



A LARGE MONTEREY PINE AT DEVORAN QUAY OFFERS SHELTER AND SOMEWHERE TO REST UNDER; REDSHANKS FEED ON INVERTEBRATES IN THE MUD



Feock trails
FEOCK PARISH WALKS
A collection of 9 short circular walks in and around Devoran, Penpol, Point, and Trellissick
Colour-coded and drawn maps
Walks for all ages and abilities
Tall tales and historical truths
Nature notes

wild

ABOUT CORNWALL

FEOCK TRAILS

Words and photographs by David Chapman

When I first moved to Cornwall, about 25 years ago, I lived in Feock for a year or so. On weekend walks I got to know the area around Devoran, Trellissick and Feock quite well, but the move west put some distance and eventually time between me and there. Thanks to the establishment of some walking trails in Feock parish I recently took a walk down memory lane; in fact, I have taken three

walks and the number is growing. Before donning my walking boots, I met up with Phil Allen, a Feock parish councillor who is very much at the heart of this project. He explained: "The idea for establishing these trails started in 2015, prompted by public consultation over the Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan. In particular, one of the focuses of this plan is to promote health and wellbeing. ▶"



THE QUAY AT ROUNDWOOD WAS A BUSY PORT IN THE 18TH CENTURY WITH MULE TRAINS DELIVERING COPPER ORE FROM THE INLAND MINES, IT WAS ALSO HOME TO A COPPER SMELTING OPERATION FOR A TIME; THE ENIGMATIC CRIES OF CURLEWS CAN OFTEN BE HEARD AT DEVORAN

"From research, we found that many local people enjoy getting out and about on footpaths, so we thought it would be a good idea to encourage as many people as possible to go out in the fresh air to exercise and enjoy what is on their doorsteps." A bid was made for Heritage Lottery funding for the project, and £10,000 was granted to produce a set of free trail leaflets and develop a website to support the trails.

There are many aspects which make this project exciting. The most obvious feature, when you pick up and look at one of these beautifully designed leaflets, is the wealth of historical interest inside. I get the feeling that Phil was the driving force behind the idea and he is clearly passionate about history. When I met with him to learn about the project, he was enthusiastically telling me stories about local history before I had even got my pen out!

Opposite the parish office where we met, there is a garden commemorating the Lobb brothers. In 1831 the Lobb family moved to this area and the father took up work as a carpenter at Carclew Estate, just opposite Devoran. The family lived in a cottage at Perran Wharf, from where sons William and Thomas became two of the most prolific plant-hunters of the mid-19th century, bringing back more than 600 new species to Britain.

One fact that interested me personally is that William

was responsible for the commercial introduction of the monkey puzzle tree. The family of my wife, Sarah, once lived in a house in Truro which was previously owned by a family who kept a commercial nursery. In the garden was a massive monkey puzzle tree which must have been 100 years old. Sarah's father nurtured it and took seeds from it; he gave a monkey puzzle sapling to Sarah and we now have it growing on our smallholding. This is our own living connection to the Lobb brothers, but through these leaflets and the history they bring to life there will be many personal connections to be made for many local people.

Phil told me of the story about a man called John Taylor who oversaw the construction of the Tavistock Canal. He became a mine entrepreneur and raised funds to re-open the Consolidated Mines at Gwennap. This mine became part of what was thought to be the richest square mile in the world, producing one-third of the world's copper. In 1824 he built the Redruth and Chasewater (as it was then spelt) Railway to connect the mine with Devoran Quay, making it easier to export his copper; this is when the village of Devoran was born.



A local man by the name of Thomas Hall was employed by John Taylor to operate the railway, and was sent to South Africa where he was to oversee construction. He never returned, but his family prospered there and one of his descendants has become one of the largest exporters of avocados in the world. I find it fascinating to know that, as you sit on Devoran Quay with a trail leaflet in your hand, you could be tucking into an avocado salad thanks to the same family who literally helped put Devoran on the map.

As fascinating as they are, leaflets have a shelf-life, and it could be argued that as soon as literature is printed it becomes out of date. To enable constant renewal, Phil was keen to develop an online presence for the trails; so the Feock Parish Council website allows access not only to downloadable copies of the trails leaflets, but also an even greater wealth of information through the use of Quick Response (QR) Codes.

QR codes are the square barcodes that we find on an increasing number of information services. They can be 'read' by smart phone apps to provide further information.

These codes have been printed in the leaflets and on signs at some 32 points around the trails. These small, discreet signs are the modern day equivalent of the interpretive panel: all the information but at a fraction of the size. The real benefit is that the information can be updated whenever necessary and without significant cost.

The parish council were fortunate to be able to employ local boy Sam Edwards, a techno-savvy apprentice with an interest in history. He helped set up the QR system and over the past six months has spent many happy hours building up web-based information for the project in his gap year between A levels and taking up a place at Oxford to study a degree in history.

The trails feature more than history. Fellow parish councillor Keith Hambly-Staite, who is also a trustee of Cornwall Wildlife Trust, was keen to point out the wildlife elements of the trails. He told me: "With the help of the trust we have been able to introduce an overview of the landscape character and flora and fauna of the Parish. This has been achieved via our website and four QR posts on ▶"



Puffins and Sea Pinks:

PUFFIN ISLAND, THE RUMPS, NEAR PADSTOW

Words and illustration by Dick Twinney

Here in Cornwall, we are fortunate to have two coasts, north and south, and so many beautiful rivers and estuaries to choose to visit. At times, I am really spoilt for choice when it comes to locations for my wildlife art. This month's painting was not a problem, however, as it was commissioned, and the customers knew exactly where they wanted it located, having seen puffins in this very spot on several occasions.

The Rumps is a rocky point that sticks out into the sea between Padstow Bay and Portquin Bay. It can be reached by parking near Pentire Farm and taking one of the small coastal tracks. The view is stunning whichever way you look, whether back towards Padstow or towards Tintagel and Bude. Once out on the end of the point, you can see the island just across a small stretch of water. Officially named The Moulds, it's known locally as Puffin Island and referred to as such by the Padstow boatmen who organise trips around it.

The cliffs were covered with thrift (sea pinks) when I visited

to take reference photographs and sketches, so I was able to add natural colour and brightness to the finished artwork.

As usual, I will be at the Royal Cornwall Show from June 8 to 10, supporting the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI) on stand 312.

To see more of Dick's artwork, or to purchase prints and paintings, call 01637 880606 or visit www.theheartofdicktwinney.com

Visitors are welcome at his St Columb Major studio by appointment.

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competition competition

To enter the prize draw to win a signed, limited edition print of Puffins And Sea Pinks, email us by June 30 (with 'Dick Twinney Puffins' in the subject line) at competitions@cornwalltoday.co.uk

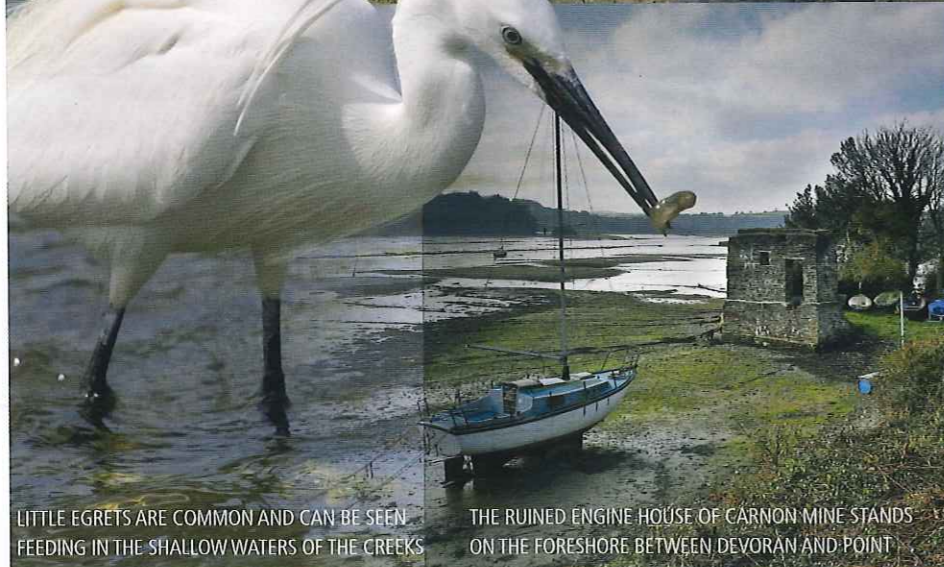
SAM EDWARDS AND PHIL ALLEN SHOW HOW TO SCAN A QR CODE USING A PHONE



A VIEW ACROSS NARABO QUAY FROM THE TRAM ROAD NEAR DEVORAN

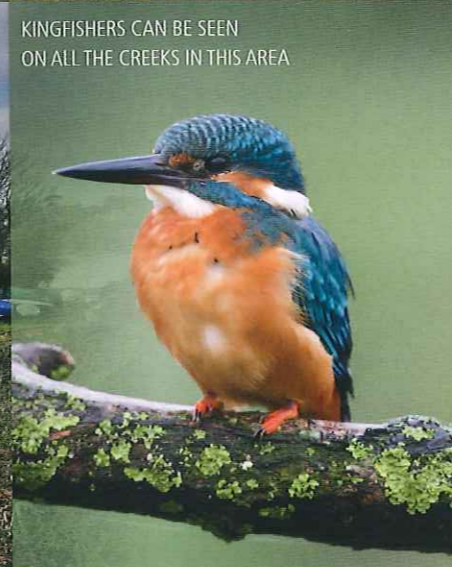


SARAH AND I READ ONE OF THE TRAIL LEAFLETS WHILE ADMIRING THE VIEW



LITTLE EGRETS ARE COMMON AND CAN BE SEEN FEEDING IN THE SHALLOW WATERS OF THE CREEKS

THE RUINED ENGINE HOUSE OF CARNON MINE STANDS ON THE FORESHORE BETWEEN DEVORAN AND POINT



KINGFISHERS CAN BE SEEN ON ALL THE CREEKS IN THIS AREA

the different walks. The excellent work of the Environmental Records Centre for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (ERCIS) and the Cornwall Wildlife Trust has enabled us to include bespoke maps of the parish, together with a link with ORKS (Online Recording Kernow and Scilly) as we encourage walkers to record their sightings, hopefully building up a comprehensive record of the wildlife of the parish."

Since meeting Phil, I have had the opportunity to use the leaflets, and I must say they add a huge amount to the enjoyment of a walk. The facts and figures from the leaflet and QR codes force a slower pace, and this is a good thing: too often we go out walking with our heads down and eyes closed (metaphorically speaking!). I really enjoyed being able to look at a view while also looking at a painting of the same view from 150 years ago. It is staggering to see how the place has changed.

As a natural historian, I love many of the places the trails visit. Standing on Devoran Quay, listening to the cries of the curlews and watching as redshank and little egrets plod around in the mud, is always wonderful. Wandering the woodlands of the National Trust's Trellisick estate, hearing the calls of woodpeckers and nuthatches

while seeing kingfishers sweeping past along the water's edge, takes some beating. Being in these beautiful and fascinating places is a privilege, good for body and soul.

So I hope the Feock Trails encourage more people to get out and enjoy all these things, and that this idea can become more widespread around the county. If you are a keen walker, I would encourage you to get online and download the leaflets; and if you are a councillor in a different parish, I would ask: what are you waiting for?

Feock trails

The trails cover Feock parish: Carnon Downs, Devoran, Point, Feock and Trellisick as far as Roundwood Quay. Leaflets are available free of charge from the parish council offices in Devoran and online at www.feockparishcouncil.co.uk

There is now a substantial online reference library exploring the industrial and natural history of the area, with many further useful links. This project wouldn't have been possible without funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the work of many local organisations.