



Friends of St Andrew's Church  
Stratton, Cornwall

**Newsletter Autumn 2013**

Volume 5 Issue 2



*Stratton Circa 1918*

*Dear Friends,*

I write this letter as the nights start to draw in and the brilliance of the Summer season starts to give way to the pastel shades of Autumn. The Summer this year has been without a doubt truly magnificent. The temperatures have reached heights that we could only dream of last year and what is more the necessary rain has fallen soft upon our fields (Gaelic Blessing) and gardens too. It has to be said this year's Summer will go down as one to rival those of the "Good Old Days".

Over the past few months St. Andrew's church has been a veritable hive of activity with its Flower Festival and Summer Fete. The Flower Festival was themed around "God's Acre" reflecting the beauty, peace and tranquillity of the churchyard. Stratton Primary school had an excellent display of decorated shoes and boots leading up from the lych-gate to the church doors reflecting the lives of the many folk who had trodden that path over the centuries.

The interior of the church was decorated in memoriam of various people who were buried in St. Andrews churchyard. These ranged from the Cornish Giant Anthony Payne to the mysterious person of Anca Winand Van Wulfften Palthe. The whole church looked beautiful and was a great credit to the team of flower arrangers who used their artistic talents to provide a brilliant picture of God's Acre.

Stratton Fete was blessed with truly magnificent weather - the sky was blue and the sun shone all afternoon. The Fete was opened by the newly crowned queen and various choirs from round about sung all afternoon. The stalls were many and varied and the entertainment was great. The whole day was very well planned by Bill Kneebone, Rob Varley and the team and was a great success for both Stratton and St. Andrew's church.

The church continues to play an active part in community life trying to merge faith and life in a down to earth fashion. The services continue on a regular basis enabling worshippers to recharge their spiritual batteries strengthening them for the journey ahead.

My grateful thanks go out to all those who support St. Andrew's church enabling it to continue to be a beacon of life and faith here in Stratton.

Yours in Christ's service,

*Fr David*



## FABRIC REPORT

The new Fabric Committee at their meeting on 21st June appointed Alan McIntosh, a FoStA member but not a PCC member, to be chairman. His drive has led us this summer to fully assess the needs of the church building with the result that it is now felt that the Chancel Roof slates and ridge tiles need fully re-fixing with some replacements in order to prevent further deterioration and to deal with the rain ingress that occurs near the Rood Screen in some wet and windy situations. This is likely to cost in excess of £10,000 and the north side guttering replacement would be £4,000.

The sums involved mean that the PCC will look for grants from local and national sources which may well require matching funding from St Andrew's PCC and subsequently it is likely FoStA will be approached for help as well in due course.

Meanwhile the kitchen roof leak remains a mystery so without a certain cure becoming apparent two FoStA members have re-painted the offending walls, which was a cheap but effective solution that may need repeating until the cause is established. The Ventilation Grills advised by our church architect and FoStA committee member, Nicola Nartowski, have been donated and installed by our fabric chairman in twelve places in the pew areas. This is intended to help dry out the walls and floors with the eventual hope that the internal south wall will be ready to re-decorate.

A five yearly Inspection of the Electrical Installation in the church was required this summer with a report that states the lighting wiring needs to be largely replaced at a quoted cost of £2,752 in order to comply with safety regulations. The PCC will discuss this at their next meeting!

Members may recall that the first grant FoStA gave to the PCC was to pay for a new Tower floodlight. This has been so successful that to save wastage on electricity a dusk to dawn sensor has been inserted into the circuit at a cost of £38.40p paid for with a grant from FoStA.

The Lych Gate roof needs some repair to the Ridge Tiles and a few corner slates need replacing. The underneath plastering has come away in places and needs attention for aesthetic and safety reasons. The oak gates themselves are rotting but only adjacent to the ground so some remedial work there will be required.

All in all an interesting, though rather scary, summer financially. With FoStA behind us I am sure resolution of many if not all of our problems will only be challenges and success will prevail.

Dr Ian Barker on behalf of the Fabric Committee.

## ***Val Barker writes:***

This autumn's newsletter was promising to be a very slim edition but, surprisingly, over the last few weeks the submissions have snowballed. We are so busy at St. Andrew's and beyond that there is much news to relate but that must be a good thing. Shows we are alive, active and keeping the flag flying.

I have endeavoured to get the newsletter out to you early this time as we hope you will all consider buying some of our Christmas cards. The trend these days is to 'buy early' and more and more people seem to be purchasing charity cards - so, this year, why not make St. Andrew's church your special Christmas charity offering?

The cards are good value and not so large as to incur additional postal charges and what is so special is that they are all Stratton

related except the sheep photographed on Bodmin Moor. What better way to send a message to friends and family? We are grateful to the FoStA members who kindly provided the photographs for our use.

It was particularly pleasing to welcome Lesley and Colin Peardon, FoStA members all the way from Australia, to St Andrew's on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> August for the Parish Mass and coffee afterwards.

So many old and new friends visit us and it is not always possible to share fellowship or to offer hospitality but having anyone visit is always a heart-lifting experience. So, keep coming, we enjoy seeing you all.

There is little more for me to say at this point, except as always, to say how enormously grateful we are for your help and support of St. Andrew's and all that we try to do to keep this remarkable building in good repair for the benefit of all and in thanksgiving for the heritage entrusted to us.

And, don't forget, if there is anything you would like to share with the membership please, do get in touch.



## Dates for Your Diary

- Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 7.30pm.  
Patronal Festival Mass at St. Andrew's.
- Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November at St. Andrew's  
Annual Gift Day, Mini Faye and Ringing Festival.
- Old Cornwall Society Christmas Carols – see separate advert.

*Although some of these are not specifically FoStA fundraising events I know there are many who like to put these dates in their diary. More information will be found on our website or on A Church Near You in due course.*

# Membership News and Comment

## *Addresses*

Please remember to inform the membership secretary if you have a change of postal address or e-mail. Keeping in touch is really important to us.

## *Standing Orders*

Even more of you are now paying by Standing Order – the majority in fact – and that is a great help as it saves on administration costs but please be assured that we are quite happy to continue with all the other means of payment if that is more convenient to you.

## *Donations*

Thanks are due to those who have very kindly made donations this year or who have enhanced their membership subscriptions. It is appreciated.

## *Membership*

There is a need to keep adding new members to FoStA if we are to continue to grow.

If every member reading this could encourage one other person to join it would be amazing. Why not download the information and application form from the website and pass it on to a friend or family member or even, like someone did last year, buy a membership for someone as a gift?

As it is now more than 5 years since the inception of FoStA several Friends have become fully paid up Life Members and special thanks are due to them for their support and generosity. Some have very kindly continued with donations. In any event, it is good to know that we keep in touch via the Newsletter if not in other ways.

## *Contributors*

We are genuinely grateful to those who fundraise; those who help find new members; those who write articles for the newsletter; our volunteers and the committee who are forever supportive and especially to all our membership who have made it all possible.

## ***Newsletter***

If you would be willing to print your own newsletter or read it from the website instead of receiving a hardcopy in the post, could you kindly let me know please. Looks much better in colour!

VB



### **The Churchwarden writes:**

The glorious July weather in Stratton helped us to have a very successful Fete on 20<sup>th</sup> July with attendance of over 1000 adults and children enjoying Bill and Sue Kneebone's paddock at their home in Stratton.

New and old events and stalls, supported by teas, bar and barbecue refreshments with musical entertainment from young and adult contributors made it all very active. A children's slide and bouncy castle were always busy with archery, coconut shy and football targets for the older youngsters. A Family Dog Show and a Dog Agility activity kept a crowd content in the partial shade of Pam Steven's garden across a temporary river bridge from the paddock. The two gardens make a superb site for this event.

The profit, much needed to contribute towards our MMF (Mission and Ministry Fund) requirements, was £2,730, and we were very grateful a week later to receive an additional £894 from Bill Kneebone as part of the profits from a "Bands in the Paddock" concert that he held in the same marquee.

In church the Family Service on the 3rd Sunday each month at 9.30 am is proving a good way to facilitate multigenerational worship in a less formal setting. Fr. David cleverly creates interest for the very young and for the not so young. There is now a regular congregation who obviously enjoy this form of service.

Please remember that all the Christmas services will be publicised on the A Church Near You website and the new Stratton Deanery Website [www.strattondeanery.co.uk](http://www.strattondeanery.co.uk)

*Dr Ian A H Barker*

# The Mammoth Sale Trail 2014

## What sort of Beast is he/she?



Many people saw their first blush of a summer sunrise in many a long year as Stratton town hosted a unique event on Saturday, 31st August, when the streets were turned into a mammoth sales area. The atmosphere was like a Continental market as people strolled around the historic town following directional arrows and looking for

fluorescent numbers which marked out individual venues on a free Sale Trail map.

Twenty-one homes turned into Pop-Up shops for the day, clearing out their clutter and selling everything, including (literally) the bathroom sink! Driveways, garages, front gardens and alleyways all became the destinations for bargain hunters from across the area, as people brought out their items to sell. From surfboards to sofas, from bread makers to footballer's autographs, there was something for everyone. The Tree Inn was a popular stop, both for a pint and for the lover of Art Deco and 1950's architectural salvage.

The Sale Trail was widely spread out, with participants from the wilds of Diddies to the edge of the parish at Holnicote Road, Bude, and people could hop in and out wherever the fancy took them and there was always something of interest for sale. There was even a BMW car on offer at one venue!



It was interesting to see how eagerly newcomers to Stratton embraced the premise, as a means to meet their new neighbours and also how much accumulated clutter was freed up in the process and has now found new appreciative homes. Recycling on a genuinely mammoth scale!

Many 'Trailers' were very successful and achieved sales in the low hundreds of pounds, but naturally this was dependent on the volume and size of items on offer; and yes, the car was the star, receiving six offers to purchase !



The Trail created a huge buzz and Stratton's community spirit was enjoyed by all who came along and tried something very new and different.



A special thank you must go to Tony at Stratton Stores, who not only supplied the bulk of the provisions for lunches but also allowed his premises to be the Trail HQ, and his constant support in our varied endeavours helps them to run so smoothly. Truly the corner shop lies in the middle of our community.

*Nicola Nartowski.*

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## BookFest 2014



## Forever in Foreign Fields

The next BookFest will, unusually for us, have a single theme, that of conflict. Those who know their Stratton history will be aware of the clues that surround us concerning our involvement in a myriad of wars and military engagements throughout the centuries. Most people would know of the Blanchminster effigy that lies in St Andrews and its significance for the role played by that family in the Crusades, and others will recognise the names 'Waterloo Cottage' and 'Gibraltar Square' as relating to major overseas engagements.

However, there are stories of Stratton men that go much further back than the Napoleonic/Peninsula wars or even the Crusades, to the period before Domesday; to the time of King Alfred and the defence of his lands here in Triggshire against Viking attack in the late ninth century.

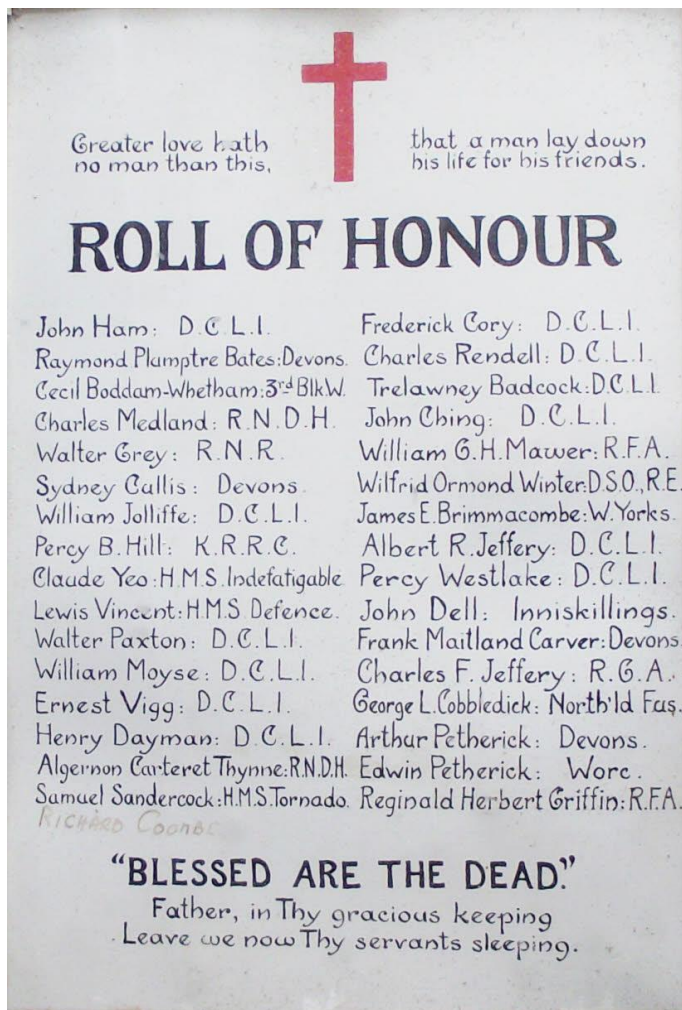
Conflict has dogged Stratton throughout the centuries. It played an active role in the Prayer Book Rebellion and one of the most decisive battles of the English Civil War took place in May 1643 on the hills overlooking the town. But perhaps the most obvious sign of conflict still visible today is our War Memorial, marking the loss of life of brave local men in the First World War. Made from one of the granite pillars of the church, removed during the restoration of the 1880s, it is remarkable for its legend, dating the war to 1914 – 1919. This is one of the issues that BookFest will be examining as it focuses in on the centenary of the Great War.

We are now official partners of the Imperial War Museum's 1914 Centenary Project, one of only 1,000 organisations across the world to be granted this status. This gives us access to a wealth of educational resources, use of the official IWM logo and the ability to put our research directly online and into their digital archive. We have 34 'Lost Boys' who gave their lives in very many foreign fields – from Palestine to Ypres and several whose final resting place was the cold, unforgiving seas of Jutland. With the input of the local Primary School, the Royal British Legion, the Cornwall Record Office and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, we will be researching their stories over the next four years.

If you are related to any of these gallant men we would love to hear from you and would like to record their details for future generations. So if you have any photographs, service records, medals or other documentation, then please get in touch, either through the FoStA Membership secretary or at [strattonbookfest@talktalk.net](mailto:strattonbookfest@talktalk.net). We also welcome any information from non-Stratton combatants families, as the IWM wishes to record every scrap of information before it is lost to us all.

BookFest will of course be collecting and selling its huge selection of books of all genres as usual, but there is already a massive military history section building up, as might be expected!

*Nicola Nartowski*



**The next BookFest will take place in Spring 2014. The exact dates will be published in due course**

# Carols of the Stratton Hundred

We are extremely fortunate in that the local branch of the Old Cornwall Society has chosen St. Andrew's church to be the venue for this year's Carols of the Stratton Hundred. This has been brought about partly as one of our FoStA members is also an OCS stalwart and, having a foot in each camp so to speak, has encouraged the committee to organise the event in Stratton. It promises to be a wonderful evening with singing, Stratton related readings from their archives and a good opportunity for socializing.

**Bude, Stratton & District Old Cornwall Society**



**Come and Sing**

**CAROLS OF THE STRATTON HUNDRED**

*At St Andrew's Church, Stratton*

*Monday 9 December 2013 7.30 pm*

*Everyone Welcome*

*Refreshments*

*Retiring Collection In aid of St Andrew's Church*

*Guardian of the Cornish Heritage*

As Audrey Aylmer, of the OCS explains –

*“ It is not a 'concert', the whole idea is to get everyone to join in the singing! Each year our Bude Stratton and District Old Cornwall Society have an evening to sing the local traditional carols to keep them alive. Other OCS throughout Cornwall also do this, our motto being 'Gather the fragments lest they be lost'. (Most societies do it round the streets as it would have been done in times gone by.) We sing a few carols, have some relevant readings and end with tea or coffee and mince pies usually at around 9pm.*

*We bring our own set of carol books for use on the evening and in the past a lot of people have brought their own. I still have a few left which sell at £6. These were published by the Federation of Old Cornwall Societies on the occasion of our 50th Anniversary and won a 'Holyer an Gof Award' in its class arranged by the Cornish Gorsedh. The carols were collected by Michael Richardson and he and I went to Truro to receive the certificate from the Grand Bard.*

*Michael researched a lot of the carols and started to include them at Christmas in Kilkhampton several years ago. Andrew Jewell then presented our society with a copy of the carols sung in his family. His Mother, Ethel Jewell, was a founder member of our OCS and our first President. She wrote first hand accounts of Stratton life and events which Andrew collected and printed as 'A Stratton Childhood' and we hope to include some extracts in our Carol evening.”*

This whole event promises to be a gem and it is a long time since I, or anyone else, have heard the Stratton Carol sung in STRATTON church. So come and join us and let's 'raise the roof' – it needs a bit of repair anyway – joining in with 'the band of flaming seraphs telling wonders from on high!'

*Ed*



# St. Andrew's Flower Festival 2013 fulfilled all expectations

Walking through St. Andrew's Graveyard with all the signs of spring surrounding the stones was only a foretaste of the experience offered this year inside the building itself.

'God's Acre', was the Saxon name for the churchyard which inspired the theme of this year's St. Andrew's Flower Festival. The recent dedicated work of transcribing the wording on the memorials, undertaken by five Friends, provided the background detail of the displays which



celebrated with such care and thought Strattonian lives from over the centuries and right up to the present day.

Lyzette Bevan co-ordinated and supported the army of dedicated arrangers who managed to bring to life the people whose memorials had been collected. Famous figures from Stratton's history, such as the Cornish Giant, Anthony Payne, was celebrated by an arrangement in the porch which welcomed the visitor, inviting them to wonder where in the building he was actually buried.

The range of lives recorded and the creative use of the language of flowers to give thanks for all they had given to Stratton was remarkable.



Dressmakers, apothecaries, watchmakers, millers, architects and many more. Lives of dedicated service and commitment to the local community. The experience of hardship was there in a wonderful evocation of the lot that befell the inhabitants of the Stratton Poorhouse at

Hillhead, together with stories of the tragic loss of children to virulent diseases and epidemics which caused such distress in times past.

The shock of so many local young men lost in the First World War was vividly caught by members of the Bude Flower Club, filling St. Andrew's Chapel with an arresting display in the blood red of sacrifice.





As the visitor was led towards the end of the South Aisle and out again into the graveyard itself, an arrangement dedicated to the only Cornish Bishop of Truro, Bishop Hunkin, drew their attention to his gift of the beautiful cherry tree now flowering at the base of the tower.

No one who came to the festival will ever walk through the churchyard in the same way again. It has become filled with friends whose lives still have the ability to touch us and whose love for the people of Stratton was brought to life so vividly. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807 - 1882) in his poem "God's Acre" speaks of the..."Fair gardens of that second birth". The festival was indeed a taste and glimpse of this uniting experience. Everyone who contributed, helped 'God's Acre' at St. Andrew's fulfill the task the poet speaks of, ensuring that -

*"... it consecrates each grave within its walls,  
and breathes a benison o'er the sleeping dust."*

A St. Andrew's Flower Arranger

## **Member's Musings**

If I think of a place of worship, I immediately think of St Andrews. Words that spring to mind are family, friendship, spirituality, support, beauty and home.

Although I now live over 200 miles away on the outskirts of London, Stratton has been - and still is - a place very dear to me. As a child I would love skipping up Sanctuary Lane and through the gate into the church yard to look for the names of family or friends who I may not have known, but had heard all about.

During the weekends that my siblings and I were staying with our Dad in the little town we would always be in church on Sunday. I would often gaze at the beauty of the incense swirling as the sun shone through the stained glass and, whilst in prayer, I would peep through one eye and watch Father Thomas break the bread above the altar to the sound of a lone bell tolling. I enjoyed the singing and

the theatre of it all, even if whilst "listening" to the sermon my mind would sometimes wander to what my friends were up to. Overall there was always a sense of calm and happiness by the end of the service.

As I've grown up, St Andrews has been with me at so many key stages of my life, like a reassuring companion. I was confirmed there but the warmth of the St Andrew's family has radiated much further afield too. When my husband Nick and I married at Bickleigh Castle in 2007, Father Richard Stranack kindly agreed to join us for our special day and bless our marriage in the venue's ancient chapel - his beautiful service at the heart of our celebrations.

In the roller coaster that is life at times, just two months later my husband went through gruelling heart surgery which threatened to shatter our world. When we heard that prayers were said for us by our friends at St Andrews, we were deeply moved. It was this moment that St Andrews really touched Nick and became a special place for him too. We are eternally thankful to those who were there for us and our family in those dark days. I will also never forget the warmth and joyous welcome we had when a healthy Nick was able to attend a Sunday service.

In 2010 we were blessed with our first daughter, Cerys, and when it came to her baptism, my mind again turned to St Andrews. With the help - as always - of my wonderful parents, we had a lovely christening at the church during the Sunday service, led by Father David Standen. As a new Mum I was almost a little overwhelmed by how special it was welcoming our new child not only into our close family, but to our wider church family in Stratton. I was also really touched by the posy of flowers given to me by the Mothers Union - I too had entered a new phase of life.

This summer we welcomed another beautiful bundle into our world - Florence. Once again we will be celebrating her arrival at St Andrews during the Sunday communion service.

I already know that my reassuring companion will make this yet another special day.

*Faye Jenkins*



# Items for sale

St Andrew's Churchyard Survey (Book Form)	£10
St Andrew's Churchyard Survey (CD)	£5
Chimney Corner Tales by Joan Heard	£3.50
Stratton School — <i>A History 1848 — 1992</i> —	£2

## **SOLD OUT**

Inspired by Stratton – Poems by Derek Ward	£3.50
Growing Pains – New anthology of poems by Derek Ward	£1.75

*All the above items can be sent by post free of charge to FoStA members but please note that multiple items may incur some costs.*

**A selection of Christmas cards is available through the Membership Secretary. Orders can be made by post or e-mail. Please see the enclosed colour supplement.**

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Members are sent a copy by post;  
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