



Morrab Library Newsletter - September 2020



Welcome to our September newsletter. There's lots to share with you, despite having been closed for four months....

From the Trustees

Dear Morrab Library Members,

How delighted we were to open the Morrab Library's doors to you again, and on behalf of the Trustees, I would like to thank you all for continuing to support the Library over the past few months.

The Annual General Meeting seems an age ago now. That successful, sunny afternoon, at the beginning of March, where we said goodbye to trustees who were leaving, thanking them for their hard work for the good of the library will not be forgotten.

Over the last few months we have gained two new trustees. We welcomed Myfanwy Barrett, who has taken over the post of Honorary Treasurer and Daniel Garside, who some of you may have already met, if you have ventured upstairs to our theology section. Both Myfanwy and Daniel bring skills and experience to the Management Committee. A full list of current Trustees can be found on our website: <https://morrablibrary.org.uk/trustees/>. Alas, we do still need a new Chair so don't be shy if any of you feel that you would like to join us; contact Morrab Library now. On this note, the Trustees are always looking for members with expertise; specifically building maintenance skills, personnel work, fundraising ideas or event management drive, then please step up now.

As many of you know, we have been plagued by roof leaks over the last two or three years. Indeed as we write, yet another one has occurred, serious, but not damaging to our lovely books. Perhaps ironically it has happened at the right time as a major roof repair is in progress (you might have seen the scaffolding at the Library) and hopefully a robust long-lasting repair can be achieved.

Lastly, Trustees would like to reassure members that, in this uncertain world, the Morrab Library will survive, and its future is bright. During closure Morrab Library has received a

very generous grant and a rate reduction from Cornwall Council, which offset the loss of income and we have been overwhelmed by the kindness of library members, who have made donations large and small.

Morrab Library Management Committee look forward to the day when members no longer need to make appointments to change their books and when that day comes, there will be an open day of celebration, so that we can thank you all in person.

My absolute best wishes,
Jak Stringer, Vice Chair

Library Update

As you know, 2020 has been somewhat disrupted by a certain virus, and we are delighted to be open again, albeit in a limited capacity. We are currently open by appointment on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. You'll have seen our messages outlining our booking process for borrowing books or using rooms in which to work - all the information you need is on our website, or if you don't have access to that, give us a call and we can explain your options. We shall continue to adapt our service as circumstances (hopefully) improve and we'll keep you updated on any changes. Unfortunately at this time we are unable to schedule any talks, events or classes in the library where groups would gather. We will rely on Government guidance and make appropriate decisions around resuming these in due course.

Whilst most of our volunteers have not been able to return in the current situation (and we miss you greatly!), we would like to express our thanks to those who have been helping us in various capacities since we reopened to keep the library's operations ticking over.

The Library team continued to work from home all through lockdown and a lot of 'behind the scenes' work was able to be completed during this time. One of the most important reflections from this experience was the amount of support and goodwill we received from you, our members. It kept us going during an uncertain time, and inspired us to do everything we could to reopen as soon as we were able and to welcome you back to this wonderful space. An enormous thank you from the library team.

Life in the Photo Archive

Thanks to all the safeguarding measures put in place by Lisa we have been able to resume our work in the Photo Archive. We are restricting the number of volunteers in at any one time and we have separated our work stations. At the end of each session we meticulously clean our own areas. Otherwise things are fairly normal, and we are scanning images and responding to requests for photos from the general public. You will soon be able to see the Zennor Collection (from the Wayside Museum) and other discoveries from our collections.

We are always pleased to hear from members about any matters concerning our photographs. We are planning a calendar for 2021 and I would be interested to hear from anyone with memories of the 'At Home' events at the Library in the early 1960s. Also does anyone know anything about Dorothy Cake (possibly her married name) who moved away during WW2?

We hope to get the newly scanned photos online soon. Don't forget you can search for many of our images online at: <http://photoarchive.morrablibrary.org.uk/>

David Puddifoot, Photo Archive Manager

New shelves and furniture

Just before lockdown our Honorary Librarian Harry Spry-Leverton and talented maintenance man Kane Emslie worked together to create some new shelving in the Jenner Room. Our Cornish collections were fast running out of room and the addition of these above the fireplace has

allowed us to create some wriggle room for all of our lovely new future acquisitions. We were also able to spend a small grant from Cornwall Council's Community Chest scheme, which allowed us to buy some wonderful new bean bag sofas for the children's room. They're brilliant for our young members to lounge on when perusing the collections, and will also prove very useful when our Super Storytime sessions can resume.



New books

Our Book Selection Working Group met (virtually!) just after we reopened and chose a wide and varied selection of new titles to add to the collections. We're in the process of cataloguing them all now and we'll email a full list of new titles to members once they have all been processed and are available for loan in the next few weeks. For those not on email, a full list will be available on request, please just contact library staff. A reminder that we welcome suggestions for new books to be added to the library collections.

Lockdown stories

We thought we would like to capture something of the spirit this unprecedented time - the longest period the library has ever been closed in its 202 year history. We'd very much like to hear your lockdown stories - how did it affect you, did you create something artistically or literary? Did the library being closed affect you - what did you miss about us? We would like to collate people's stories and images and add them to our Archives collection for future generations to gain some insight into how the pandemic changed our lives. Get in touch with Lisa if you would like to contribute or for more information.

A few reminders

- If you weren't able to renew your membership prior to lockdown in March, we ask that you still might consider doing so now. At £30 (£20 for students), membership will cover you to the end of the year, ready for renewing annual memberships again in January. New members are welcome to join the library at a cost of £15 (£10 for students) for the remainder of this year, so please spread the word.
- If in the past you haven't supplied us with an email address, and you would like to do so now and be added to our regular mailing list, please contact the library. Similarly, if you now find you are eligible to agree to Gift Aid on your membership or donations, please do let us know. Gift Aid allows us to claim an additional 25% on your contribution, so it's incredibly helpful to us.
- While access to the library is restricted, it's possible for members to borrow back issues of journals we subscribe to, including the Times Literary Supplement, The London Review of Books and many Cornish journals. Get in touch for more information.

- We're still not able to accept large quantities of book donations at this time, but get in touch to discuss options if you would like to donate a smaller number of titles (i.e. no more than a bag!).
- Although somewhat stalled by Covid, the fundraising appeal towards the acquisition of a public access defibrillator in the Morrab Gardens continues. Cash or cheques can be given in at the Library, with cheques to be made out to 'Hypatia Trust defibrillator account'. Contact the library for more information.

Social media

Don't forget that information about Morrab Library can be found on our Instagram, Facebook and Twitter accounts. We use these platforms to share images and information about treasures from our collections, and we recently celebrated our 1,000th new follower on Instagram!

Book and Archive cataloguing update

Work progresses on developing the pilot programme for our KOHA book cataloging project. And even during lockdown some of our volunteers continued to work from home creating electronic records of our paper archives index. We recently featured in a case study for the National Archives, which gives an insight into how the archive cataloguing work is done, and why it's so important for us:

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/managing-your-collection/manage-your-collections-in-discovery/who-is-using-manage-your-collections/morrab-library/>

Congratulations to the PLHG

Warm congratulations to the Penwith Local History Group, who meet regularly at the Morrab (usually!), on their nomination in the annual Gorsedh Kernow Holyer an Gof publishing awards. The awards were established to promote books about Cornwall, set in Cornwall or in the Cornish language. The PLHG's latest book, *Growing Up in West Cornwall*, was nominated in the Social, Cultural and Political History Section. Copies of the book are available to borrow, or purchase through the library.

So finally...

An enormous thank you once more for your support and encouragement to the staff and for the library. We would be nothing without our members and volunteers, and we look forward to welcoming more of you back in better circumstances in the future.

Lisa Di Tommaso, India Vaughan-Wilson, and Sue Garwood

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