

# SALTASH AND DISTRICT OBSERVER

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May 2016 - Issue 290

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## Waterside Improvement Planned with Town Takeover

W eeds the size of triflids, broken glass everywhere, barriers where boats are moored, abandoned and decaying boats, and even hypodermic needles where children could find them, are all features of Saltash Waterside, a resident complained to the Town Council. She had been disgusted at what they found when taking visitors from 'up country' to what should be the 'jewel in Saltash's crown'.

The area is currently the responsibility of Cornwall Council who have only two officers to monitor all the harbours in Cornwall. It was felt that they concentrate more on the obvious tourist spots in the county.

The Town Council is currently seeking to take over all the services and assets of the Waterside area, the resident was assured. This would give them jurisdiction as to which boats could moor there. Currently

anyone can leave any boat on the Waterside whether it be seaworthy or not.

The Town Council's intention is to acquire the responsibility for everything to include the ferry pier and town pier, the jubilee pontoon, and the dinghy port, tender rack and four garages. They would also administer the beaches by Brunel Green and Sand Quay, north of the Tamar Bridge as well as the two slipways on Jubilee Green and the old ferry

slipway by Ashtorre. This would also include the car park north of the Tamar Bridge.

While this would result in the Town Council incurring costs in administering and maintaining the Waterside Area it would also generate an income that would go some way to covering these. A Waterside Warden would be appointed seasonally in Summer to collect mooring and launching fees. The dinghy park and pontoon (for which no current mooring charges are made) could also produce regular revenue for the town. The pontoon is currently partially closed and awaiting repair and this work would need to be done at a cost of around £23,000 before the town takes it over.

After some debate the Town Council has agreed to negotiate with Cornwall Council to assume ownership of the Waterside assets, as well as responsibility for their maintenance and for the Waterfront management and administration services. Cornwall Council has already confirmed that it is willing to

pass all of these assets and responsibilities to the town in accordance with its policy of devolution.

The Town Council could also generate further income by charging for parking in the Waterside Car Park by Brunel Green although it has no current plans for so doing.

Meanwhile concern remained over the current state of Waterside with the Summer season approaching. It was suggested that the community payback scheme be used and that offenders be used to improve the Waterside environment in particular ready for the annual regatta in late June.

The Town's policy and resources committee noted that once Waterfront management is in place the Saltash Town Council may wish to consider negotiating with the Duchy of Cornwall, Plymouth City Council and Saltash Sailing Club to administer the tidal moorings in the Tamar.



## Saltash Ladies are World Champions!

S altash-based Caradon Gig Club's ladies crew are World Champions for the first time in the Club's history, after taking the top honours at the World Pilot Gig Championships held in the Isles of Scilly over the May bank holiday weekend.

Rowing their gig 'Amazon', the Ladies A crew of Kate Bourn, Bea Holman, Natalie Smith, Stacey Best, Naomi Philpot, Leanne Woodward and Steve Kent (cox), were unbeaten in all four races at the championships, eventually

winning the final by three lengths from Flushing & Mylor in 2nd and St Mary's in 3rd, to be crowned Ladies World Pilot Gig Champions 2016.

Leanne Woodward from the

winning crew said 'The feeling when you cross the line, winners, is fantastic. We have put in a lot of hard work and training over the years, and to finally be able to say we are World Champions is a dream come true!'

Caradon Mens A also got on the podium finishing 3rd overall behind eventual winners Falmouth and 2nd placed Looe.

Caradon fielded a total of 5 ladies, 4 mens, 2 ladies veterans and 2 mens veterans crews at the championships. The Club also has an alliance with the H4H services team who fielded a mens vets crew and a mens crew, rowing their new gig H4H Valliant.

The first races on the water were the veterans races on Friday night. The Caradon Men's Vets crew re-claimed their championship crown from Roseland and the Ladies Vets finished an impressive 5th.

The main championship was contested over Saturday and Sunday, starting with the seeding races from St Agnes, which saw a record number of 151 gigs take to the start line. Following the seeding race, the group sprints took place on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning, with the Championship finals being held on Sunday afternoon.

Full Caradon Gig Club Results: Continued on page 7

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saltashregatta.co.uk

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## Centenarian Celebrates at Rowan House



Family and friends gathered at Rowan House residential care home in Port View to help celebrate the hundredth birthday of Mrs Gertrude Tapp, known to one and all as "Mick".

She was born in London during the midst of World War I during which her father was to lose his life when she was

Norman Tapp, the other three sons being Michael, Brian and Tony.

With such a large and ever



growing family it was fortunate that Mick's favourite pastime was knitting and keeping her family warmly clothed has brought her many years of happiness. Her younger sister Violet lives across the town in Tamar House.

Mick has lived happily in Rowan House for five years sharing in the various activities organised there, Peter, the Duty Manager, provided and opened a bottle of bubbly for Mick's many friends and family to help her celebrate her centenary.

Mick's late husband was named Norman and her oldest son in accordance with family tradition, is also named

Richardson's Legal Services is also named

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## Station Renovation Plans Proceeding

The decrepid appearance of Saltash Station, which has been causing increasing concern to rail passengers and towns people may soon be addressed, the Town Council hopes.

As recently reported in your Saltash Observer the Town Council has unanimously agreed to apply for a compulsory purchase order if no progress is made over three months. However this could be a long and expensive process with no guarantee of success and it was hoped that there would be no need to implement this.

The Town Council was, at its April meeting, told of progress made in negotiations with the current owner. The information was given during a confidential closed session of the council.

The council did afterwards issue a statement to confirm that the council has authorised the station working group to continue detailed negotiations around the potential agreement as it is currently emerging for a period of up to three months, within which the group would need to bring a more detailed proposal to the council or seek further

## Dancing on Water

Wreckers Morris, our popular local Morris side, has danced in many locations in South East Cornwall and beyond over the years, but this year's dance in the middle of the River Tamar had to be a first,

The especially low Spring Tides encouraged sailing clubs on each side of the river, at Cargreen and Weir Quay, to set up a cricket match on a rarely exposed sandbank and the dancers were invited to provide extra entertainment. 'It was great fun with many spectators', they reported. 'The sand was fairly firm but wellies were worn by all'. They were next due to dance in the May at the summit of Kit Hill at dawn, 5a.m. on May Day morning followed by breakfast at a local cafe.

## St Barnabas

The League of Friends of St. Barnabas Hospital held two very enjoyable and successful fund-raising events recently. The Spring Coffee Morning on Saturday 19th March raised almost £300. On Wednesday April 6th Martin Lister led a group of walkers to explore the Gems of Saltash, the walk finished at the Chapel in St Barnabas hospital. Cream teas were served by the Friends and the event raised £90 for the hospital. The League of Friends would like to thank everyone who supported these events and extend their gratitude to Waitrose who provided the jam and cream.

## Chamber Chairman Peter Ryland Keeping us updated...

Summer is not yet upon us and Christmas is still 8 months away, but the need to plan for Christmas starts now. The Chamber in association with the town council is looking into ways to improve the Christmas experience in the town. The mayor elect, Hilary Frank, and myself have already had discussions to consider how we can improve the feel good factor that Christmas should portray. We are looking to gain support from all businesses and I would welcome any thoughts from the people of Saltash.

However, Spring must be upon us as the early hanging baskets are now adorning the town centre. This is one of the initiatives for which I have been responsible over the last few years, wearing my hat as the Joint Chair of Saltash Town Centre Improvement Group. The baskets whether Spring or Summer have always been well liked by the traders and the public and help to brighten up Fore Street. It was also good to see how the town and some of the shops went royal with the displays for the Queen's birthday in April.

In the last couple of months, I have been in correspondence with Tesco to ascertain if and when they will be building their store at Carkeel Roundabout. They will still not commit nor be prepared to support any specific project in the town to offset the uncertainty/poor visual quality of their site at one of the main gateways to the town.

One of the matters that has been of recent concern, to traders and customers alike, is the lack, due to vandalism, of public toilets in the town. Public toilets have been, for a long time, of concern and the need to improve the facility in the town centre is of high importance. In itself, it will not result in more people shopping in the town but is part of giving the town centre an ambience, which is conducive to shopping.



CORNWALL COUNCIL  
and our PL12 community  
For Observer readers  
From Councillor Joe Ellison

Cornwall Council has now slipped uneventfully into a new financial year. However with the so-called Cornwall Deal with the Government on the one hand and devolution of assets and services to local councils on the other, radical changes are starting to sweep (or should it be creep?) across Cornwall.

The most notable change of the Cornwall Deal will be integration of the Adult Social Care Service with the National Health Service as represented by Kernow Commissioning Group. 2% of your Council Tax, amounting to £21 million by 2019 is going to pay for this - in theory, bed-blocking should become a thing of the past, but success of this integration will depend on the willingness of powerful groups to share or even give up their budgets. Remember that implementation of the National Living Wage for low-paid care workers will absorb 80% of that £21 million.

I would like to say that devolution of assets and services to local town and parish councils is equally revolutionary, but it continues to be painfully slow. As you know Saltash increased its precept accordingly by 38% to almost £600,000 - as Cornwall was limited to a 2% increase, and because we could do so without being capped. Towns throughout Cornwall have done the same. Rumours suggest that parish councils may also be capped by DCLG by 2018.

As from April, Saltash

will operate the three existing public toilets, and during the year will almost certainly re-open Alexandra Square toilets. Cornwall is also desperate to devolve Saltash Library to local control, and Saltash is currently exploring methods of operation and likely to commission a survey of the building as an asset. The Saltash Leisure Centre, together with eleven others across Cornwall, is likely to go out to tender for privatisation during this year.

Meanwhile, Cornwall Council is in detailed negotiation with Saltash Town Council to devolve assets and services on the Waterside. There is a strong business case for doing so, as identified by the Coastal Community Team. After refurbishment, the pontoon is due to pass to Saltash, together with the dinghy park, and the Jubilee Green car park. Saltash will also take on the management of the pontoon, the various beaches, the ferry pier and the two slips. It is agreed that local management by Saltash is far preferable to remote management from Truro. This will happen in the coming financial year.

On the same principle of better local management, Cornwall is also starting to talk to Saltash about ownership and maintenance of the children's play areas across the town. In part this stems from Saltash's acquisition of all the Green Spaces at Pillmere, including the large derelict adventure play park.

A quiet revolution has begun to take place.

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## Essa Files

A few days before the Observer went to press the town council selected its Mayor and Deputy Mayor for 2016-2017. Casual Mayor-watchers will probably have noticed nothing unusual in the chain that the new Mayor's consort, Sho, wore – it's the same chain that in most years is worn by the Mayoress. Since a consort is the male version of a Mayoress, so you have either a Mayoress or a Consort but not both - this may not have seemed at all surprising.

Those who take a greater interest in such matters though will have realised that this is a departure from tradition. When the Mayor is a man (8 of the 11 Mayor's I have worked with) the Mayoress (usually his wife) wears a very ornate and lovely gold chain which has been with the town for many decades. When the Mayor is a woman however, assuming that her husband becomes consort, the Consort wears a more modern and less ornate chain, kindly donated by a previous office holder.

This year the incoming Mayor asked if it would be acceptable to the town council for her Consort (husband) to wear the chain normally worn by a Mayoress, and the Town Council agreed to leave it up to their preference.

No doubt many traditionalists will dislike this departure from the usual way of doing things, but it's one that I support for two reasons:

Firstly: choice – there are two chains available for consorts of the Mayor and the fact that one is normally worn by a woman and the other by a man shouldn't prevent the current Mayor and consort from choosing the other. Personal preference is, to my mind, more important than biology.

Secondly though, regardless of my view that it should be the choice of the Mayor, I am personally very pleased that the new Consort has chosen to wear the more ornate chain. It has bothered me for a while that quite a few aspects of being a councillor are geared towards the assumption that

councillors, and Mayors, will be male. The fact that a female consort, usually of a male Mayor, wears the older and fancier chain confirms, no doubt unintentionally, that it's more 'normal' to have a male Mayor. Another example is that female councillors are automatically designated 'Councillor Miss X' or 'Councillor Mrs X' whilst men are not 'Councillor Mr X' but just 'Councillor X' – that is again because historically it was 'normal' for councillors to be male, and female councillors were more unusual and needed to be marked out as such. I have no problem with people choosing to be known however they wish – as Councillor Mrs, Miss, Ms or Mr, or indeed Councillor Mx or Councillor Dave – my problem is with the automatic assumption.

I very much hope that we are moving away from the days where male is 'normal', and we are fortunate in Saltash to have had some excellent female Mayors and female councillors. Nevertheless it is sadly reality that a little under a third of recent Mayor, and about the same of councillors, have been female. Similarly young people are also quite under-represented on the council – I, almost a veteran now at 9 years' service, remain the second youngest. I do hope that this time next year a wide variety of people will put themselves forwards for the council and that it can be as representative as possible of the town it serves.

## A Break in Tradition



Saltash bells rang out this May to mark the making of a new Mayor, Councillor Hilary Frank was invested with the robes and the chains of office in true tradition, while a break in tradition was made as her husband and consort Shojiro was invested not with the consort's chain but the more ornate chain previously given to a mayoress (see this month's Essa Files) For a full report on Mayor Choosing and a profile of our new Mayor see your June Saltash Observer.

## Derriford Bus Attracts Interest

A considerable amount of interest in a direct Saltash to Derriford bus service has been noted by the town's Community Enterprise PL12 organisation. Following the acquisition of a second Hopper Bus, anticipated by the end of June, it is suggested that one of the two buses might run a regular service linking the town to the region's major hospital.

Public views are being sought and the Town Council's April meeting was told that already there has been 130 responses, many from the rural areas around the town.

There would be two groups of Saltash residents welcoming such a service.

## Safe Cycle Way to Callington

A safe passageway for cyclists, walkers and runners between Saltash and Callington, may result from a survey currently being carried out of all who currently use any or this entire route.

The safe passageway is being promoted by St. Mellion Parish Council and supported by Saltash Town Council and other local authorities, County Councillors and Saltash Environmental Action Group.

Views are being sought in particular on safety of the route at present for cyclist walkers and runners.

The results will be used in order to support the business case for a 'safe passageway' along the nine miles between the two towns. Such a route has already been opened up between Callington and Gunnislake avoiding the busy main road. It will also be fed into the Saltash Cycle Network feasibility study being completed by Cornwall Council this year.

Further information on the survey and the proposed route is available from the St. Mellion Parish Clerk via clerk@stmellion-pc.gov.uk

The first would be those attending hospital appointments or visiting patients and who currently either have to pay high parking charges on limited spaces or change buses at St. Budeaux and await a half hourly onward service. The other group of potential users is those who work at the hospital and whom Community Enterprises chair Peter Thistlethwaite described as the likely 'bread and butter' customers.

An on line survey of

potential users is in liaison with the hospital's human resources department confirming potential employees travelling from the Saltash area and their likely use of such a service.

The Hopper Bus currently in use is increasingly busy building a programme of popular visits to local events and places of interest. A draft business plan for transport was being prepared by two of the directors to consider the financing of running the two buses.

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## Hopper Bus Trips

May/June 2016

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Tuesday 31st May

Abbotsbury Swannery - 10am

£14.50 plus admission

Thursday 9th June

Royal Cornwall Show, first day - 9am

£9.50 plus gate admission

Saturday 11th June

Royal Cornwall Show, last day - 9am

£9.50 plus gate admission

Saturday 18th June

RHS Rosemoor - 10am

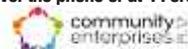
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Sun 19th Karaoke (Bar)  
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# Observer Cancer Charities Fund Hits Close to



## £12,000 in Twelve Months



Helped by our fantastic friends in local businesses as well, of course as our loyal readers, our 2015/16 charity fund raising campaign has reached an almost unbelievable sum, over the last twelve months of just under £12,000 – the current figure standing at £11,389.00, and there is still time for others to come on board and help lift this well over the £12,000 mark. We are always pleased to talk to our readers as to how we can help and work together to alleviate the curse of cancer that sadly strikes so many families.

As we approach our twenty-fifth year of service as your own locally run community newspaper we have always, through these years been active within the community in particular in working to raise funds for good causes within the town and beyond.

Most recently, following the tragic loss of a family member of our editor Mary, this has led us into raising money for cancer charities and in particular research into prostate cancer sufferers locally.

Many of our readers, especially the three hundred plus who took part, will vividly recall our mega-quiz in the 'Ploughboy' a year ago by kind permission of mine hosts Mike and Joan. When they gave their pub over to us they did not know what they had let themselves in for – but tell us that they are happy to do it again.

In addition to this Mary joined forces with her daughter Kerrie who held a 'Bedsteps Festival' at the Bedruthan Hotel, Morgan Porth, which proved another highly successful event. While son-in-law Tony did his bit by completing a solo Skydive to add more funds to the pot.

## We were Bowled Over by Bowls Club Support for Our Chosen Charity!

We were delighted to be supported by so many at our quiz night, including Saltash Bowls Club who also gave the proceeds from their Summer season opening event the following weekend to add to our chosen charity funds.

This in turn led to the Indoor Bowls Club, at Plymouth Life Centre, with whom many Saltash members bowl during the Winter season, making contact with us. Ken Spear, then president of both Saltash Bowls Club and the

Indoor Bowls Club, invited us to become involved in the annual grand fund raising day this Spring and offered to add the proceeds of this also to our own charity's coffers.

So Mary actively set about its organisation helping add to the total life centre pot. As ever she could not have done so without so many local friends and we would like to thank in particular for help in selling raffle tickets Petit Pain Cafe in Fore Street, our stalwart friends at the

'Ploughboy' and the never tiring Tracey Rhodes and her family. This culminated in Tracey and her family coming over to join Mary who spent the day busy helping at the Annual Charity Event in the Life Centre.

Each year the Indoor Bowls Club invites all members to participate and play for a donation which covers a sumptuous buffet prepared by lady members with pasties donated by Ginsters. There were also well over a hundred raffle prizes donated by local

businesses and the Club would like to thank each and every one for their generous support. A host of table top stalls and a silent auction also attracted good support from club members and visitors.

We are delighted to share with our readers the delight with which the proceeds were received when Malcolm Hooper-Bennett, a volunteer and trustee of the Chestnut Appeal, attended the Life Centre to accept a cheque for £2,679.00 from Ken Spear.

'As a prostate cancer sufferer myself I wish that I could have had the benefit of the equipment for which we will be putting forward the money from this cheque', Malcolm said at the presentation. 'Thanks for the efforts of all including Mary here. In particular we are seeking to ensure that all Westcountry hospitals have the benefit of the amazing Da Vinci Robot with the aid

of which surgeons can now carry out intricate and life saving surgery from outside the theatre.' Monies now being raised are being put towards purchase of a MRI Fusion Scanner. As well as raising funds for such equipment, volunteer Malcolm explained, the Chestnut Appeal ensures

support, with a positive approach is offered to each patient who is given the sometimes traumatic initial diagnosis. 'We are here to help, to prove that matters may not be so dark as they may seem, and there is hope for the future', added Malcolm. 'From personal experience I know all too

well the need to work as a 'buddy' with those newly diagnosed.'

To conclude Ken Spear, who was about to retire as President, added 'Thank you to every member of the club and others for help and donations and a big thank you for all helpers on the day from Mike Sampson Life Centre Chairman and myself.'

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## May Fair was 'Back' Where it Belongs

Back in the town centre 'where it belongs' according to most of those we spoke to, the 2016 Saltash May Fair brought out the crowds on a sunny if cool Saturday. It was acclaimed by one and all a great success and a credit to the new committee.

So much was there to see and do that the stalls ran up Fore Street and overflowed to line Longstone Park. There was a host of activities from Fore Street through Victoria Gardens to the arena in Longstone Park, ranging from May Pole dancing, through a wide variety of music to a dog show and the fearless Arrow Barrows display team.

The traditional parade up Fore Street was restored, led by Mayor Bill Phillips who then officially opened the Fair. It was then award time and Citizen of the Year was Marilyn Grose, founder and organiser of the thirty-five shows, produced over 25 years by the acclaimed 'Youngstagers' youth theatre group.

Young Citizen of the Year, we were delighted to confirm was Jack Phelan, who had celebrated his 14th birthday the previous day. We have previously reported on Fire Cadet Jack and his mammoth fund raising effort towards providing a life saving De-

fibrillator for which he is already £1000 towards his target. The Peter Stephens Award for the entertainment, which had most pleased the Mayor during his year of office, went to saltash.net school for the show 'Annie'.

The feast of entertainment provided and the variety of stalls, many of which sold out by mid afternoon, ensured that crowds continued to pack Fore Street and the two parks right through the day.

Saltash traders to whom we spoke confirmed that they too were pleased to see May Fair back in the town centre.

'We are delighted to have it back in Fore Street', said Debbie of Saltash Bookshelf. 'If we could only see it like this every Saturday that would be really good'.

Douglas of 'Saphira Jewellers' and treasurer of the Chamber of Commerce confirmed that while he did not expect to do especially good trade that day there had been plenty of interest in the

window display from passersby who were made aware of how much Saltash shops have to offer.

The beautiful Monet inspired window display in 'Patricia Ann's Soft Furnishings' also attracted great interest. "It has been really exciting and I have been kept busy with people looking at the 'pattern books and fabrics'", enthused Pat.

The new committee, who came together with little experience but great enthusiasm is to be congratulated on putting together such a day that brought the community together at the heart of the community and brought such pleasure to hundreds of Saltash residents and visitors of all ages.



Jack receives award from Mayor Bill Phillips (See more info on Page 8)

## Remembering Grandad

Tracey Rhodes with daughter Mia & son Jack on their May Fair stall selling the pots they had made themselves, helped raise funds for the cancer charities supported by our Saltash Observer.

The Children have been busy fund raising since losing their beloved grandfather to prostate cancer.

They raised a total of £110.54 on the day, a big thank you to all who supported them.



Photo Martin Lister

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**Burraton Community Players Presentation**



**Conundrum Corner**

Taking the initial letter to the one-word answer to the following eight questions can you re-arrange them to make a local place name?

- 1 What crop is particularly affected by the Boll-weevil? (6)
- 2 What is the National Flower of India? (5)
- 3 Consider Yourself and Boy for Sale are songs from which Musical? (6)
- 4 On which Mediterranean Island is Mount Etna found? (6)
- 5 What type of food is a Langoustine? (5)
- 6 What was the name of the House in Gone with the Wind? (4)
- 7 Which Battle saw the final defeat of Bonnie Prince Charlie? (8)
- 8 What is the name of the Princess in Sleeping Beauty? (7)

Answers on page 8

Following their pantomime earlier in the year, Burraton Community Players presented cheques to three charities during their fun quiz held at Burraton Community Centre on April 30th.

The three charities were chosen by the entire cast and represented their desire to put children at the centre of their fund-raising events

Ronald Macdonald House, Children's Hospice South-West and Saltash Children's appeal all offer support to children and their families in times of stress and medical problems.

A well-attended quiz produced a keenly fought competition with the eventual winning team, "Seriously Brain Dead", winning by just 3 points!

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I have been contacted by many constituents who were concerned that the Government had chosen to use taxpayers money to circulate information about staying in the EU after the referendum on June 23rd. I disagree with the Government spending nearly £10 million on propaganda that is very one sided. Many people have said to me that they feel they want information from both sides of the argument. Therefore on Saturday I was delighted to meet so many of my Constituents in Fore Street in Saltash where I was joined by Cllr Stephanie McWilliam to hand out leaflets giving the alternative case for the Vote Leave Campaign.

It was a real privilege to join my Constituent William Jago and his family aboard the French Naval Ship Dixmude. William received the French Legion D'Honneur for his part in liberating France during WW2 and was one of the small number of veterans to receive his medal from the Commanding Officer of the Dixmude.

Small businesses are the lifeblood of South East Cornwall and I was pleased to learn that unemployment

**SHERYLL MURRAY MP WRITES...**



has more than halved in our Constituency since 2010. I would like to thank those small businesses in Saltash for the part they have played in reducing unemployment by 53% since that date.

I would also like to praise businesses like the China Fleet Club for the part they play in the provision of apprenticeships. I visited two apprentices at the China Fleet last year and this was at the front of my mind when I was one of those who welcomed HRH Princess Royal who was guest of honour at the China Fleet Country Club as it celebrated its 25th Anniversary of being based in South East Cornwall.

The China Fleet Country Club was born in Hong Kong as a Royal Navy Canteen on the Wanchai waterfront, to benefit the serving ratings and other ranks of the Royal Navy.

The new China Fleet Country Club in Saltash

was officially opened in 1991, just a year before the Hong Kong China Fleet Club closed its doors for the last time ready for the Chinese takeover of Hong Kong.

The Trust who run the China Fleet Club continue to serve not only the Royal Navy but their immediate families too. A number of those who have served the Trust with distinction were presented with a thank you gift by the Princess Royal who also has the title of the 'Chief Commandant for Women in the Royal Navy'.

I was pleased to hear how impressed she was with the facilities and in particular the fantastic Aqua Spa. I always enjoy staying at the China Fleet Club and look forward to the opportunity to take advantage of the steam rooms and sauna and all the other facilities in the aqua spa, Gym and swimming pool.

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Continued from page 1

**Full Caradon Gig Club results:**

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Ladies C – 29th	Mens C – 20th
Ladies D – 67th	Mens D – 78th
Ladies E – 104th	Mens H4H – 100th
Ladies Vets A – 5th	Mens Vets A – World Champions
Ladies Vets B – 19th	Mens Vets B – 15th
	Mens H4H Vets – 39th

Caradon Gig Club will be holding novice sessions every Wednesday evening at 6p.m. from Saltash Sailing Club from May - August, for anyone interested in having a go at gig rowing.

**New Season Launched as Mayor Bowls First Wood**

The Spring and Summer season for Saltash Bowls Club was officially launched by Mayor Bill Phillips, who followed the mayoral tradition of bowling the first wood, accompanied by his wife and Mayoress Jean.

The Saturday afternoon event followed a morning free 'taster' session when fourteen people took advantage of an offer to experience the sport. This can be followed up by six free tuition sessions, on a Friday evening, while they decide if bowls is for them. Following last year's taster twelve people went on to enjoy the tuition and to join the club.

After the bowling of the

first wood the club held its traditional 'spider' at which members surround the green and simultaneously bowl at a jack in the centre. The nearest wood to it wins a prize and the entry fee goes to a charity of the President's choice. This year President Ken Spear had chosen Hospice South West, which also happens to be the Mayor's chosen charity.

**A Diamond Celebration at Saltash Bowls Club**

A chance meeting during the 1950's at a sea cadets' social event at their headquarters in Richmond Walk Plymouth led to romance between the 21 year old cadet Ken and 17 year old Shirley who had accompanied a friend who was dating Ken's brother.

Six decades later, on 24th March this year Ken and Shirley Spear were to celebrate their diamond wedding at the Saltash Bowls Club, of which Ken is President. Joining with club members to congratulate them were their four daughters, nine grandchildren and ten great grandchildren, many of whom had travelled from as far as Norfolk to be at the event.

The knot had been tied sixty years earlier at Emmanuel Church, Plymouth following two years of courtship.

Shirley puts the happiness of their long marriage to learning to 'just accept whatever comes along and if you have to, fight it together.' Ken adds, 'the family brought us great happiness - and still does'.

**Town Centre Garden's Future Uncertain**

The Maurice Huggins Room and the Victoria Gardens at the top of Fore Street in which it stands are up for consideration as to their future.

The Maurice Huggins Room, built as a room for rest and refreshment especially by the elderly was passed to the Town's Community Interest Company and since then has been used by various local organisations and enterprises. However its main day time user has now relocated and the Community Interest Company (now known as Community Enterprises PL12) has decided not to renew its agreement. Income appears unlikely to go far towards expenses and it considers that investment in the fabric of the building and a marketing programme are required to make the project viable. They are however keen to work with the Town Council in finding a way forward for the building and will continue to manage bookings via their premises at '4 Fore Street'.

Meanwhile Victoria Gardens themselves also need funding as the wall alongside St. Stephens Road is leaning over and evidently requires major repair work. The gardens, in which Saltash Environmental Action Group has been planting out a bed of environmentally friendly vegetables and plants, may be acquired by the Town Council from Cornwall and the town's devolution options group is currently pursuing this.

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## High Flying Eric was Pilot to the Queen

As Saltash joined with the rest of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth in celebrating Her Majesty's ninetieth birthday with bunting flying over Fore Street, the event was especially significant for one Saltash resident who spent five memorable years flying the Queen across the world.

Eric Spencer, now of Tamar House Nursing Home joined the Royal Air Force at the end of the war as a 16 year old boy fitter and retired thirty years later as a Squadron Leader. During three decades he witnessed the World War II propeller driven aircraft which he helped to keep flying replaced by jet planes of increasing power and

complexity. But the experience that was most significant to him was the five years in which he was attached to the Queen's Flight. Only a few officers with unblemished records were chosen, as he was, to pilot the De Haviland Andover Mark 2 aircraft that bore the queen, her family and entourage to almost every Commonwealth country and many others.

'She was a very friendly passenger always interested in the aircraft and keen to be shown around', Eric recalls. 'Although not over technically minded she like to know what was going on and to chat about the flight, where we were going and what we were doing. She would ask what weather we were flying into and was quite knowledgeable about this.' She

also displayed a friendly interest in Eric's family, his wife Yvonne and two sons Gary and Robert, Prince Phillip would, as an ex naval officer be interested in chatting about the differences between the services.

Despite travelling to so many destinations Eric saw comparatively little of them though he did view Niagara Falls and experience rodeos in Canada. 'I was busy with the aircraft, which I would always service myself. I could have delegated this but felt it was my personal responsibility to do all the checks', he told the Observer.

During his career he also met many flying legends including air ace Sir Douglas Bader CBE of who he recalls 'he always had to come first - though I suppose he had earned this' Eric was also

one of the first RAF pilots to fly into China as the cold war began to thaw. 'I could not get used to having a guard not on the plane but on myself'.

Following retirement from the RAF, with commendations from the Queen and Air Officer Commanding Eric did not hand up his wings. Instead he served for five years as test pilot for De Haviland, sampling all the latest in flying technology. Indeed he says, 'I still love flying. I would rather fly than drive a car.

Having been bought up in Wimbledon and served around the world Eric came to Cornwall following the death of his wife Yvonne to be close to his son Gary and two growing grandchildren. He now enjoys life at Tamar House with his photographs, logbooks, and a host of flying memories.

## Saltash.net Students awarded at May Fair

Saltash.net student, Jack Phelan, was awarded at Saturday's May Fair as the Saltash Young Citizen of the Year, for his inspirational work highlighting areas of safety concerns in the local community.

Saltash Mayor, Bill Phillips, was on hand to honour Jack at the opening event in Longstone Park.

Jack, who is in Year 9, is currently trying to raise £3,000 to install a public access iPad SPI Defibrillator in Saltash, to be located outside the fire station. So far Jack has raised £968, part of which came from a Christmas raffle that Jack and other students arranged at saltash.net.

Jack is a Fire Cadet at Saltash with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service and uses his Twitter account to raise awareness and campaign for community safety.

The May Fair's opening event also saw the Mayor's Best Performance Cup for 2015-16 be awarded to the amazing cast and crew of saltash.net's 'Annie'.

Mollie Willis, who played the role of Annie, and Molly Banks, who played Miss Hannigan, received the cup from the Mayor on behalf of everyone at saltash.net. (See Jack's photo on P5)



## Happy Birthday, Your Majesty!

With the Union Jack flying proudly outside the school, students and staff at saltash.net did their bit to help celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's 90th birthday. Appropriately patriotic cakes and biscuits were on sale at brektime in the canteen and the Trematon



Zone students organised their own special birthday party for the afternoon of Thursday April 21st. In addition, students are being encouraged to participate in the Radio Times' competition to design a birthday card for our monarch as the winning design will be appearing on the front page of a future edition of the magazine. Students can download



further details from the saltash.net App store. <http://saltash.net/appstore/>

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