

ST.IVES CELEBRATES THE JUMBO ASSOCIATION'S 5TH BIRTHDAY.

Supporters of the phenomenally successful celebrations last Saturday had good reason to feel blessed as, by Sunday morning, temperatures plummeted and winds increased to gale force. By contrast, warm, even sunny, conditions prevailed as a large crowd gathered at the head of the slipway to scrutinise the freshly oiled oak and larch and the gleaming copper rivets of the new punt that Jonny Nance had just delivered to the Association. Mirrors were provided so that the names of those commemorated could be found which were otherwise hidden out of sight beneath the thwart. *(Incidentally, readers may still arrange for a name to be inscribed as one thwart remains unfastened. Please contact Jonny Nance 01884 840342).*

The crowd hushed as pastor Matthew Care blessed the new arrival as he has done for each of the jumbos. Former BBC radio presenter, Janette Eathorne then sprinkled the boat - and the crowd - with water from Fenten Ia (St.Ia's Well). She wished all that use her every bit as much pleasure as she had derived from the original. Both punts that Jonny Nance has launched at St.Ives are replicas of her father's punt which Jonny's father, Dicon, had recorded in 1975. The mayor, Cllr. Ron Tulley then acknowledged the positive contribution that the Jumbo Association has made to the community.

By now the tide had reached the foot of the slip. The punt was brought to the water's edge and was shoved off as Jonny Nance clambered aboard. After a brief 'scully of honour' he brought her to the foreshore to take on the first boatload of Scully Day students.

First up was Alex Cole, celebrating his 16th birthday by learning to scully the boat that he'd watched taking shape in a barn on his mother's farm in Devon. His younger brother Tom was quick to acquire the knack and was soon driving half a ton of boat and crew at a respectable pace.

Phil Slater (son of the former Fore St. Methodist preacher) and Peter Lee joined other volunteers in order to meet the demand of those wishing to try their hand at this ancient technique.

The Ambling Band, having arrived from Bristol, appeared at the Lifeboat corner and processed, New Orleans-fashion, to the slipway where they delighted the crowd with their theatrical arrangements of material ranging from 'Besame Mucho' to 'Pick up the Pieces' by the Average White Band. Eventually, even the band took to the water continuing their performance in the middle of the harbour. Then, with the sousaphone in the bows acting like a sail, they turned and ran for the shore before the freshening breeze.

An exhibition of photographs greeted more than 150 who attended the evening's Grand Jumbo Party in the Guildhall. The jumbo-themed photos were entries in a competition organised and mounted by Sally Ewings. Within the hall, meanwhile, a wonderful festive atmosphere had been created under the direction of Bill Fry. Alban Roinard screened a medley of jumbo-sailing footage taken by St.Ives Community TV some of which had been taken earlier that day. Marco Amureo of St.Ives Brewery provided a well-stocked bar and Ruby June was serving hot Indian curries. The Ambling Band were the icing on the cake, filling the hall with colour and excitement.

Whilst the band took a break, the winner of the photograph competition was announced. The prize, a glass goblet hand-engraved by Peter Lee, was presented by Sally Ewings to Dr.Rupert Manley. There followed a draw of names inscribed in the new punt. The prize of life membership of the Jumbo Association (worth £300) was won by Valerie Canavan.

The new punt has been taken back to Devon to be completed. It will return to the harbour, complete with a mast and rudder, to join the jumbos for the start of the season. In a departure from tradition, she will carry a standing lugsail so that novices may be taught to sail within the safety of the harbour.

Members of the Jumbo Association have been much encouraged by the increased level of support demonstrated over the weekend and wish to express sincere thanks to everyone who have helped make their anniversary a success.

Membership is open to everyone at only £20 per annum. Please contact Jill Block 01736 793657.