



## A potted history and where we are now.

To my knowledge the art group has been in existence for at least 20 years and in that time there have been four tutors. The first being a young Art teacher from South Molton Community College who due to his hours at the college was unable to continue, that was when Mac (Mr R.McKnight) took over as our resident tutor. Mac is an artist and has taught art before retiring to live in Petrockstowe. Mac decided as he was approaching his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday it was time to retire again so early in 2013 we went looking for a replacement tutor. Had we not been able to secure a replacement for Mac I seriously doubt the group would have carried on!

We were very lucky to obtain the artistic skills of Netty Holwill who was running her own art classes in and around Hatherleigh, whilst also being a senior art tutor at the prestigious Kelly College (now Mount Kelly) or Hogwarts as I believe it has been nicknamed. Netty was and still is a larger than life character, who sported red and black hair and was not embarrassed to turn up at Kelly's dressed in a clown outfit, much to the amusement of the students and I guess the disapproval of some members of the teaching faculty. We tried many different forms of art, lino cuts, mono printing, life drawing (all clothed, well mainly) still life, making pictures using bits of plants string hessian and whatever may have been lying around, drawing, watercolours, acrylics, pastels it was always interesting. Then sadly Netty announced that like the original art teacher from South Molton her hours were changing and she could no longer be our tutor, that was a very sad day.

It must have been destiny that Bee Everett bought a painting from an artist who lives in Dolton. Because after seeing the painting I checked out the artist's website and immediately phoned and made arrangements to meet up. From the purchase of a painting and a subsequent meeting we have been extremely fortunate to have gained not only a very talented artist, but a tutor of a very high standard in Teresa Tanner.

Having moved to Devon two years ago, Teresa has re-established herself running local Art Classes as well as working for The Burton Art Gallery & Plough as a tutor.

Teresa says "My aim is to open up Art to everyone no matter what their level of ability and to introduce a new dimension of enjoyment. Petrockstowe Art Group are a joy to teach. They are responsive and open to give anything a go. The cake & coffee at break time is pretty good too!"

We now have 22 members, which has risen from 8 from when I joined in 2007, if the membership continues to grow, we may have to get a lottery grant to have an extension built on the Baxter Hall!!

We welcome anyone and everyone whether they are trying art for the first time, or need to hone their artistic skills.

We meet on a Friday at 10am until 12.30pm the cost for coming along is £6.25 plus a share of the hall rent and heating at the end of each term. We supply tea, coffee biscuits. Cake is provided by group members on a strictly voluntary basis.

The Art Group has agreed to take on the challenge of painting the play area walls with a theme yet to be finally decided, the weather will be the deciding factor on how long it takes to compete. The group regularly display it's works of art at the Merton Vintage Rally and this year is no exception. We look forward to another year of discovery under the artistic hand of Teresa.

Keith Rooke

Or Gropenfuhrer... as Councillor Kelsey affectionately (hopefully) refers to me.

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## CHURCH REPORT FOR THE PARISH COUNCIL

We are currently in the process of applying for a Grant to enable us to have the Church and guttering roof repaired. This will, hopefully, prevent the rain from penetrating and creating wet walls inside the church building. Much of the fabric is being spoilt at the moment. Ann Luxton, the churchwarden, and David Birks, committee member, are working on this together with the help of Ian Fisher, to whom we are extremely grateful.

We have also had Michael Harris cutting down the Box hedges, as they made a complete wind break and prevented the light from reaching the cobbled pathway which has become very slippery and covered with moss and weeds, despite attempts to spray it clean.

Our fund raising events for this coming year are as follows:

Some PCC members are helping with the Merton Monks day at the end of April, (washing up mostly! And selling raffle tickets

Another Cider and Pasty Walk is planned for July 30<sup>th</sup>

A Quiz on Saturday September 30 with Tony and Monica Jones from Hatherleigh as quiz masters.

Harvest Festival Lunch will be on Sunday October 8<sup>th</sup>

Ian Kent has agreed to organise another Tractor Run which is very popular and this will probably be at the end of October, on 29<sup>th</sup>.

This year we are planning a Christmas Tree Festival for the first time in the church, on 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> December. We can accommodate up to 30 small decorated trees so would hope that as many people in the village as possible will join in with this lovely project. Watch this space!

For 12<sup>th</sup> Night next January 20<sup>th</sup> (this is an old West Country date) we propose to host a Victorian Evening, so start organising your costumes now!

We are grateful to the Parish Council for your continued financial support for our village church.

We are also grateful to the Ladies Group for the substantial donations raised by their hard work throughout the year which help us enormously.

Thank you.

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CRICKET. The team have been promoted to Division 2 in the North Devon League this season after coming top of Division 3 last season. The Club were unsuccessful when applying for a Lottery Grant to install new Sightscreens and an Electronic Scoreboard. The main news this year is that the officials of the Recreation Ground Committee are standing down and it is proposed that the current Cricket Committee create a combined new Committee entitled The Petrockstowe Sport and Social Club. The members of the Recreation Ground Committee must be thanked for all their past work, especially Chris Hansen for obtaining the Grant to enable the new Bar area to be built. There are several items such as Insurance, Bar Licensing, Utilities etc which still need to be dealt with. With our enhanced facilities we do hope to see more of our village friends enjoying a beer or a cup of tea during the summer.

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## PETROCKSTOWE GARDENING CLUB

We meet every 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month - 10 speakers, 1 summer barbeque and 1 Christmas meal.

Last year our numbers dropped down, but I am pleased to say that this year we have increased our numbers and now have 37 members

We have kept our membership fees at the same levels (£20 for a couple and £12 for a single person) for a number of years and have managed to keep our heads above water despite the cost of speakers increasing every year (the grant money from Merton Mocks has certainly helped).

Our speaker in May is Simon Dawson who runs a self-sufficient smallholding with his wife on Exmoor. Simon will be talking about his good life and how he accidentally changed everything, leaving behind 'London suits for welly boots'. Everyone is welcome (£2 entrance charge for non-club members).

We are going to organise a trip to Marwood Hill gardens in the summer with the club paying the entrance fee for members.

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## MERTON AND PETROCKSTOWE HERITAGE GROUP

Last year Merton and Petrockstowe history groups joined forces because both groups were lacking in numbers. We are now called the Merton and Petrockstowe Heritage Group and meet on the second Friday of each month alternating between both village halls. The number of members has increased and over the last twelve months the group has enjoyed a variety of speakers on such subjects as Parson Jack Russell, Torrington Then and Now, local Christmas Carols and Murder Most Foul by Simon

Dell who told us about some of the murders that had taken place around the Dartmoor area.

We also hosted Buckland Brewer History Group and went for a walk with Philip around Merton Village which was very enjoyable. A walk with Peter Christie around St. Mary's church in Bideford and the surrounding area was also very interesting and in October the group enjoyed a meal at The Oxenham Arms at South Zeal where the proprietor told us the history of this very old building.

We hope to continue with a programme of speakers and trips that members will enjoy and plan an exhibition at Petrockstowe in September focusing on both villages during the 1950s and 1960s.

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## **Ladies Group Report**

The main purpose and focus of the Ladies Group is to offer financial support to the village Church, Chapel and Hall.

We do this by fund raising. These occasions are usually well supported by villagers, visitors and residents of surrounding areas. Our fund raising activities include community breakfasts, coffee mornings, vintage teas, quizzes, we also hold a 'ladies only' Pimms afternoon, a Punch & Pie evening and we make and sell a variety of cakes and produce at local Fetes & Rallies. At times we have worked with the village Hall committee to help share some of the workload. We as a group are also supporters of the yearly Macmillan coffee morning, all profits from this event go to the Macmillan Nurse Charity

In December 2016 we handed over cheques of £1200 to each of the three organisations. This money goes towards the maintenance and general upkeep of each building, which in turn helps to enhance our quality of life here in Petrockstowe.

2017 has started well for our group and our hope is that we can replicate or improve on the monies handed over last year.

It is well worth reporting that it is thanks to the support and generosity of the community shown to the ladies group that we are able, and of course hope to continue to support the village with our fund raising efforts

Thank you

Ann Tomkins (for the Ladies Group)

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## **Petrockstowe Newsletter Report**

My aim for the newsletter continues to be :  
Informing the community about events and news relevant to the village and surrounding area.  
Promoting eco culture with Freecycle  
and community pages.  
Supporting local business through advertising.  
Hope this is enough.

Kind regards

Jane