

# Morrab Library Newsletter Autumn 2022



## Welcome

Dear Members,

The year continues to fly by - we hope you had a lovely summer. As autumn turns to winter, Morrab Library continues to offer a cornucopia of opportunities to enjoy our beautiful spaces, including upcoming talks, workshops, new acquisitions, fairs and even a party! Read on for a bumper Autumn newsletter...



If you'd like to learn more about our Trustees, have a look at their dedicated page on the website: <https://morrablibrary.org.uk/trustee/>.

You'll also find pages on our President and Patrons, and also the library staff.

## From the Chair....

We appear to have entered a period of national reflection with the death of Queen Elizabeth – the only monarch that many of us will have ever known – and also face uncertain times with the emergence of yet another Prime Minister. Yet the fulcrum of constancy that is the Morrab Library continues quietly with a full programme of talks, workshops, meetings and bookish conversation. We have experienced our own sadnesses too, with the recent deaths of Melissa Hardie and Alan Kent – both good friends and supporters of the Morrab. There will be time for a fuller tribute at our AGM next year.

We bade a fond farewell to Sue Garwood after three years in post as Assistant Librarian. We have not lost her entirely, however, as Sue has returned as a Volunteer to keep a watch over the progress of KOHA which she did so much to set up. KOHA continues at pace with much of the various Fiction collections now catalogued - over 5.000 books to date! We have welcomed Emma Tanner as Assistant Librarian and I'm sure she will already be a familiar and welcoming face to many of you.

Having stated at the AGM in May that we were seeking to appoint a number of new Trustees to the Committee, I am really pleased to report that we had a very positive and quick response from within our existing membership and we have been able to appoint six new Trustees - Christina Carson, David Falcon, Victoria Clare, Ben Barkow, Paul Phillips and Richard Davies, all of whom bring an enormous amount of expertise, life experience, wisdom and plain common sense to our discussions, and have considerably eased the burden of the various sub-committees. Sadly, we have said farewell to Leslie Watson, due to pressure of work, and thank her for all she did for the Morrab over the last eighteen months particularly in the areas of outreach and HR.

Unbelievably, the festive season is approaching rapidly and I hope you will have the chance to meet some of the new faces at either the Christmas Fair (November 19th) or the Christmas Party for Members (10th December). 2022 has been an eventful year both nationally with Jubilee celebrations quickly followed by national mourning but also for the Morrab with new Patrons, new Trustees, new carpets and a host of new books.

Membership is burgeoning and is at record levels with just a few more required to push us over the 800 mark. As always, my thanks to my fellow Trustees for all their hard work in keeping the Morrab up to scratch, to all the volunteers for their many and varied skills and finally to Lisa, Harriet, Emma, Alison and Jak for keeping the whole show going on a daily, weekly and monthly basis.

Oll an gwella, Harry Spry-Leverton, Chair

## Dates for the diary

A reminder of some important dates coming up in the library calendar before the end of the year:

- Saturday 19th November - Christmas Craft Fair (10am-2pm)
- Saturday 26th November - Morrab Library Volunteers' Thank you Afternoon Tea (1pm-3pm)
- Saturday 10th December - Members' Christmas Party (1.30pm-4.30pm)
- Christmas Closure - the library will close at 4pm on Friday 23rd December and re-open on Tuesday 3rd January from 10am.

More information on each of these will be sent out in due course. And keep an eye out for our talks and workshops throughout November and December too.



## Talks

Speaking of talks, we hope you have found something of interest in this year's variety of talks held at the library, either in person, or online via our website for those we have been able to record - from Big Brother to Rabbin Burns, we look forward to hosting more in 2023. We are also aware that some members have expressed their frustration with the ballot system for allocating tickets, but we have found it is by far the fairest way of ensuring that all members have an equal chance to attend. On a number of occasions, almost everyone who has entered the ballot has been able to attend an event, so please do consider putting your name forward if you are interested.

We will continue to film talks when we are able to, and make them available on the website to view afterwards. (<https://morrablibrary.org.uk/librarytalks/>)

Thanks to all of you who have attended or watched talks this year, and supported us with your generous donations.

## Membership

You'll have seen from our separate message to you regarding changes to our membership fees. A reminder that we'll be in touch regarding your renewal in the new year. If you have any questions, please contact the library team. And again, if any members will find it difficult to support us financially in the coming months, please get in touch with Lisa directly via telephone, email, letter or in person for a chat about options. We would be delighted to offer help if we can.

We are excited to say we will be introducing a new membership management system in the new year, which will make life easier for staff and hopefully for members. The main aspect is that the system will allow memberships to be paid in instalments over the course of a year, and new members will be able to join at any point in the year and renew at that same time the following year, thus abolishing 'part-memberships' towards the end each year. We'll send you all you need to know as we get closer to launch date!

## COVID screen

With the recent increase in COVID and flu cases in the cooler weather, we have made the decision to keep the screen at the front desk up for a little longer. We know that at times it has proved a frustrating obstacle to relaxed and amiable conversation (not to mention working out where the gap in the screen is to return your books!) but we do need to reduce the risk to our volunteers, staff and members. Thank you to everyone for their patience and understanding.



## Exciting news from the basement

Our ideas for the renovation and development of the basement are now moving forward at pace. Over the summer we held a tender process for design services for the feasibility stage of the project, followed by detailed discussions with the bidders. This led to the appointment of a local team of consultants, Richard Gowan Consulting of St Just, and we are excited to be working with Richard and the impressive team he has assembled. Over the next few weeks we will be meeting with them on a regular basis as we develop the full scope of the alterations and refurbishment planned.



## Magazines

The library has a number of paid subscriptions to Cornish journals (latest issues can be found in the Jenner Room), alongside current issues of the Times Literary Supplement, the London Review of Books and the Cornishman newspaper. Other journals are kindly donated to us by members to share. These can be found on the display trolley in the Reading Room (or occasionally the Jenner Room) - titles include the New Scientist, the Spectator, RA magazine, the Oldie, Private Eye, The Economist, National Geographic, and more....

If you would be happy to donate any latest issues of magazines you subscribe to when you have read them please do drop them into the library, though please be aware we do not retain back issues in our collections and they will be disposed of in due course. Thank you!



## New Chairs

Enormous thanks go to all of our members who sponsored our new events chairs. We are happy to say they will be delivered imminently, and then arrangements made to attach your dedications.

**PATRICIA ESCHEN  
PRIZE FOR POETRY 2022**  
MORRAB LIBRARY & THE DENNIS MYNER TRUST



## Library Tours

We have recently recruited two new volunteers to join our brilliant guide Linda Camidge in delivering the Friday afternoon free tours around the library. The tours have proved very popular especially in the summer months, and we have recruited many new members on the back of them, as well as raised awareness around the world of our special place. A big welcome to Lisa and Liz who will join Linda in the new year.



## Penwith Futures Book

We are very grateful to all who have contributed to our Penwith Futures Book project so far. As things have gained a little more momentum in the last few months, we are delighted to announce that the project will be extended until Easter 2023.

We would love to hear from you, be it via a story, narrative, poetry or art, with your ideas and vision for how you imagine Penwith in the future, through protecting our natural environment, or ensuring our communities are sustainable.

You'll find more information here:

<https://morrablibrary.org.uk/penwithfuturesbook/>

## New books in the library

Thank you to all of our members who have made such brilliant suggestions for new titles to add to our library collections over the year. The new Suggestions Book at the reception desk has allowed us to welcome many more suggestions than before. Our next Book Selection meeting is in November so we'll send you a list of new books in the collection just in time for the Christmas season.

## Patricia Eschen Prize for Poetry

Our poetry competition proved an outstanding success with close to 3,000 entries (including more than 200 in the children's category)! Our two magnificent judges, poets Katrina Naomi and Penelope Shuttle, have worked their way through all of these to find the winners, who will be announced at a special event at The Exchange gallery on Saturday 12th November. We'll post the successful entries and introduce the winners as soon as possible after then on our website. Our enormous thanks go to Mike Higgins and the Dennis Myner Trust for inspiring and sponsoring the competition, as well as to our own Harriet who managed the whole process from start to finish.

## Keeping warm in the library

As the weather gets colder, we know our library isn't always the warmest place at this time. With this in mind, keep an eye out for these wonderful lap blankets, most of them handmade by our fantastic library volunteer Diane Gendall. They'll be located in the upstairs foyer, and if you start to feel chilly whilst working in any of the rooms, please feel free to borrow one and return it to the basket after use. Handmade contributions from other members would be welcome - contact Lisa for more information. We hope these and a hot beverage from the kitchen will help stave off the worst of the winter chill!



## An unusual volunteer request

We would be nothing without our volunteers - there's more than sixty and our doors only open because of them. Occasionally we have a need for volunteers for specific projects or more unusual jobs - and here is one! In order to keep the collections safe, we have placed sticky pest traps in each room so we can monitor the type of insects that love our library as much as we do. Most insects are harmless to our collections, but we do need to be aware of nasties like carpet moths and bookworms (not the ones who like reading lots!), as well as making sure our neighbours the silverfish remain on neutral ground! Ideally these traps should be checked and any finds recorded onto a spreadsheet so we can monitor seasonal patterns and ensure our collections remain safe. The work requires availability just a few hours a month and a strong stomach! If you might be interested in taking on this role, please contact Lisa to discuss things further.

## We're full! Overflow storage

You may have noticed that we may seem a bit thin on the ground when looking for novels by your favourite crime author, anthologies of short stories, or non-fiction books about Scotland, Ireland, Wales, the Americas and Australia. Never fear, many of these are now located in the Newspaper Room in the basement, where we store our overflow collection. You'll find many additional titles down there - make sure to ask staff for more information and help in finding them.

## Finally...

We know there are challenging times ahead in the coming months in so many ways, but we hope Morrab Library will provide a source of continuity, tranquility and companionship to you. Please keep in touch - if we can help in any way, do not hesitate to talk to Lisa and the rest of the library team.

## Contact us:

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Email: [enquiries@morrablibrary.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@morrablibrary.org.uk)

Website: [www.morrablibrary.org.uk](http://www.morrablibrary.org.uk)

Facebook: [@TheMorrabLibrary](https://www.facebook.com/TheMorrabLibrary), Instagram: [@morrablibrary](https://www.instagram.com/morrablibrary) or Twitter: [@morrablibrary](https://twitter.com/morrablibrary)

If you would prefer a plain text copy of the newsletter, please contact the library.

## News from the Photo Archive

We have been collaborating with Lisa to produce a calendar for 2023. This involved photographing the Library and some examples of the riches in the the library archive. We hope that the resulting publication will be ready soon and that you will all buy one! All the money raised will, of course, be put to good use in Library projects.

The work scanning and digitising the photo collection continues as always and we have been putting more images on line. Our new A3 scanner has been put to good use and we are discovering more amazing images. The album that this photo comes from, inscribed L Thomas 04/01/1886 and apparently finished in 1902, contains many local images but also photos from travels in the middle east. Cornwall has always been connected to the wider world!

David Puddifoot, Photo Archives Manager



## Book suggestions blog

Thank you to those who have already contributed to our 'Members Book Recommendation' blog (<https://morrablibrary.org.uk/2022/05/members-book-recommendations/>). We update it fortnightly with reading suggestions from Morrab members. Titles recommended so far have included cli-fi novel *The High House* by Jessie Greengrass and YA novel *Wonder*. If you've enjoyed a book - fiction or non-fiction, any genre or subject welcomed - and would like to tell your fellow members about it, then please email [harriet@morrablibrary.org.uk](mailto:harriet@morrablibrary.org.uk) with a 100-word (approx.) review.