. All contributions... as they say... are most welcome.

NADFAS News:

This past year NADFAS (The National Association of Decorative and Fine Art Societies) have worked each Friday afternoon on the Illustrated London News refurbishment, and general book cleaning throughout the Library. We value their interest and enthusiasm and are very grateful for all the work they have carried out.

Finally:

* PLEASE BE SURE TO UPDATE YOUR STANDING ORDERS FOR NEW 2016 SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

To end on a happy note, we have just bought for the Library a Christmas present of £1250 of books!

May we thus wish all our members a very joyous Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

With very best wishes,

Mary
Chairman
