

# The Riverporter

HAPPY NEW YEAR • READ AND PASS ON

COVERING THE NEWS FOR ST IVES AND AROUND

Issue 175: 10 January 2025

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

## Out with the old and in with the new?

**A** phrase that is often used at this time of year and yet we start with the news about two of our older and most respected local citizens, who are definitely now in!

Ed 'the Poppy Man' Kelly, now 101 years old has been named in The King's New Year Honours List 'for over 40 years of selfless voluntary service' to the Royal British Legion.



Ed told the BBC 'being appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) took me rather by surprise'. He added he was 'just one of a team' of other volunteers. Since 2009, the branch has raised more than £400,000 for the Poppy Appeal and he was awarded The Legion's Centenary Award to reflect his outstanding contribution. It also recognised him on its Centenary Wall of Honour.

Mr Kelly has also been given St Ives Town Council's Lifetime Achievement Award because of his regular presentations to schools, cadets and other youth organisations. He said: 'I do talks about why you should wear a poppy and wear it with pride and say the heroes are the ones on the memorial. I'm one of the lucky ones who survived.'

Mr Kelly added he hoped to continue supporting the annual Poppy Appeal for as long as he is fit.

'I'm living up to my reputation as the Poppy Man,' he said.

Other local people honoured included 82 year old David Chambers. The ex-Head of Art at St Ivo, who retired 23 years ago, was awarded a British Empire Medal for services to music and to the community in Somersham. When the news broke on a local Facebook page about his award the comments, mostly from past pupils were effusive. 434 people liked the post and over 70 posted comments, some still calling him Sir and



referring to his nickname 'Chunky'. Below: David conducting the Somersham Town Band at the Dickensian Market in St Ives in 2005.



Below: The Dementia Choir, Riverport Singers, lifted the roof off the Corn Exchange at their Christmas Concert led by Agi Peach (20th Dec). A wonderful display of Christmas jumpers, and a varied repertoire of seasonal favourites, entertained a packed house and sent the audience home happy and full of Christmas cheer. Attendees included both the Town Mayor, Cllr Pasco Hussain, and his deputy - Cllr Julie Kerr. The evening was concluded by the presentation of a donation of £500 from The Rotary Club St Ives.



## Eco café news

If you are interested in helping to run a monthly eco café, please COME ALONG to our first planning meeting on **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> January at 10am** in the LIBRARY by Waitrose or contact us for details on: [stivesecocafe@gmail.com](mailto:stivesecocafe@gmail.com)

## EXCLUSIVE

# St Ivo Head speaks to Riverport Radio



Following the report about St Ivo Academy in issue 172 of *The Riverporter*, the Principal, Tony Meneau, invited the Riverport Radio team to discuss some of the issues raised.



Obviously we were delighted to accept the invitation and in a frank and wide ranging 45 minute interview we were able to ask any questions about the school. You will be able to hear it on our next podcast, which will be available next week. You can see the link on our website: [www.theriverporter.uk](http://www.theriverporter.uk) or go to <https://riverportradiopodcast.buzzsprout.com/>



Above: The design for the refurbished 6th Form Centre.

## DIARY OF EVENTS

If you wish to inform us of your events please email: [editor@theriverporter.uk](mailto:editor@theriverporter.uk)

### JANUARY 2025

**Saturday 18th - COSI Scottish Themed Winter Concert** 7pm at the Free Church. Tickets £10, under 16s free, on the door or from [www.ticketsource.co.uk/chamber-orchestra-of-st-ives](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/chamber-orchestra-of-st-ives).

**Saturday 25th - Burns Night Celebration** - St Ives Corn Exchange 7pm Tickets [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents) or from the venue.

**Friday 31st - Chapel Arts concert with The Lightwaves** Corn Exchange 7.30pm. Tickets £10 [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents) or from the venue.

### FEBRUARY 2025

**Saturday 1st** - St Ives eco café. 10am, St Ives Corn Exchange - A town discussion about St Ives Green Week in June.

**Wednesday 5th - Engage Talk - The Muddy Hoard**

A local metal detector discovery - 2pm, St Ives Library - free.

**Sunday 9th - Tea Dance hosted by Lesley's Social Dancing** St Ives Corn Exchange 2pm Tickets [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents) or from the venue.

### HERE ARE SOME MORE DATES FOR 2025

Annual Town Meeting 20th March - Mayor Making 14th May, Bible Dicing 10th June - Civic Sunday 22nd June, Remembrance Sunday 9th November.

Read on-line at [www.theriverporter.uk](http://www.theriverporter.uk) or see our Facebook page. Email: [editor@theriverporter.uk](mailto:editor@theriverporter.uk)

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# Christmas Day Lunch 2024

The St Ives office of Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre (HVC) with the Free Church, organised a fabulous lunch, it was so lovely to see over 50 guests who would otherwise be on their own on Christmas Day sharing a very tasty two course Christmas lunch with coffee, mince pies and mints to follow.



Businesses also helped with over 40 raffle prizes donated by members of The Free Church, Fifi's Cakery, Janet Church Interiors, The Golden Lion, West End DIY and our volunteers. Adams Cook & Pearce with the help of Simon Hephner set up the televisions so we could all watch the King's Speech. Afterwards the guests made their way home with a gift bag put together by Michael and his family containing hand made gifts from Star Crafters and homemade jams and chutneys made by Pat our cook plus lots of other goodies.

Our volunteers gave up their Christmas Day to ensure the lunch went like clockwork, welcoming guests and making sure everyone was comfortable, serving lunch and drinks throughout the lunch.



Mike Baker, HVC Chair, started the day off with a welcome to St Ives Mayor Pasco Hussain (above) and Shalom our organist who accompanied the singing of Carols before lunch. Rev Nick Witham came to say Grace.

The lunch is only possible due to generous donations. The food is donated by The Buckingham Emergency Food Appeal, and cash donations come from members of the public with drinks supplied by Morrisons and Waitrose.

Pat Jones the marvellous cook and her willing helpers started the lunch preparations on Christmas Eve and were back early on Christmas Day to complete the meal.

Mavis, John and Free Church volunteers prepared the hall with decorations, set the tables, including crackers which set the Christmas scene for the day.



Above: Some of the volunteers and helpers.

We also needed volunteer drivers to collect those who would not be able to get to the venue and return them home at the end of the day. Thank you volunteers, you are amazing. The Christmas Day lunch takes an enormous amount of planning and preparation and without the help, kindness and support of all people mentioned we would not be able to run this event, we are extremely grateful to you all.

Mayor Pasco also received compliments for attending the whole day and getting involved and congratulations must also go to Mike Baker, who is on hand each year to ensure this wonderful tradition continues in St Ives.



## Volunteers collect 19 bags of rubbish



nineteen bags of litter! Unfortunately there seems to have been no progress made during the past year in solving the problem of huge piles of rubbish in Meadow Lane.

Volunteers from StAR (St Ives Against Rubbish), The Rotary Club and St Ives in Bloom joined forces for their now traditional New Year litter pick on the morning of Saturday 4th January at the Park and Ride. Despite the cold, they managed to collect



Some of the rubbish collected.



Hate rubbish and want to help?  
Contact StAR on: [star.stivesecoaction@gmail.com](mailto:star.stivesecoaction@gmail.com)

## Over £6,000 raised by the Hangover parties



The Nelson's head once again staged the New Years Day Hangover party organised by and featuring the amazing St Ives singer/songwriter 'Pianoman' Paul Dodson, the party just gets better every year!

Paul played to a packed audience for more than 3 hours, the crowd sang along and danced when they could find the space. Now in its 5th year, this year's session raised an amazing £1,323. Which brings the running total to over £6,000 since the party began and has made fantastic donations to both The British Heart Foundation and the Macmillan Charities.

If you missed the party but would still like to donate to Paul's Macmillan charity, there is still time at: [www.justgiving.com/page/nydhangoverparty2025](http://www.justgiving.com/page/nydhangoverparty2025)

## Winter series of TALKING TOGETHER offered by



A new winter series of TALKING TOGETHER, the telephone-based series of discussion groups, are now being offered by Cambridge Older Peoples Enterprise (COPE).

With the shorter days and unpredictable weather, these weekly meetings can be joined from the comfort of your home.

Each of the groups is led by a skilled facilitator and provides an opportunity to share your ideas, experiences and life-long learning with other older adults. The programme is completely free, with registration required.

### On offer are:

**Mondays 1.15pm 20 Jan – 24 Feb (5 weeks)**

#### A virtual journey to Anglesey Abbey

Marian French, facilitator

Join Marian each week as she 'journeys' with you through some of the loveliest Cambridgeshire villages, ending up finally at Anglesey Abbey, the stunning Jacobean-style house located to the north-east of the city. At each stop you will discover more about the fascinating history of this area.

**Mondays 2.15pm 20 Jan – 17 Feb (4 weeks)**

#### My very first time

Pam Halls, facilitator

In these sessions we will explore the fascinating social history of the second half of the 20th century by sharing our own memories. Each week, we will look at a different 'first' including your first job, your first home, your first holiday without your parents

and your first vinyl record. We will use these as the starting points to delve further into work and play, consider how far some things have changed and how some just stay the same. Come ready to share your memories: in these sessions you are the expert!

**Mondays 3.15pm 20 Jan – 24 Feb (5 weeks)**

#### Step into Nature with Art

Ruth Clarke, facilitator

Join Ruth to explore the natural world as depicted by artists in five key artworks from the Fitzwilliam Museum. Taking a different painting each week we will examine each one

together and take time to notice details: how the artist has used colour to create mood, texture, atmosphere and how this all comes together to enable us to become immersed in nature. Ruth will also share some stories from the artists' lives and the artworks in hand. Copies of the artworks will be sent to participants in advance.

**Thursdays 1.15pm 23 Jan – 6 Mar (6 weeks)**

#### The future of Cambridge's genome project

Sam Shingles, facilitator

Cambridgeshire is at the heart of a revolution in genomic science – the study of DNA, that code inside each of us that provides the biological instruction book for our bodies. As society races toward this brave new world, we should all think carefully about what kind of genomic future we want. In these discussions we will use recent DNA news stories and research from the Wellcome Sanger Institute to explore how genomics is impacting our lives now and discuss what we do with this science in the future.

**Registration is due by 15 January 2025.**

To register phone the COPE office on 01223 364303

Email: [copetalkingtogether@hotmail.com](mailto:copetalkingtogether@hotmail.com)



St Ives Civic Society

## THE MAYFLOW 400 YEARS ON PART II



A presentation by Adrian Moss to follow up the very popular presentation in 2023 about the links with Fenstanton of the pilgrims on the Mayflower.

St Ives Free Church  
7.30 pm Friday 17<sup>th</sup> January

Visitors welcome: suggested donation £3

# The Riverporter

Voted Best local newspaper of the year 2019/20 in the Cambridge Building Society's Community Magazine Awards

Having your say ...

Get it off your chest,  
email Erik at:  
editor@theriverporter.uk



Erik is very excited about the Riverport Radio Podcast.

**Dear Erik,**  
Huntingdon Quaker Meeting has had to sell its Meeting House in Godmanchester, and for the time being we are holding our Meetings for Worship in different locations and premises.  
During February we will be hiring a room at the Free Church in St Ives, and would welcome anyone who might be interested in joining us for an hour of worship on the Sundays of 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd at 10.30am in the Lounge at the Free Church.  
Our Meetings for Worship are held in silence, though anyone who feels so led, to offer ministry, is welcome to do so, and we always end with time for coffee and a chat.  
Quaker Meetings are open to anyone, of any faith or none. Do get in touch with me on courtspinney@hotmail.com if you would like further details. **Ann Barnes**

## New plans labelled Grim Towers

A planning application by Gladman Retirement Living Ltd., to build 86 retirement flats next to Meadow Lane overlooking St Ives Sailing Club lake has already received several objections. According to the submission, the 86 one, two and three bedroom apartments aim to provide a safe, comfortable and supportive environment for its elderly residents, ensuring their independence and well-being.



Objections included the impact of the 'wind shadow' on the sailing club, the use of greenfield land rather than brownfield. One objector said that 'Although the location would provide residents with a nice view, it comes at the cost of everyone else who has to look upon these grim towers - instead of the little remaining woodland this country has to offer.'

Above, the location and below, one of the Grim Tower blocks.



## OTHER NEWS

### Town Council grants £38k to community

At the full council meeting in December, the following grants were awarded for the 2025-26 year and will be paid in April 2025.

Carnival Committee £ 7,142.00	KICK £1,500.00
St Ives Town Team £9,900.00	Citizens Advice Rural Cambs £500.00
Festival Events St Ives (FEST) £8,625.00	Community Group Grants £600.00
Volunteer Grants £2,000.00,	St Ives in Bloom £3,600.00
Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre £3,500.00	St Ives & Warboys Cricket Club £750.00
Hemingford Voluntary Organisation £0	

The grants will help these community groups to provide the services and events that St Ives enjoys, including the wonderful floral displays by St Ives In Bloom, Picnic in the Park, The Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival and this years 600 year celebrations of our famous bridge.

### Bridge Lights update

Issue 174 of *The Riverporter* highlighted the dangerous state of the lights on the Bridge, following some vandalism. Although the Bridge is the responsibility of the County Council we now know that the lights are the responsibility of the Town Council. The Town Clerk has told us that the electrical supply has been turned off so the fixings are safe and that they are seeking replacements. They were custom made, so not straight forward and it could be some time before replacements are fitted, hopefully before the summer and the 600 celebrations.

### 700,000 more people expected here

The £694 million investment in Cambridgeshire's water infrastructure which has been approved is part of Anglian Water's £11 billion plan for the region that will be implemented between 2025 and 2030. It was approved by water industry regulator, Ofwat, and the plan aims to create jobs, protect the environment, and support the rapidly growing local economy. The East of England is the fastest growing region in the country, with approximately 700,000 more people expected to live there in the next 20 years.

### Would you like to help the celebration?

St Ives Town Team are holding a meeting on Tuesday 21st January in the Golden Lion at 7pm for any group, business or individual that would like to help with the 600 year celebrations of our famous Bridge. This series of events, including a re-enactment of the blowing up of the bridge by up to 450 troops from the English Civil War Society, will attract thousands to St Ives and provide a wonderful opportunity for residents to celebrate all that is good here. You will be able to hear of some of the plans for this year and contribute to making them happen.



### Continuing Learning for Adults in St Ives ("CLASI")

We are a group of between 20 and 30 people who meet in the Methodist Church Hall on The Waits, St Ives on a Thursday.

Our courses start at 10.30am and finish at 12.15pm

#### 2025 Programme

16th January-13th February  
**Russian Music**

6th March-8th May  
**Victorians**

18th September-20th November  
**Rise of the Superpowers**

For further details:  
Tel: 01480 493895  
Mobile: 07980 864 543

E mail: peter.german@ntlworld.com

## Music scene has never been so good

St Ives has a deserved reputation for having a lot going on and especially for live music. This year is already pretty impressive with two exceptional concerts booked in the Corn Exchange to raise money for the Jazz & Blues Festival.

### Toby Lee hits the top of the charts

Following Toby's appearance on Jools Holland's Hootenanny, not only did Toby reach No1 in the charts but tickets for his show on **Saturday 10th May** at the Corn Exchange started to sell fast. With over a third of the tickets already taken our advice is book now to avoid disappointment.

Tickets are also selling well for **The Quo Experience** on **Saturday 14th June**, featuring **Jeff Rich**, Status Quo's drummer from 1985 to 2000.

**Both concerts start at 8pm. Tickets are £15 and can be purchased from: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents) or in person from St Ives Corn Exchange.**

You don't need to wait until May or June as **The Lightwaves** (right) are playing a Chapel Arts Concert on Friday 31st January at 7.30pm in the Riverport Bar at St Ives Corn Exchange. Places are limited and again tickets are selling well, so book sooner rather than later.

A series of intimate concerts by excellent musicians on the last Friday of each month



**28th February** - An evening of popular music with Eurovision winning musician and songwriter of Katrina & The Waves - **Kimberley Rew & Lee Cave-Berry**.

**28th March** - The Cambridge based singer songwriter **Soloman Smith** will perform with his Friends, blurring the lines between Folk, Soul and Blues.

**25th April** - Nominated as Best Acoustic Act at the 2024 Blues Awards, **Greg Brice's** performance will leave you wanting more 'The most exquisite finger-picked acoustic blues that you could wish to hear.'

All concerts are at 7.30pm in the Riverport Café Bar. Doors open at 7pm. Tickets: £10 from the venue or online from: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents)

Also booked to appear are:

**27th June** - Lexie Green, **August 29th** - Johnny Wright and Ranjan Vasudevan, and **28th November** - Stella Hensley's Magical Colours.



# Slimming World

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real  
good



**SOMERSHAM \*\*NEW CONSULTANT\*\*** Opens 2 Jan 2025  
Thursday 7.00 pm Somersham Primary School  
Call Vicki on 07741 813217

**ST IVES - The Burleigh Hill Centre**  
Thursday 5.30 pm  
Call Vikki on 07955 155215

**ST IVES - The Burleigh Hill Centre**  
Friday 9.30 am & Saturday 8.00 am or 9.30 am  
Call Kathie on 07772 868472

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## La Chimera

Thursday 6 February 2025 at 7:30pm  
Doors open 6:30pm. Tickets £7  
Director: Alice Rohrwacher, 132m, Cert: 15

**Synopsis:** In 1980s rural Italy, English archaeologist Arthur aids a ragtag group of local grave robbers to find ancient tombs filled with valuable artefacts. But Arthur, who mourns the loss of his love, Beniamina, uses the digs to search for the door to the afterlife, where he imagines reuniting with her. Met with exuberant critical acclaim, *Alice Rohrwacher's* fourth feature is abundant with the treasures of a bygone Tuscany. With a handsome *Josh O'Connor* and the iconic *Isabella Rossellini* leading a charming troupe of grave robbers and rascals, this mythic yet earthy romance casts a beguiling spell.



## The Miracle Club

Thursday 6 March 2025 at 7:30pm  
Doors open 6:30pm. Tickets £7  
Director: Thaddeus O'Sullivan, 90m, Cert: 12

**Synopsis:** Set in 1967, THE MIRACLE CLUB follows the story of three generations of close friends, Lily (*Maggie Smith*), Eileen (*Kathy Bates*), and Dolly (*Agnes O'Casey*) of Ballygar, outside Dublin, who win a pilgrimage to the sacred French town of Lourdes, that place of miracles that draws millions of visitors each year. Just before their trip, their old friend Chrissie (*Laura Linney*) arrives in Ballygar for her mother's funeral. The women set out on the journey that they hope will change their lives, with Chrissie, a skeptical traveller, joining in place of her mother. Along the way, old wounds are reopened, forcing the women to confront their pasts even as they travel in search of a miracle.

Ticket at [screenstives.org.uk](http://screenstives.org.uk) or in the Corn Exchange

## THE COURTYARD, a hidden gem in the heart of St Ives.

An eclectic mix of traders and pods. Situated between St Ives Bus Station and Hyperion Auctions on Station Road.



Step into our unique courtyard, where vibrant traders and eclectic pods offer one-of-a-kind treasures. Explore a charming array of hand-crafted goods, rare finds, and artisanal delights – all from passionate vendors eager to share their stories.

Whether you're searching for gifts, unique home décor, or simply a delightful stroll, The Courtyard has something for everyone. You can also check out the collectibles in the Hyperion Antique Centre.

Whilst you are browsing enjoy a cup of freshly made coffee and a tasty bacon roll from Kate's Coffee Pod.

**Open 7 days a week Monday to Saturday 9-5 and Sunday 10-4.**

Here at The Courtyard, we feel incredibly proud of our work and supportive local community. Thank you so much to you all for your kind words and continued support.