

RURAL

Jersey Country Life Magazine

Issue 49 | Winter 2024

WIN

Gin Lab Workshop
Voucher with
La Cote Distillery
-
£300 Voucher with
MyPad

Nearer to home, closer to France

We interview the
Minister for Sustainable
Economic Development,
Deputy Kirsten Morel

From grain to glass...

Make your own gin
– Alex and Thea will
show you how

Special theme:
**Genuine Jersey
and localism**

It's beginning to look
a lot like Christmas





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Welcome

This Winter edition of RURAL magazine has a special theme: Genuine Jersey.

That is no accident – there are three markets in the Royal Square between our publication time and Christmas and there are plenty of other market-type events being held by Genuine Jersey members. It is the busiest time of the year for the legion of small producers and craftspeople who make up its membership.

This magazine is not the only medium that uses this seasonal opportunity to accentuate the message that buying from local producers makes great sense. ‘Think twice, buy local’ is a slogan that now goes back a decade or more, and is just as true today as it was when it was first used.

The value of local business and local production – especially food – is a theme that has been a constant in RURAL’s articles, but that theme might well become tedious or too strident if it is incessantly reiterated, however true or important it might be.

So, instead, let us take this opportunity to salute the Island community of local craftspeople and producers. The word ‘community’ is so often overused that it has become largely meaningless, but not in the context of localism and the local economy, as exemplified by the very broad range of undertakings by Genuine Jersey members, or, indeed, by all the cottage industries and microbusinesses that exhibit their wares at any sort of local market.

If you chat to many people encountered in these markets, they are liable to inform you that they have given up a job, perhaps a high-flying one, in order to pursue what really interests them and what they love



doing, such as working the land, or selling their art or their produce or their craft, maybe working from home and restoring a proper work-life balance as well.

Christmas is a time of hope, so let us hope that these markets, which provide an opportunity for local, human-scale transactions and where buyers can actually meet and engage with producers and vendors, will continue to thrive, and continue to illuminate Island life with their small candles, when, in so many other places, the candles seem to be flickering out — and darkness closing in.

.....

Alasdair Crosby | Editor

www.ruraljersey.co.uk

A handwritten signature of Alasdair Crosby in black ink. The signature is stylized and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.



Front cover image:

Deputy Alex Curtis and Thea Fauvel, of La Côte Distillery, at The Gin Lab, La Motte Street.

Photograph by Gary Grimshaw

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Published by

Crosby Media and Publishing Ltd
La Caûmiéthe, 2 Mon Plaisir Cottages
Rue de Bel Air
St Mary JE3 3ED

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M 07797 773880

BACS 40-25-34 | 43835928

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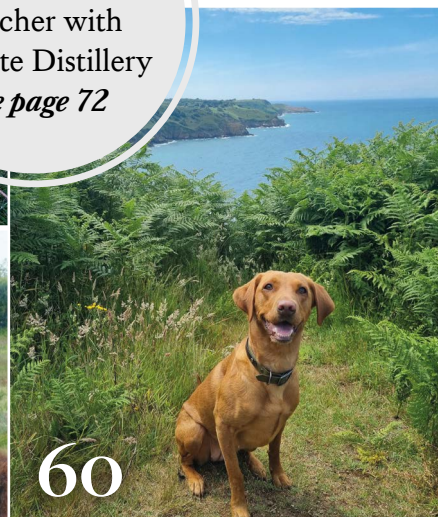
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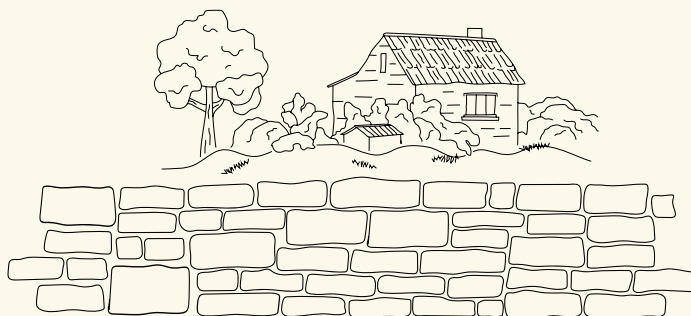
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Over the wall

A RURAL view



Regeneration – that was the theme of the event held in September at a farm in Trinity, and specifically it was about regenerative agriculture, a concept about which we hear more and more these days.

The event was called Regen 24, and it was similar to and inspired by the much larger Groundswell (Regenerative Agriculture Festival) event in the UK, which has been called ‘the Glastonbury of farming’. It is a forum for farmers, and anyone interested in food production or the environment to learn about the theory and practical applications of ‘conservation agriculture’ or regenerative systems.

This includes no-till, cover crops and reintroducing livestock into the arable rotation, with a view to improving soil health. In short, it is where agriculture meets the environment – ‘agroecology’. In Jersey, the annual Regen Gathering (it is now in its second year) has the same theme.

In essence, it is all about building a rural community and inspiring hope and optimism and imagination. It’s about getting people excited about reconnecting with the land and the opportunities and potential that might exist. The concept is a vehicle for people who don’t have access to land, for people who are new entrants, and who would like to farm but don’t come from families with farming backgrounds.

All the time, in all the talks and presentations, the unspoken theme was the atomisation of the rural way of life – in all spheres of life, actually – and what might be done to make the rural community a real and viable community once again.

As one of the organisers said, society has lost its way. People are meant to live in community and to work together, and that sense of community needs to be ... well, regenerated.

The same concepts are embodied in the name of the location (and its story) where the gathering was held – Le Tâcheron Farm, in Trinity.

The name ‘Le Tâcheron’ is an old Jersey word meaning ‘the team’ – the ideal potato harvesting team of three people, each one of them with a specific role. Jersey’s success in agriculture has always been built on teamwork and for the owners of Le Tâcheron Farm, the word symbolises the relationship between the farm and the environment, the farmer and the community, the ploughman and his horse – in other words, ‘the team’.

But it could also just as easily represent symbiotic relationships between the soil and microorganisms, and, in many respects, the synergies encapsulated within the meaning of the word Le Tâcheron: literally, at the very roots of regeneration.

And Le Tâcheron Farm? Well, there’s a bit of regeneration in that, as well. There are not many farms, these days, that are built from scratch. This one, made principally out of wood, does look already as if it has been around for a long time. In fact, the finishing touches were being put in place on the morning of the Regen event – and it is still without windows, at the time of writing!

The three-man team of owners – two brothers and a cousin – hope to support and unite Jersey’s agricultural community, something they consider to be the bedrock of Jersey’s unique cultural identity.

They say they welcome collaboration, and hope to be able to offer advice for those starting or thinking about starting an agricultural journey of their own.

The concept of regeneration is not out on a limb, the private ideas of a small and idealistic minority. The support of government and its farming policies are very supportive, it is incentivising and rewarding the best agroecological farming practices, and it is also supportive of people wanting to try to start smallholdings and small farms.

Presentations and workshops included subjects such as soil health, regenerative agriculture for arable and livestock farmers, how to get going on sustainable start-ups and circular businesses, conservation agriculture, minimum tillage and weed management, ecological field walks, agroforestry, the sharing of resources, knowledge, and land to create a thriving circular farming community. The question was raised whether agriculture and medicine can progress together from its present chemical model to a natural one.

So, the event was full of hope and optimism – as well as being quite a decent party.

Could this be the way forward for the Island’s agriculture? Well, for one sector of it, perhaps. ‘Mainstream’ agriculture – export led potato and dairy farming – will doubtless maintain their preeminent place in the agricultural economy.

But, for supplying local food to local people – that is where Regen will prove to be of the greatest value, and maybe essential as well.

The Jersey Salmagundi

A mixed salad of events and news, with a bit of this, that and the other thrown in



Helping build a better Jersey

The new Jersey general manager of Quantum Building Supplies, Paul Pinel, has been described as an 'unsung hero' by Variety International, in recognition of his many years of charitable work for Variety – the Children's Charity, which benefits the local community.

This has included his chairmanship of The Variety Sailing Trust, which has funded a 38ft catamaran, The Vernon Lilford Spirit of Variety, adapted for wheelchair access, and gives access to the experience of going afloat to hundreds of local children and young people, some who, in Paul's own words, need 'a bit of TLC'.

In September, Paul moved from Ronez, where he worked for nearly 11 years as their sales manager, to Quantum Building Supplies, a builder's merchant that supplies building materials, timber and tools to the construction industry and the end consumers. There is a shop at their premises in the Rue des Prés, providing a service for anyone who wants to create that building project – be it a small DIY job or a large house extension.

Paul was asked about the future of this sector of the Island's building industry, bearing in mind that there have been some notable construction companies that have stopped trading this year, due to the adverse economic situation.

'It has been a tough time for the whole construction sector over the last few years,' he said, 'but I believe things are picking up again, especially if a start is finally made on the new hospital at Overdale, a vast project that will benefit very many local businesses.'

'Localism' – both in business and community – is a concept in which both he and Quantum firmly believe.

Quantum Building Supplies was first established in 1994 and has grown to become a major importer and distributor of building products for Jersey's construction industry. As a member of a major UK buying group, they have access to a nationwide network of many varied suppliers and this helps them to supply a huge range of products and services at competitive rates, with speedy delivery guaranteed.

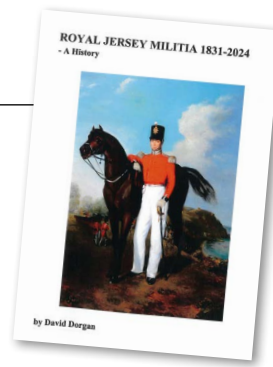
The company was purchased in 2019 by the Guernsey-based Norman Piette group, originally founded in 1739 and which is now a pan-Island business with Norman Piette, Ecohomes, Project and Annandale in Guernsey, Blanchard in Alderney and Quantum in Jersey.

'For all the companies in the group, the cost of materials remains high, because of the surrounding sea and the freight charges to cross it! But we have a great team in Jersey who are all conscious of reducing our costs as much as we can and by being as sustainable as we can. Every business needs to be environmentally conscious these days, and we are always thinking about sustainability.'

'We will always do our part to contribute towards sustainability. Everyone should do their bit to make Jersey a better place in a better world.'



Book review – Jersey Militia – 1831 – 2024 – A History



Local author David Dorgan has added a new title to the corpus of his works. The present book continues the story that he started in his previous book, *Jersey Militia 1337 – 1831 – A History*.

The new book – titled *Royal Jersey Militia 1831-2024 – A History* – covers all aspects of the Militia's history from the receipt of its 'Royal' title in 1831. It comprises a linear history of the Militia's uniforms, the Troopers, the Artillery, the Grenadiers, medical staff, headwear, shoulder belt-plates, arms, post-1831 fortifications, as well as spoons, trophies, porcelain and cutlery, swagger sticks, medals and pouches. It takes us up to the (almost) present time – the re-birth of the Royal Jersey Militia Army Cadet Force in 2010.

The book is very well illustrated with plenty of coloured pictures, which are necessary to illustrate the colourful uniforms and accoutrements of former times.

It is a book, it hardly needs to be said, that will please anybody interested in the history of the Militia and more generally, in military history. In great detail, it goes into things such as buttons and swords, and the designs that evolved over time.

It was not only buttons and swords that evolved, but also the Militia itself, with numerous reorganisations right through its history. Of special interest is the chapter on the Troopers of the Royal Jersey Militia – Jersey's own militia cavalry – which existed from 1857 to 1905.

Considering how great an impact militia duty had on Island life in times gone by – social as well as military – it seems strange that these days there is such a lack of knowledge of a part of Jersey's history that once was important and an integral part of our way of life.

If Mr Dorgan's book makes more people familiar with the Royal Jersey Militia and its history, it will have performed a valuable service.

It is available at the Société Jersiaise bookshop or it can be ordered via Amazon priced £30, or from Mr Dorgan himself. His e-mail: dalecot@dalecot.com



A Militia spoon

Exciting Christmas events at The Harbour Gallery Jersey for you

The Harbour Gallery Jersey will continue to be open seven days a week up until Christmas Eve, 9.30am - 5.30pm.

Managing director Pat Robson said: 'There is lots of lovely festive cheer and art and craft. Hampers can be made up for you; there is a Genuine Jersey Market Place and workshops for adults and children... there are lots of treats in store!'

The gallery is managed by Jersey charity Art in the Frame Foundation. It is the largest exhibiting, working and selling art and craft gallery in Jersey, spread over three floors and now includes The Textile Centre.

Located at The Quay, 19 Commercial Buildings, St Helier – The Harbour Gallery is a few minutes' walk away from Liberation Bus Station.

It is on Facebook and the website is www.theharbourgalleryjersey.com





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Jersey's Physic Garden

Amanda Bond writes about creating her Physic Garden near Sion, and working with the Jersey Flower Farm's Elise Stubbs:

It was as a result of a foraging walk in April through the lanes of St Lawrence, that I was offered a plot of land by Elise Stubbs of the Jersey Flower Farm, in order to grow medicinal herbs.

I was also granted a smallholding licence. At the end of April, I took a leap of faith (the weather was still cold) and sowed organic seeds, sourced from Earthsong Seeds, and began the task of tending and nurturing this new venture.

Over the last five months, 17 of the 19 herbs I sowed have grown to maturity, teaching me so many things – mainly by my attention to their needs, observing, listening and tending to the space around them.

During this time, Elise and I have discovered mutual passions and interests – and have begun to collaborate in additional ways. In September, we created floral displays for the Regen Gathering held at Le Tâcheron Farm. My own wreath was largely made up of foraged wildflowers and herbs from my Physic Garden, with Elise's from her beautiful field of homegrown cut flowers. Elise also supplied stunning table decorations for the event. We were delighted to donate these to contribute to this inspiring gathering focused on regenerative farming, organised by HYPHA Consulting.

We are now planning to expand the Physic Garden, growing natural dye plants, and a wildflower meadow – from which we will make herbal products, such as salves, balms and creams. We both have a textile and printing background in the arts and will combine ideas to create some handcrafted textiles using the natural plant dyes we grow. We also plan to offer workshops to share these skills and traditions.

I have been experimenting with 'wildcrafting' (harvesting plants from their natural, or 'wild' habitat, primarily for medicinal purposes). I have enjoyed infusing herbal teas and oils, as well as tinctures and oxymels – a mixture of honey and vinegar, used as a medicine. In this way I have built on my knowledge of working with essential oils and flower essences and of sourcing ingredients in a sustainable way from the wild.

We are excited to proceed, but know also that slowing down, and allowing the plants to guide us, will result in the best outcomes.

Amanda Bond

www.wildedgewalker.earth

@wildedgewalker Instagram & Facebook

Elise Stubbs

@JerseyFlowerFarm Instagram & Facebook

Elise Stubbs



Amanda Bond

Nearer to home, closer to France



The old Jersey Tourism slogan could sum up the policy of the Sustainable Economic Development Department, in terms of encouraging both local food production and regional produce from our geographical near neighbours. Kieranne Grimshaw spoke to the Sustainable Economic Development Minister, Deputy Kirsten Morel

Sustainable local produce is vital for islands, and Jersey faces its own challenges regarding the availability of local produce. We are all too aware of the reliance on regular ferry services to deliver food. Also, the disruption caused by bad weather or technical issues always creates disruption to our daily lives.

'Our department has responsibility for food security particularly in an emergency, so we have both supply chain security as part of our department, but also food security in terms of the production of food,' said the Sustainable Economic Development Minister, Deputy Kirsten Morel.

He added that his department was working regularly to ensure that there are no problems in the supply chain. To date, this had proved to be successful, through both Brexit and Covid.

There have also been some recent improvements on the agricultural side, he said.

'We've moved from a model that just rewarded production, to a model that rewards both production and environmental performance, as well as encouraging smallholders to start up in farming.

'The new Rural Support Scheme is really focused on production for local consumption, creating new farmers from smallholders and valuing environmental performance – everything from management of hedgerows to soil nutrition.'

His department also supports the annual Delicious Jersey Dine-Out Festival in the autumn. This recent initiative embraces local food and hospitality and also champions the farming industry. Recognising the environmental benefits of local food, the Minister also highlighted the health benefits, as produce spends less days in packaging. Another aim of the department is to

“ We’ve gone in three years from no smallholders to 80 – so that’s 80 new farmers

encourage smaller producers, and the Rural Support Scheme (subsidy scheme for agriculture) now enables smallholders to be a part of that, which was previously not possible.

'It's a huge success story,' Deputy Morel said. 'We've gone in three years from no smallholders to 80 – so that's 80 new farmers. Some will become larger commercial farmers, which is what we need. Some will remain smallholders, which creates variety, and they can also more easily become organic or sustainable, not having the commercial pressures.'

An ongoing challenge is finding the best way to facilitate the smooth distribution of products to retail locations. Sufficient quantities are needed to ensure outlets will buy from them. The Minister believed a distribution hub could be beneficial, as this would reduce invoicing and administration costs considerably. A hub, therefore, which could be the sole invoicer of local produce, and perhaps regional produce as well, is something his department will be considering.

So, as smallholders now provide a wider range of produce to Islanders, they could be harvesting a brighter future.

In respect of the supply chain, the Minister has had regular discussions with politicians in both Normandy and Brittany about the possibility of a more direct route for importing produce.

I've explained that we are part of the Normandy/Brittany region and we want to play an active part in that economy. I also recently took Jersey farmers to Normandy to meet French farmers and the Chamber of Agriculture in La Manche, to discuss how we can learn, sell and export to one another. We would then not be relying on just one supply chain, and food would come from a lot closer than it currently does.'

He thinks the recent trip to meet French counterparts in farming was a success. 'There's no doubt that both regions would like to engage with us a lot more regarding agriculture – and we also have similarities. When I saw a cider crusher in my hotel in Normandy, it really brought home the fact that our agricultural histories are really similar, as well as our climate. There's a real desire to export our produce to these regions as well as to import produce from them.'

With the French coast lying only 14 miles away, freight links between the Island and France are part of the southern supply chain issue. As the ferry tender process is still currently underway, the Minister has requested a minimum amount of freight between Saint-Malo and Jersey in terms of sailings – a minimum of two, but ideally three sailings per week, which could include one dedicated freight and one with both freight and passengers. This would then bring a different choice in goods and prices, quality and seasonal produce and reduce the need to travel to France for items such as our favourite pêches blanches.

There are, however, challenges to overcome regarding both local and regional produce.

'Being seasonal, they are difficult to obtain,' the Minister said. 'Chefs in large institutions, such as the Hospital, want to know they can source specific produce at any time of the year. We need them to buy into the fact it would be seasonal and consequently healthier, so there's an education piece around that as well.'

His French trip was all about maintaining good relationships with French counterparts, and the department is in regular contact with the president of the departmental council of La Manche about how to develop freight from Granville. They are also working on encouraging the French Government to allow Jersey oysters to be exported to Granville again. Since Brexit, fishermen have been forced to take them to Saint-Malo.

'Red tape and Brexit are the main issues,' Deputy Morel said. 'The UK Government have made sounds about reducing friction in the veterinary areas, so that might help with our oysters.'

A support package for the local fishing industry has also been established. 'For the first time in my lifetime, we now support fishermen through subsidy via the Marine & Rural Support Scheme. We're particularly rewarding environmental efforts, such as ensuring the fishing gear is brought home, not left at sea, as well as production. There's also safety at sea, as safety standards are always increasing and fishermen need help with that.'

This scheme, which uses public funds positively to promote environmentally friendly fishing practices, exemplifies the phrase 'paying public money in exchange for public goods.'

“When fishermen say fishing in Jersey is on the edge, they're not wrong. Despite some brilliant fishing businesses, there are so few fishermen left

'When fishermen say fishing in Jersey is on the edge, they're not wrong. Despite some brilliant fishing businesses, there are so few fishermen left – and locals don't consume that much fish.'

Remaining optimistic about the future of farming, the Minister believes it has turned a corner, whereby farmers now feel they can see a future. He would like to see some of our produce being exported to France.

'We only sell Jersey Royals to the UK, but there's no resilience, should the market fall away. Even if we just sold potatoes to Normandy, that's over a million customers. We can also sell the story about our còtills, farmers and seaweed.'

'La Manche loves the Channel Islands.'



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Hop – But Not Hip in Jersey

The Jersey hop – no, not a local dance, but a reminder that hops were once common in Jersey and used for making beer. Could they play a part in modern drink production? Alasdair Crosby talked to Pat Dean, head brewer at the Liberation group

Jersey hops for making Jersey beer?

Trouble is, there are hardly any commercial hop gardens, as the head brewer of Liberation Brewery, Pat Dean, explained.

‘There have been some hops grown in Grouville, and we have used these with our special Christmas brews over the past few years. We also did a collaboration brew with Stinky Bay and Bliss Brewery in 2021 using local hops.’

But wild hops do grow in hedgerows around the Island. Pat said that he knew that Grève de Lecq was a good place to find them and there are hobby brewers who cultivate hops in their own gardens, or very successfully in allotments at Les Creux.

All this might change, of course.

Alex Curtis of La Côte Distillery has plans to grow them (see the following article titled ‘From grain to glass’. If and when he does, it will be the next chapter in the story of brewing beer in Jersey.

The history of beer and its story in the Island has been eclipsed by Jersey’s ‘Big Apple’ and drowned in the sea of cider that was produced between the 17th and 19th Centuries. Historically, although Jersey is mostly associated with cider, it is possible that the production of beer predates the great expansion of cider orchards and cider production in late mediaeval and Tudor times. Ale would certainly have been produced since early times.



Beer, differentiated from ale, is simply ale boiled with dried, butter-tasting hop flowers. Hops (*Humulus lupulus*) are closely related to the nettle – and to the cannabis plant – and once they were a common wild plant in Jersey (the French name for them is ‘l’houblon’). They were certainly common in the mid-19th Century, but by 1891 they were described as ‘uncommon’; by 1903 they were ‘rare’. Some enterprising farmers turned

“ There have been some hops grown in Grouville, and we have used them with our special Christmas brews



their fields to hop growing; in 1791, Abraham Aubin auctioned his three hop fields in Mont Millais. Soldiers stationed in Jersey in the 18th Century grew hops and brewed their own beer in or around barracks. But early 19th Century attempts to found a Jersey hop growing industry were unsuccessful.

Hops give a special flavour to ale, making beer simply a more interesting and palatable drink.

At a time when there is so much interest in local produce being grown for local people, the Jersey hop may be making a comeback.

From grain to glass

‘Less is more’ at the Gin Lab in La Motte Street, where Deputy Alex Curtis and his partner, Thea Fauvel, provide a distilled experience for the public. By Alasdair Crosby



Make your own gin! What a riveting idea – and what fun!

Deputy Alex Curtis and his partner, Thea Fauvel, can help us have that fun and guide us in the distillation process. They can be found, whenever Alex is in distilling mode rather than in States Member mode, at the Gin Lab – which they call ‘an experiential retail outlet’ in La Motte Street in town that they bought and converted from its former use as a betting shop. It is part of Alex’s La Côte Distillery.

As you walk in, above a long table along which are ranged a row of small stills, hangs a big bunch of hops – Jersey hops for Jersey gin, perhaps?

‘We don’t use hops – yet,’ Alex said. ‘People do make hopped gin. We have a few hops of our own, and we might be able to produce a couple of bottles. We would like to do more, so we have grown some this year which we hope to plant up to full height growth next year.’

**“ Why do we do this?
It’s a labour of love**

If the reader is under the impression that the Gin Lab might be some sort of speakeasy, it is not – it is quite legal, and Alex distils vodka and makes gin under licence from Customs and Excise, whom, he said, have been very helpful and supportive of his distillery and spirit business.

The Gin Lab offers the opportunity for the public to experience distilling for themselves. You can create your own gin, and perfect your own recipe, choosing from the wide range of botanicals available in the Lab.

It has become a popular idea for corporate events and team building, said Thea.

‘Some people say: “Oh, I never drink neat spirits.” But the reaction needn’t always be “wonderful, wonderful!”

‘Equally valuable for us is: “I don’t really like gin, but I do see why you are doing this.” Or they may say, they’ve changed their mind about not liking gin. For us, it is enjoyable just to have the discussion.’

When Alex first went to university, a friend bet him that he would be unable to spend less than £100 on alcohol in his first year. He realised that barley would not count as alcohol, so he bought that instead – and had a free ticket for brewing as much beer as he wanted. He won the bet.

Back in Jersey, he had what must have been Britain’s most southerly grain to glass distillery in St Clement – in his parents’ garden shed. He made both vodka and gin ... for which he had a licence, of course, otherwise the police might have taken an uncomfortably close interest.

That was seven years ago, in 2017. He launched La Côte Distillery and his first commercial Jersey Gin that August. From his garden shed, his business has migrated to slightly bigger premises. He bought the building on La Motte Street in December 2019, and then started building works... but, of course, within a couple of months Covid had intervened in its invariably unhelpful way, and so renovations weren’t finished until a couple of years later. They have been open to the public since January 2024.

‘Originally,’ Alex said, ‘I made small amounts of bottles. That’s all we did – we sold bottles. Now, the business has two arms – two routes to market. We make and sell gin and vodka to hotels, drinks outlet, and to the end consumer. But now we’ve also got a shop, where the public can come and make their own gin!’

There might be a natural confusion for the public between their operation and other local companies purveying their own branded spirits. But there is a difference, he explained.

‘Most people who make gin don’t start from scratch, they bring in the raw alcohol and then redistill it. They can make amazing spirits from that, but we believe it’s important for us to be connected right to the raw ingredient. For us, that is barley, although we are experimenting with other produce.

That’s still a hard message to get across, but we can walk a visitor right through the process, from grain to glass. We show them each bit of equipment, and they can get to smell all the smelly stuff, and learn what brewing, fermenting and, finally, distilling is all about.’

A gin distillery that creates its own alcohol is still very rare, especially for small distilleries, so Alex and Thea are really proud to be the only distillery in the Island creating grain to glass spirits.

‘Why do we do this? It’s a labour of love. We understand why most distillers choose a different business model, and we don’t have a bad word to say about anybody who buys in raw alcohol, because that’s what most of the industry does. They make really good products, but they are not crafting alcohol from scratch, as we are.’

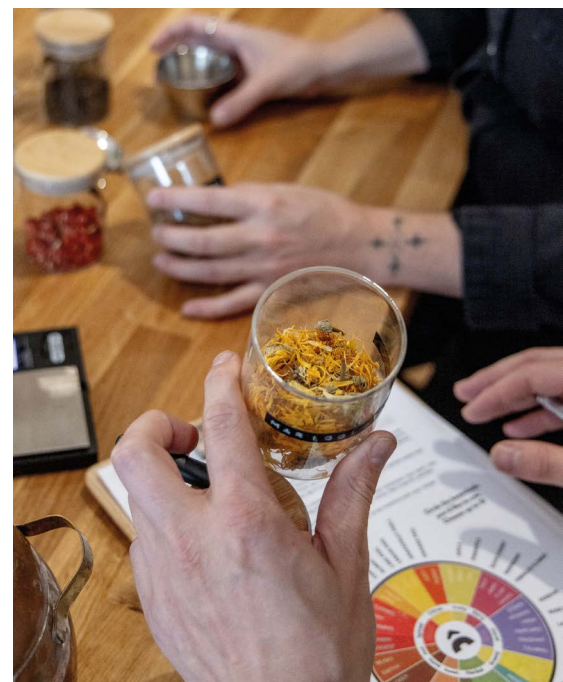
The barley used by Alex is almost identical to the grain a brewer uses to make beer. He takes the barley and brews that into a beer by mixing it with hot water for an hour and creating a ‘wort’, a liquid, that has had the sugar extracted from it.

Every day they brew, they are left with 150 kilos of spent grain ... ‘And that grain goes to Ollie Griggs at Lomah Farm in St John. He composts it. It’s fantastic, because it contains so much nitrogen it adds heat to the composting. For him, it’s a free source of really rich material, which he can use on his land. It’s like adding a nitrogen fertiliser, but it’s in an organic form, not synthetic. That goes back into Jersey soil.

‘It’s great for us, that we can put our by-product back into circulation and to a good use.’



“We believe it’s important for us to be connected right to the raw ingredient. For us, that is barley, although we are experimenting with other produce



Is the barley grown in the Island?

‘We’d love to grow the grain. We bought seven vergées of land in Grouville, and we hope to grow that among a range of things, such as hops and botanicals – juniper berries and blackthorn sloes. Our hops are just one element. We’d love to see hops being grown commercially in the Island once again. We use English barley at the moment, but we want to start growing Jersey barley and use that.’

‘We’ve achieved the brewing side; all we need to do now is to achieve growing a local grain crop to use for brewing.’

The beer, fermented with yeast, is the source for distilling vodka. It has to be reprocessed again and again in a Reflux still until the alcoholic strength is closer to 96% and has an incredibly clean liquid, fairly neutral on the nose.

‘It takes about 40 hours of production time to make 90 bottles of vodka – you’ve got to make vodka before you can make gin. So, that’s about 30 minutes a bottle. It is not time efficient and we do it because we think making the alcohol is the right thing. If you want to make a gin, and your area of focus is the botanicals that go in, you are going to buy alcohol because it is so much quicker, but if you want to be connected to the process, and make alcohol, you do what we do.’

After the past seven years, Alex is increasingly switching to local ingredients for the botanicals. The simple ones are all available locally in gardens and open spaces: bay leaf, rosemary, fennel, coriander and hops – even from sweet potatoes that are growing on the roof terrace of their flat above the distillery.

“We’ve achieved the brewing side; all we need to do now is to achieve growing a local grain crop to use for brewing

‘We are always asking ourselves: “how can we make the process more agricultural?” We have been on a mission for a few years to learn how to properly grow hops. We are hoping to make an ouzo or sambuca style spirit, and to do so, we grew our own fennel and harvested it at exactly the right moment – and the trial batch smelled amazing!’

What about vodka from waste Jersey Royal potatoes?

‘Two Jersey businesses are selling that. They are shipping the potatoes to the UK and the vodka is created there. There is still so much scope for using up surplus Jersey Royals; maybe it is something for the future. But it is a very hard product to process and to convert it to fermentable sugar.’

‘It is certainly an opportunity for the Island, but I don’t think it’s a business that would make millions! It would be valuable for the Island if it were part of a story about how Jersey converts waste products into something valuable and recyclable.’

And the business potential for his own company?

‘If we didn’t enjoy it, we wouldn’t want to spend our weekends working on top of our other day jobs. It helps me stay grounded and in touch with the real world. It is a small operation – and an adventure for us.’

‘Normally farmers are trying to get out of farming, and to get into some higher value product. As far as we are concerned, we have the higher value product – and we want to get into farming.’

An expanded version of this article is available on our website: www.ruraljersey.co.uk

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FOOD AND DRINK

JERSEY'S FIRST VINEYARD



Summer spraying at La Mare vineyards



The pioneer family of Jersey's wine

La Mare Wine Estate in St Mary was created by Robert (Bob) and Ann Blayney in 1973 and was the first successful commercial winery in Jersey. Bob, who celebrated his 90th birthday this summer, talked to Alasdair Crosby

Once upon a time, there was a semi-derelict farmhouse in St Mary called The Elms. There were pigs in the kitchen and chickens roosting upstairs. It was an old building, built in 1789, and although, from afar, it might have looked imposing, that was very far from being the case. No maintenance had been done on it for many, many years and now it was falling apart.

Robert (Bob) and Ann Blayney had come to live in Jersey in the late 1960s, and were looking for somewhere to create a family home. They were shown the property and fell in love with it – they could see the potential. They bought it and started the long and expensive business of repair and restoration.

They called the property by its original name: La Mare. A few years later, they planted the first vines – and that was the genesis of the present La Mare Wine Estate, the first successful commercial winery in Jersey.

The Blayneys have long retired, and this summer Bob Blayney celebrated his 90th birthday, with Ann, his sons and their families. Looking back over his long life, he recalled why the scion of long-established Northumberland wine merchants had moved to Jersey ... and why a wine merchant then became a wine grower.

Bob was the inheritor of a wine business, Blayney & Co, that was the premier wine merchant company of the North East of England; it had been in his family for five generations.



“ We found that everything was right for a vineyard – except for the usual St Mary wind – and the sunshine hours were absolutely perfect

He recollected: ‘My family’s firm, established in 1831, had built up excellent relations with leading families in the great wine centres of Europe and they taught me about wine, from the vine to the glass. My father was one of the doyens of the wine trade in England, and he continued to foster my expertise in wine, which he had been gently doing since I was introduced to wine tasting when I was a boy.’

After his school years, Bob’s first practical wine trade training was as an 18-year-old cellar boy with wine shippers in the City of London; then, after some months, he was sent to learn the trade in the vineyards of Spain, Portugal and France, before returning home to work in the family business. Years later, he would become a Liveryman of the Vintners’ Company and a Freeman of the City of London.

Blayney & Co owned pubs and off-licences as well as the main wine merchant business. The wine trade was very different then from what it later became.

‘There was much more of almost a family relationship with our private customers. People would come in and sit down in a comfy office chair, or in our oak-panelled luncheon room, and discuss what wines they liked. My job was to suggest what they might like! That was the joy of being an old-fashioned wine merchant.’

There was also a very clear chain of supply that went from the vineyard to the négociant to the wine shipper and merchant and then to the end consumer. But all that changed with the advent of supermarkets, which rent that chain asunder and undercut prices. The supermarkets were able to provide good quality wines at far less cost.

Within four years of Bob joining the family firm, his father had died as a result of a bad car accident, and Bob had taken over the company, aged 23.

‘After a few years, it was clear that the traditional wine trade couldn’t adapt or survive,’ Bob said. Many famous companies just went under, but Blayney & Co eventually merged with one of the big brewery companies. As the latest generation of a family company, it was a sad decision but as Bob says, ‘... it opened up a new and exciting chapter.’



“Ann said: You don’t need a couple of rows of vines – you need the whole lot. I’ll help you create a vineyard



Bob had married Ann three years earlier in 1965, and with their toddler son, Andrew, joined Ann’s parents, who were living in Jersey, and Bob became involved in the wine trade in St Helier. They lived initially in St John while they looked around for a property to buy until they found and bought The Elms.

‘The thought of having a vineyard in Jersey was definitely not in the front of our minds. All the land attached to La Mare was let out. Our tenant was Tony Woolley, a warm-hearted, ex-Army farming chap. He gave us a lot of advice, especially how to fit into the neighbourhood milieu of Jersey farmers.’

They asked Tony if they could take back the little paddock next to the house, partially as grazing for Ann’s horse.

Bob continued: ‘One day, I thought “this could be a vineyard area”, and so I said to Ann ... “Do you think it might be possible if I could just have a small portion of it to have a couple of rows of vines?” Ann said, “No. Not a good idea.” Oh dear, never mind.

‘Ann then said: “You don’t need a couple of rows of vines – you need the whole lot. I’ll help you create a vineyard.”’

They researched locally and they joined the English Vineyard Association, through which they met Dr Helmut Becker, professor at the German Viticultural Institute at Geisenheim on the Rhine. They persuaded him to visit Jersey to advise them.

‘Helmut Becker was a big, open-hearted Rhinelander with the typical Rhinelander sense of humour. He remained always very helpful. Very different was the French advisor, whom the States Agriculture department kindly found for us.

‘This chap arrived. He was so dry, you thought he would fall to ash! He walked around, and his general impression was: “Non. C’est impossible. Absolut non”.

‘At first, we thought: “OK. That’s it, then.” Then we thought: “let’s prove him wrong.”

‘We looked into it, and we found that everything was right for a vineyard – except for the usual St Mary wind – and the sunshine hours were absolutely perfect.’

Their research led them to plant, in 1972, a trial four-vergée vineyard with Müller-Thurgau (a cross between Riesling and Sylvaner), which was thought to be a safe bet for Island conditions.

In 1974, the Blayneys created a small, well-equipped winery and laboratory in time for their first vintage that autumn. The sales price for their first bottles was £2.25 – which at the time was said to be ‘not too expensive’.

‘But although owning a vineyard was a lot of hard work, and a lot of fun, we were becoming acutely aware that although it might seem a glamorous occupation, vineyards devour money. Over the winter of 1975 we explored the possibility of opening La Mare Vineyards to visitors.

‘As I had my “day job” to keep me busy in town, Ann took on the tourism side of La Mare Vineyards. That summer of 1976, we welcomed personally thousands of visitors to La Mare and created another valuable tourist attraction for Jersey. The wonderful summer and autumn conditions in 1976 brought us an abundant harvest, and the quality of the wine was excellent.’

Their wine was served on two Royal Visits of the late Queen and Duke of Edinburgh, at States luncheons.

‘In 1978 the States entertained Her Majesty to luncheon at Hotel L’Horizon; all the Island’s great and good were invited – and us, as well! It was a huge fillip to our confidence for our wine to be served. We had the extraordinary pleasure of drinking the Loyal Toast to the Sovereign in her presence with our own wine.’



The vintages of 1980 and 1981 were tiny and made them look for another product to sell to visitors. This was cider and effectively they revived the ancient tradition of making cider in Jersey in commercial quantities. Such was the success of La Mare Vineyards that Bob Blayney swapped his day job in St Helier for full time vigneron.

These were immensely exciting years for the Blayneys. The quality of their wines was steadily increasing and in the fullness of time La Mare had become a successful venture. It also became the first modern distillery in Jersey, producing the Jersey Apple Brandy. But, by 1997 Bob and Ann decided they deserved their retirement; they left La Mare in 1998.

‘It was very sad for us, but we could see that things were changing, and it was time for another family to take it.’

The sale to the new owner, Trevor Owen, was arranged very amicably. They had known Tim Crowley – an Irishman with a background in both farming and retail – for some time and knew of his keen interest in La Mare. They suggested to him, with Trevor Owen’s support, that he might like to take over.

Over the next 27 years, La Mare has continued to grow and become the business familiar to Islanders today.

“We had the extraordinary pleasure of drinking the Loyal Toast to the Sovereign in her presence with our own wine



Finance

With its roots in the soil



Wealth management firm Evelyn Partners is a major sponsor of Genuine Jersey. Kieranne Grimshaw met their Jersey managing director, Matt Falla, to learn about their mutually beneficial partnership

Evelyn Partners director Matt Falla has a great interest in the Island's rural economy. It is a finance company, based in town, but it is also an inaugural and major sponsor of Genuine Jersey, of Farm Jersey events and Regen Jersey, and it offers favourable terms to agricultural businesses. So, what is the connection?

“There's a very personal connection, in that that my grandfather was the chief soil analyst during the Occupation until his retirement. So, my roots are in Jersey soil, quite literally

‘My fingers have been in the soil of the Island – although indirectly through both my grandfathers – for generations. I love the Island I was born in. There's a very personal connection, in that that my grandfather was the chief soil analyst during the Occupation until his retirement. So, my roots are in Jersey soil, quite literally.’

Matt grew up in the Island. After his school years, in his words, he ‘managed to avoid university’ and went straight into banking and financial services, where he has spent his whole career.

Evelyn Partners are the first patrons of Genuine Jersey and this is something that Matt feels is very important for his company.

‘We are very pleased to be able to support an organisation that has done so much good in the Island over the last 20 years. We are pleased to have become its first patron and to lend financial support to help members.’

‘Also, we feel it is a great opportunity to be able to offer our services – be it investment management, tax, accounting, business services etc – at a discount to farmers and to Genuine Jersey members.’

Evelyn offers a diverse range of services to GJ members. As Matt explained: ‘It all depends on the size of the organisation. Jill, for example, produces fudge. That service could be taking the fudge and produce to give as gifts to some of our clients. For the larger businesses, they can also avail themselves of the expertise we have in trade and custom advice and see if they are making best use of the allowances. It's really everything Evelyn does, from investment management and tax to financial planning and advice.’

Deciding to sponsor Genuine Jersey has had mutual benefits – as an Islander, Matt feels that the sponsorship helps Evelyn connect to both small and large businesses and producers, be it a one-person band or Jersey Dairy.

'It's interesting to find out what people are doing and what innovation they're looking at. It's an amazing connection between what has always happened in this Island and where we find ourselves now.

'To be able to talk about the things that the Genuine Jersey members are doing and, hopefully, helping in some way is, in essence, what it is all about. We're looking at real businesses – about 180 to 200 of them now in our Island – they're the lifeblood of it.'

Evelyn also assists the hospitality industry, from hosting events in the Island for visiting hotel owners to showcasing Jersey produce, both locally and in the UK.

Recognising the importance of sustainable food production, Matt was delighted to support the recent Regen (regenerative farming) Gathering at Le Tâcheron Farm, Trinity for its second annual event. Jersey's farming industry, sustainable land use and soil quality were the focus of this two-day event in September.

'For me, Regen is what we've been doing here for hundreds of years in farming – regenerative farming – which, I think, is something to which we are returning. Squeezing more out of the land with intensive production of the Jersey Royal has led in some places to a product that looks vastly different to what it originally did and has created a soil structure in some places that has contributed to the recent flooding.'

Discussing how Evelyn helps facilitate the smooth running of local businesses, Matt highlighted their range of advice from issues on carbon to plastic tax, as well as helping businesses improve their productivity through technology.

“Squeezing more out of the land with intensive production of the Jersey Royal has led in some places to a product that looks vastly different to what it originally did and has created a soil structure in some places that has contributed to the recent flooding





'Jersey is leading the way in terms of what the Dairy are doing with blue tooth on their herd and what Island farmers are doing with the aid of technology crop in terms of spraying and harvesting. I think we don't just have to look to the UK for guidance, we can actually export a huge amount of our own experience – and Regen helps.

'We spend most of our time in an Island that is looked after and tended by the custodians of the land. It would be a pretty rotten place if they weren't here.

'So often, businesses can look as if they were external to the local life of the Island. We always ask ourselves: what else can we do locally to support the Island community?'

“ So often, businesses can look as if they were external to the local life of the Island. We always ask ourselves: what else can we do locally to support the Island community?



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evelyn
PARTNERS



ARTWORK – based on dog walks

Beverley Speck is drawn deeply to nature in all its forms. She met Ruth Le Cocq

There's a sense of childlike excitement in the room and it's got something to do with the gaggle of little felted animals peering down from the shelf above.

Each one wears a unique, expressive face, carefully crafted by Beverley Speck, and there is a feeling of revisiting one's formative years when *Jemima Puddle-Duck*, *Mrs Tiggy-Winkle* and *Tom Kitten* captured our imaginations in a *Beatrix Potter* world.

Beverley, sitting comfortably in her chair in front of her sewing machine, gazes upwards and smiles indulgently. Her delight is tangible.

'I love making the little felted animals and I absolutely love Christmas, particularly coming up with new Christmas decorations. I make a new one each year because I've got people who come back year after year who want to add to their collection,' she said.

It was 15 years ago that Beverley Speck – Bespoke Textiles – came into being. The mother of three children was struggling with her work/life balance.

'My husband said to me: "When are you happiest?" I said: "At my sewing machine." And he said: "That's probably the thing you need to do."'

Beverley started out by making cushions and small vintage style textile gifts including cards and ornaments.

“When are you happiest?” I said: ‘At my sewing machine.’ And he said: “That’s probably the thing you need to do



'I joined Genuine Jersey and I had my first Christmas market at The National Trust headquarters and I completely sold out. Now, the customer base at the Christmas markets has grown so much that I start making for Christmas in April!'

This level of interest boded well for the future because in 2013 Beverley was contacted by *Country Homes & Interiors* magazine.

'I was asked for a batch of products in June, so I did a selection box of Christmas decorations expecting them to be used for gift ideas.'

However, she was delighted to see that her products featured not only on the front page of the magazine but all throughout the pages.

It's impossible not to catch Beverley's joy and excitement as she talks about her creations.





These include textile art which starts with a painted background.

She explained: 'I draw the actual image using the needle on the sewing machine. The thread is the paint, the needle on the sewing machine is the tool – the paintbrush or whatever – and I'm using my hands to draw.'

All of Beverley's artwork is based on her dog walks and she is drawn deeply to nature in all its forms.

'I will just stop and do a quick sketch of a bird formation, and I take a photograph to remind me of the colours of that day. Then I will go back and mix the paints. My artwork is completely based in nature – that's what feeds me, that's what makes me, that's my happy place.'

Beverley grew up near the Lake District where she was surrounded by natural beauty.

“ I love making the little felted animals and I absolutely love Christmas, particularly coming up with new Christmas decorations

'I remember walking through fields to my grandma's and I was absorbed in the beauty of the animal life, the bird life and the changing rhythms of the seasons.'

As the youngest of four children, Beverley became a big observer of the world.

'I think if you live in a big family the chances of using your voice are really slim, so you have to use your eyes a lot.'

'I find that nature speaks to me, it brings me alive, and I feel restored after being in nature and that's how I feel when I'm sewing too.'

Beverley will be exhibiting at Genuine Jersey's Simply Christmas markets in the Royal Square on 21 to 24 November and 28 November to 1 December before heading out west to Grève de Lecq at the invitation of The National Trust for Jersey on 14 and 15 December.

Usually, she can be found in her studio at The Harbour Gallery, Commercial Buildings, St Helier, in what was once the stationery cupboard.

She can be contacted on beverley@beverleyspeck.co.uk, [instagram.com/beverleyspeck](https://www.instagram.com/beverleyspeck) and [facebook.com/beverleyspecktextiles](https://www.facebook.com/beverleyspecktextiles).





The man is indeed for turning

Ruth Le Cocq met Steve Pearl from Hamptonne Wood Turning



Steve Pearl steps carefully from one side of his workshop to the other at Hamptonne Wood Turning, making sure he doesn't knock anything over.

The space is brimful with hardwoods, from tiny offcuts and recycled floorboards to large planks and timber from fallen trees. And, of course, there is rather a lot of dust.

Steve creates bespoke pieces turned on his lathe as well as distinctive pieces of furniture. He pointed to the planks of wood leaning against the wall.

'There is some very exotic wood here,' he said. 'Bloodwood is very rare and very beautiful and rosewood is a toxic wood but it is great for making small things. In that pile I've got red oak, European oak, walnut, beech – all sorts of wood really.'

Steve learnt woodturning at school but it wasn't until 30 years later that his interest was piqued again when he shared his skills with the young people at Grands Vaux Youth Club. Then, when he retired in 2017, his hobby developed into something a little bit more.

'I started getting lovely chunks of wood that had lots of faults in them and splits and voids, so I started filling them with resin,' said Steve.

These resin rivers running through his creations, as well as the range of colours and tones of the different species of wood and subtle differences between the grain and textures, make each of Steve's pieces unique.

'When I put a piece of wood on the lathe, I don't actually know what I am going to turn until I start to shape it. I'll notice a fault in the wood so I'll have to turn that out to change the shape of what I wanted to do.'

He pointed to two large pieces of timber.

'Just look at the thickness of that,' said Steve, stroking it gently with his hand.

'It's going to be a huge dining table. It's going to be trimmed off, squared up and shaped and this...' he said, pointing to a large indentation, '... will form a natural river that will run through the centre of the table with coloured resin.'

Steve focuses on making pieces that please him and, to his delight, they seem to please other people too.

'Some of the items are quite pricey but, especially at the Christmas markets, people buy them as gifts for a loved one,' he said.

For example, Steve made an oak bowl laid with brass cartridges encapsulated with clear resin and it sold immediately.

'A gentleman bought it as a present for his father and then his wife came back to me and said she thought he would like one as well.'

As Steve talks about his craft, his eyes light up at the thought of what he is going to make next.

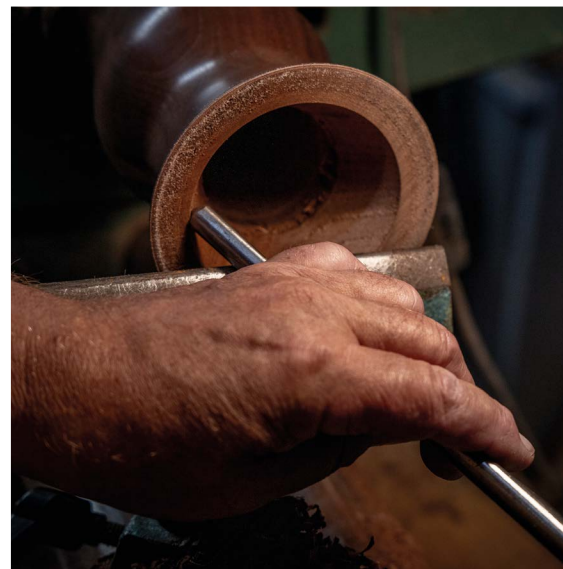
'Woodturning is a very creative thing, it's a bit of both craft and art. There is also an element of danger in it – when you have got chunks of wood spinning around at 2,000rpm and you've got razor-sharp tools, you have got to be careful.

'You can have all sorts of things going on in your life but as soon as you get to that lathe you are completely focused on it – you are listening for the noise it's making as you can hear faults in the wood.'

However, after a morning in the workshop, Steve is covered in dust from head to toe despite wearing a visor and mask.

'That's my argument for going to the pub for a drink,' he grinned. 'Just to wash the dust out of my throat.'

Steve will be at the first two Genuine Jersey Simply Christmas markets and he can be found on Facebook at Hamptonne Wood Turning.




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**THURSDAY 21ST NOVEMBER 6.00pm and
SUNDAY 25TH NOVEMBER 2.30pm**

Tea Tasting with the award winning Jersey Fine Tea Company Boutique producers of single estate Jersey Teas

At both events sample the Camellia Sinensis leaves grown in Jersey's own tea gardens within organic principles, to include green, black and white teas.

After the tasting enjoy the delights of a delicious selection of sweet things from Petit Gateau together with a glass of Prosecco.

You will all go home with a sample pack of tea and can enjoy 10% Discount shopping in the gallery on the day.

£42.00

Member of Genuine Jersey



THURSDAY 28TH NOVEMBER

Coffee tasting with David Warr of coffee roasters Coopers & Co Jersey

Get the taste buds into gear, sample delicious world wide coffees including Fairtrade

Afterwards enjoy a delicious buffet and a glass of wine. You will take home a sample pack and can enjoy 10% discount shopping at the gallery all evening

£42.00

FRIDAY 29th NOVEMBER

Beer Tasting with the Liberation Group

The Head Brewer will be explaining about the ingredients and methods used to create their award wining beers, which you will get to sample.

This will be followed by a sumptuous buffet where more beer can be tried, or wine from Liberation, if you prefer. You will take a gift away with you.

You can enjoy 10% shopping discount from our newly opened Christmas Exhibition, or any goods in the gallery. They can be stored at the gallery for you to pick up over the weekend.

£42.00

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THURSDAY 12TH DECEMBER

You are in for the most deliciously mouth watering treat!!

Chocolate tasting with Kundeti Raj of Cocoa49.2 Jersey's first 'Bean to Bar' chocolate manufacturer, combining purity and quality of Indian grown cocoa beans with the finest dairy products that Jersey has to offer, no additives or preservatives.

Afterwards enjoy a delicious buffet and a glass of wine. Take home an assortment box of chocolates and enjoy 10% discount Christmas shopping in the gallery

£45.00

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book early to avoid disappointment.

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Art in the Frame Foundation, Jersey Charity No.21

The Harbour Gallery Jersey

Christmas Events and Workshops for Groups



Art in the Frame Foundation can put together a lovely event, day or evening, for you and your fellow workers leading up to Christmas at The Harbour Gallery Jersey.

We offer a buffet from well tested caterers or just snacks, cupcakes, a wine bar, beers, tea/coffee, soft drinksoptions can be discussed with you.

Or, arrange a tasting, **SEE REVERSE**,
also SIP AND PAINT SESSIONS AND SEA GLASS PANELS.

We give you choice of a 45/60 minute Christmas Activity whilst enjoying your time with us making something that you can take home with you or leave to pick up later.

Living foliage Christmas Wreath workshops, allow 2 1/2 to 3 hours,
tea /coffee and cakes, wine, buffet etc can be added, just 2 dates left.

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email; partintheframe@yahoo.co.uk
we are here to help you and love to see your creations.

These workshops do not have to be just for Christmas but can be adapted to any time of the year, birthday parties, Hen parties in fact any celebrations.

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The Pottery Shed Jersey

Ruth Le Cocq met Karen Hibbs

Visiting The Pottery Shed Jersey is like entering an enchanted world where the surrounding ferns and foliage seem to breathe gently as Karen Hibbs performs alchemist magic, transforming stoneware clay into a range of beautiful bowls, mugs, and jugs.

Although her garden is just next to one of the busiest roads leading into St Helier, Karen's studio is bathed in peace and tranquillity with the perimeter trees acting as a soundproof barrier, enabling her to focus on what she loves to do best – throwing clay onto her potter's wheel.

'I set up The Pottery Shed Jersey about ten years ago and shortly afterwards I joined Genuine Jersey,' said Karen, who sells her creations throughout the year, mainly at the summer and Christmas markets.

For the festive season she makes Christmas-themed ceramics and a range of porcelain tree decorations while also offering her usual Jersey range, which includes a butter dish, cream jug, a Jersey Royals bowl and her bestseller, a Jersey milk jug.

However, running a ceramics business wasn't on Karen's original wish list in life.

'I'd done a couple of ceramics classes over the years and just sort of dabbled. Then a friend's husband wanted to buy her a course doing something creative and he asked whether I would go with her and what would I recommend.'

The two friends attended pottery classes once a week at the Philip Maurant Centre for about three years.

“ But I became totally obsessed with it, really passionate about it, and I think that anybody who makes ceramics finds it quite addictive, even though it's not easy

'It was a hobby,' said Karen, 'but I became totally obsessed with it, really passionate about it, and I think that anybody who makes ceramics finds it quite addictive, even though it's not easy.'

Learning how to throw onto the potter's wheel and experimenting with a mind-blowing array of glazes were just two of the challenges facing Karen.

'You just have to keep at it and find things that do work and learn from your mistakes,' she laughed, as she politely declined to share publicly some of her early mishaps.

In particular, Karen loves making bowls.

'There is something about when you get it right – it just feels right when the weight is right – it should feel balanced in your hand,' she explained.

Karen often seeks out plants in the garden and she uses them to decorate her pieces.

'On this one,' she said, pointing to a finished mug featuring her trademark curly handle, 'I used some lavender, fern and rosemary to make an imprint.'

In recent years Karen has also enjoyed sharing her skills and more people than ever are having private pottery taster sessions at her studio.

‘I meet some really lovely people. Some come in and they really are quite nervous and tense because their experience of doing anything creative was 30 or 40 years ago at school. Then, they relax and start to enjoy it and they just have such great fun.’

For Karen, time seems to stand still as she focuses on perfecting her art.

‘It’s a very mindful practice because you can only concentrate on what you are doing in the present moment – there is so much coordination going on. Hours pass and, even if I’m not on the wheel, and working on a piece at my workbench, I’m not looking out of the window. I’m totally focused on what I am doing and it’s great,’ she said, smiling gently.

Karen’s latest venture has involved opening a shop at The Gallery Café and Deli in St Aubin. The shop is called Jersey Artisans Gifts and Homeware. She, and eight other Jersey makers, artists and small businesses, have created a cooperative joining forces to sell their handcrafted products together with those of other local artists and makers.

‘We are taking it in turns to run the shop and it will be a good opportunity for locals and holidaymakers to come and meet the makers in person,’ she said.

Karen can be found on Instagram @the_pottery_shed_jersey and Facebook @thepotteryshedjersey and she can be contacted on thepotteryshedjersey@gmail.com or by telephoning 07797 731717.



A photograph of two men standing in a farm setting. The man on the left is wearing a dark vest over a light shirt and dark trousers. The man on the right is wearing a green vest over a light shirt, blue jeans, and a green cap. They are standing in front of a metal fence with a cow behind it. The ground is covered in straw. A large black cow is in the foreground on the right.

Sense and seasonality

**Martin Mitchell,
commercial director
of Valley Foods Ltd,
talked to Alasdair
Crosby about why
it makes sense to
use the Island's local
produce**

As the Bible says: 'For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven ... a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted.'

Martin Mitchell, commercial director of Valley Foods Ltd, believes that, as an Island community, there is a time to grow more of our food, increase our food security, cultivate smallholdings and gardens, and eat seasonally as well as sensibly.

Valley Foods has launched its fresh fruit and produce side: 'It's all about the small, independent grower. We are willing to work with as many farmers who are willing to work with us, and the door is wide open for anybody who wants to come on board.'

To some extent, they are indeed a hub for local growers.

'Restaurateurs can buy the most glorious of local fresh vegetables. Lettuce from Anneville Farm for example: organic, slow-grown, superb and ten times better than you get buying in from the UK. This is the sort of produce that we want to get on to Islanders' dinner plates – and we are finding out that there are plenty of restaurants that want fresh, top-quality produce as well.

'Master Farm's asparagus that we had this year was second to none, absolutely sublime! We put an order in for 10 kilos of asparagus, and it's cut that morning and sold that day. You can't get fresher. We've got something that has zero air miles, is grown two or three miles down the road, cut on the same day and delivered to the restaurant on the same day.'



“With agriculture getting tougher and tougher, we have great potential for developing a livestock business sector – it’s sitting in the background, ready to grow

Valley Foods has changed a lot recently, he said, in that they are working far more closely with local farmers. They also provide fresh meat for their butchery department. Jersey Angus primes cuts and burgers from the aged cows are sent by Trinity Manor to the abattoir and lamb and pork from Panigot Farm in St Peter.

Martin is also on the board of the Jersey Hospitality Association (JHA) and chairs its Supply Chain board. The JHA has put together the Delicious Dine-Out Festival, something on which they have worked hard for a year or so. ‘It’s not like the old Tennerfest, it’s all about helping and supporting local producers. The concept is to put a menu together that includes local ingredients. It’s tricky, because we’ve got restrictions of what we can produce in Jersey.’

‘We’ve got beef and lamb, but not a huge amount of both. We haven’t got poultry for the table because we haven’t got an abattoir that can process this yet. We need that to change. At the moment, it was designed as a waste processing facility along the lines of “what do we do with these cows once they have finished milking?

We’ll put them through the abattoir and ship them to the UK and turn them into Findus Crispy Pancakes”. What a waste! This has changed over the last decade but there is plenty of scope to develop.

‘With agriculture getting tougher and tougher, we have great potential for developing a livestock business sector – it’s sitting in the background, ready to grow, if only we had an abattoir that was open for longer during the week. It’s a difficult thing to talk about – beasts going through an abattoir and the resultant carcasses – but it’s part of the circle of life.

‘I know there are people out there that would jump into producing beef from aged dairy cows. The majority of our cows are not aged; as soon as they are finished as milkers, they get sent to the abattoir. Whereas in the UK and Europe now, the cows are kept for a few years and put to pasture, so they develop, relax and can enjoy themselves. When the end comes, suddenly you have this fantastic flavoured, marbled meat. We have the base product there ... everything is here! But we haven’t got the ability to take this forward yet.’

Valley Foods would also like to be a part of the proposed hub for the distribution of locally caught fish. There had been much talk and argument about this in the fishery sector, but little result.

Of course, Valley Foods has also to import supplies, but more than need be, mainly because people do not eat seasonally. The restaurateur is being pushed by the end user, who is not educated fully on which produce is available in which season.

‘Jersey could grow practically anything – the soil and climate is that good. Even some of the fruits you think we couldn’t grow – we can! Let’s use and enjoy eating the local produce – in season.’

A salty story



Sara Felton talked to Matt Taylor, founder of Jersey Sea Salt

Sea salt production can be dated back to the Iron Age in Jersey where clay 'salt pots' have been unearthed by archaeologists that were used to boil down seawater. During the Island's Occupation and with consequent food shortages, including salt, locals took it upon themselves to start harvesting their own salt from the sea. Fast forward 70 years. Matt Taylor, founder of Jersey Sea Salt, was enjoying the spoils of a successful fishing trip when it dawned on him that, as Jersey is famous for its culinary delights, especially seafood, the most important and abundant ingredient was not locally available.

Having studied fine art in London, he moved back to his home, Jersey, and started an interior design and building company. 'I was happy but needed something new, unique and most importantly, sustainable,' he said.

Matt's approach to salt harvesting is as much about preserving the environment as it is about creating a premium product. 'Our process is simple, we harvest fresh seawater and collect it in our salt houses, where we let nature take its course. We then sort, sieve and pack the salt by hand.'

Matt's sea salt harvesting begins with the pristine waters surrounding Jersey, which are known for their clarity and richness in minerals.

'The key to great sea salt is starting with great water, which we harvest from St Catherine's, ensuring that no harm is done to the ecosystem. It is then dried without artificial heat and free from chemical additives. The only energy used to harvest our sea salt is that from the sun.'

“It's a slower process, but it results in a superior product

Once filtered, the water is slowly evaporated in bespoke salt houses, which enable them to solar evaporate larger quantities of seawater. This patient, low-energy technique allows the salt to crystallise naturally, preserving the minerals that give Jersey Sea Salt its unique flavour profile. Matt's emphasis on natural evaporation is central to his brand's commitment to sustainability.

'We let nature do most of the work,' he says. 'It's a slower process, but it results in a superior product.'

The final stage of the process involves hand-harvesting the delicate salt crystals. Matt's team carefully collects the salt, which is then dried and packaged by hand. This artisanal approach ensures that each batch of Jersey Sea Salt meets the highest standards of quality.

'There's no substitute for doing things by hand,' he notes. 'It's the only way to guarantee the texture and flavour we're known for.'

Jersey Sea Salt offers a range of products, each designed to enhance the flavour of food while providing a natural, mineral-rich alternative to mass-produced table salts. In addition to the signature salt, Jersey Sea Salt also offers a number of infused varieties, incorporating herbs and spices to create unique blends that reflect the flavours of Jersey. These include combinations like pepper dulse, lemon, chill or smoked sea salt, which add depth and complexity to a wide range of dishes.

For Matt, running Jersey Sea Salt is about more than just producing a product – it's about connecting with the environment and sharing the unique taste of Jersey with the world.

'Our salt is a reflection of where it comes from,' he says. 'When people taste it, they're tasting the sea, the sun, and the wind of Jersey.' His passion for sustainability and craftsmanship is evident in every aspect of the business, from the harvesting process to the final product.

In a world where mass production often overshadows quality, Matt Taylor's dedication to traditional, sustainable salt-making practices ensures that Jersey Sea Salt remains a premium choice for discerning chefs and home cooks alike. He has a passion for the Island and his artisan product shines through in every crunch of Jersey Sea Salt.

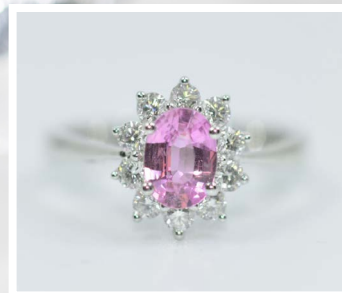


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Happiness
you can eat

If you would be as happy to fall in chocolate as to fall in love, Ganache pâtisserie and chocolaterie could be the ideal place for a romance. By Sara Felton

Meet Ganache – if you have not already done so.

The word is used every day in pâtisserie and chocolaterie. It is a mixture of cream and chocolate and is the basis of many of the recipes created by Glenn Noel and his partner, Constance Chaperon, at their Ganache pâtisserie and chocolaterie at Castle Quay (behind Coopers Coffee Shop).

According to legend, ganache was accidentally created in the mid-19th Century by an apprentice who spilled boiling cream over chocolate. To avoid being caught, he mixed them together, creating the delicious product we enjoy today.

‘Jersey certainly loves chocolate,’ said Glenn. ‘In our first year, we used around 1½ tonnes of chocolate to make our recipes. Our chocolate range includes 14 flavours of chocolate bonbons, seven varieties of chocolate tablets, five flavours of praline fingers, and four panned products, including coated almonds, hazelnuts, popcorn, and caramel. There is something for everyone.

‘Some of our ganaches are infused with tea or coffee, while others are made with fruit purées like raspberry and passion fruit.’

Jersey ingredients play a key role in all of their recipes at Ganache. Whenever possible, they use locally sourced ingredients. Pâtisserie primarily involves butter, cream, eggs, and sugar.

‘We are fortunate in Jersey to have exceptional local dairy and fresh free-range eggs. Our two main ranges are chocolate and pâtisserie, both of which feature Genuine Jersey products. All our chocolate bonbons use Jersey Dairy cream and butter, and our macarons are made with egg whites from Hamptonne Farm eggs.

‘The fillings are crafted with ganache using Jersey cream. We have recently launched our homemade jam, made with 60% fruit, featuring Jersey raspberry, Jersey strawberry, and Jersey rhubarb and cherry. If we can, we use Jersey products in our recipes, it just makes sense.’



Not only is their shop counter full of tantalising handmade chocolates and pâtisserie but they are also happy to take requests for weddings or events requiring bespoke items. They can personalise sleeves for chocolate boxes or discuss custom flavours.

“We are fortunate in Jersey to have exceptional local dairy and fresh free-range eggs. Our two main ranges are chocolate and pâtisserie, both of which feature Genuine Jersey products

‘The process for making chocolate bonbons takes between three and four days. The key to chocolate making is patience, as the chocolate needs time to “crystallise” (set) correctly, and this cannot be rushed.’

Glenn was born in Jersey and trained at Highlands College while working for The Royal Yacht. He then went on to work for Mark Jordan at The Atlantic, Noma in Copenhagen and Tom Kerridge’s The Hand and Flowers. In 2016, he moved to France to work for the chocolate company Valrhona.

He and Constance met in France, which is where she is from. She attended pastry school in Grenoble before moving to Lyon to work for the renowned chocolaterie and pâtisserie Bernachon. Later, she moved to Paris, the epicentre of pâtisserie, which is where the couple met.

Then came several years working in the Middle East, after which Glenn decided it was time to move home to Jersey, bringing Constance with him. They opened Ganache in August 2023 and became members of Genuine Jersey a few months later.

‘We have an open kitchen, so you can often see us preparing our recipes. We also participate in some of the Genuine Jersey markets, and we announce our presence on our social media channel. Please do give us a follow.’

*Instagram @ganachejersey
www.ganachejersey.com*

The Smokey Shed

What does Neil Cotillard do at the bottom of his garden? He's gone for a smoke (but not for a fag)



Why does The Smokey Shed exist? The business owner, Neil Cotillard, runs a small building company and a van sales company ... there seems to be no connection between them and a business producing cold-smoked smoked salmon as well as local Jersey biltong, the famous cured and air-dried beef snack from South Africa.

'We got into this just because of our love of good food,' Neil said.

He continued: 'We are a farming family originally. Both construction and van sales are good businesses. But when I get home at night, what do I want to do? *This is what I want to do.*'

The smoked salmon is not a traditional Jersey product – there's no salmon in Jersey waters. It all comes from Scotland. The Smokey Shed is the only local business that is producing smoked salmon commercially.

'It's pretty expensive, as there are quite a few costs involved and it's quite hard to produce it properly, it's almost double the price of the imported versions you can purchase in the shops. Good smoked salmon ain't cheap; cheap smoked salmon ain't good!'

But Neil believes quality always sells: 'When you eat it, it's nothing like commercially imported salmon, it has a beautiful soft texture, and it is not as salty either.'

'In a farmers' market held in the Royal Square for the Corn Riots Festival, I sold out in one day. I thought I had enough for two days.'

'We buy supplies from the Fish Market each week; the salmon is Scottish farmed salmon – you just can't buy wild – but there are different grades of farmed salmon, and we buy the most expensive ... Grade 1, guaranteed pesticide free. It is a really good product, and something we hope to scale up a bit, eventually investing in slicing and packaging machinery.'

“ We are a farming family originally. Both construction and van sales are good businesses. But when I get home at night, what do I want to do? *This is what I want to do* ”

Now on to the Genuine Jersey biltong.

Neil purchased The Little Jersey Biltong Company last year. This cured meat is genuinely Jersey – made from the beef of retired dairy cows, purchased from Woodlands Farm butchers. They take the topside and silverside, which they slice into steaks, remove all the fat, marinade it in a biltong spice mix, and hang it in the dryers – big, stainless steel cabinets, that can do 160 kilos at a time, for around three to five days, subject to the humidity in the local weather. During this time, the meat loses half its weight.

'Phil Le Maistre, the chairman of the Jersey Milk Marketing Board, said that what we are doing is a really important part of the farming process, even though we are not farmers, because we are recycling the dairy industry's by-product of surplus old cows.

'The biltong is high protein, low fat and has no growth hormones. We sell to gyms, because their clients are told to eat over 50g of protein a day. People eat it with a cold beer, after work as a healthy snack, instead of pork scratchings or peanuts.'

The product is currently stocked in 32 Island retailers, including pubs – a beer and biltong go well together. Neil said that a couple who saw it for the first time asked if it was a packet of dog treats. Then they tried it and were hooked.

'Even the Jersey South African community like it. They taste it and then tell me: "Oh!! I was hoping that Jersey biltong would be awful, but this is good, actually!" ...'

And the future is looking good, especially if they can get Rural Initiative Scheme funding towards a packing machine, to do a job in minutes which, at the moment, is taking them hours every evening.

Neil said: 'As a society, we have gone through a vegetarian phase, and a vegan phase – I think now we are actually seeing a movement back to meat.'



Christmas Evening Event
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Keeping the Island green...

Jersey's Agricultural Land Restrictions

By Katharine Marshall (partner) and Sarah Parish (managing associate) of Ogier

Jersey's unspoilt landscapes and rich rural heritage are a testament to its outstanding natural beauty. They are a fundamental aspect of our Island identity and underscore the importance of safeguarding our natural environment to ensure that a sustainable agricultural land bank is retained for future generations.

Famous for our Jersey Royal potatoes, high quality dairy products and a diverse range of fresh produce, the Island's agricultural land is essential for providing food security and support for our local economy.

The regulatory framework relating to agricultural land is primarily concerned with controlling ownership/occupation and development. Control of agricultural land in Jersey is outlined in the Island Plan and is regulated by laws and policies, enforced by the Infrastructure and Environment Department. Two pieces of legislation form the cornerstone of this regulatory framework:

- the Agricultural Land (Control of Sales and Leases) (Jersey) Law 1974; and
- the Protection of Agricultural Land (Jersey) Law 1964

Ownership and occupation of agricultural land

The Agricultural Land (Control of Sales and Leases) (Jersey) Law 1974 regulates the ownership and use of agricultural land in Jersey. The law imposes strict controls on transacting agricultural land which is defined as 'land, including land under glass, used or capable of being used for any purpose of agriculture or horticulture but does not include any dwelling house or outbuilding'.

The prior consent of the Minister for the Environment is required for a sale or letting of agricultural land irrespective of its size. The Land Control Department has the ability to impose conditions on any consent granted. The most commonly imposed conditions are:

1. to prohibit the land being occupied by anyone other than a bona fide inhabitant of the Island who is wholly or mainly engaged in work of an agricultural nature in Jersey for his own benefit and profit; and/or
2. that the land is used for agricultural or horticultural purposes only (specifically excluding the grazing of equine animals and the growing of trees)

Consent of the Minister for the Environment is also required where the land being sold forms part of the garden of a dwelling house if the size of the garden exceeds one vergée. In these circumstances, where the land in question is genuinely domestic garden land, it is likely that an unconditional consent will be granted.

Change of use and development

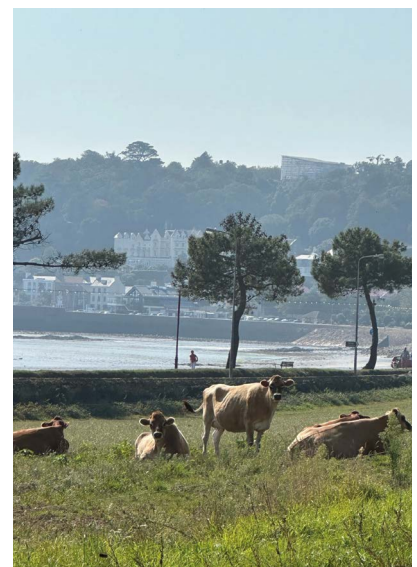
Any permanent change of use of agricultural land will require planning permission. If the change is temporary, then consent may be granted by Land Controls under the licensing scheme. There is a general bias against permanent change of land use for developments that could reduce the Island's capacity for agriculture or negatively alter the character of its landscape. These restrictions highlight the tight controls surrounding the domestication of agricultural land.

“Famous for our Jersey Royal potatoes, high quality dairy products and a diverse range of fresh produce, the Island's agricultural land is essential for providing food security and support for our local economy

While fundamental to safeguarding Jersey's agricultural land, the restrictions can present challenges to farmers and landowners. An example is the potential to repurpose derelict glasshouse sites.

Under the Island Plan, glasshouses are considered to be temporary structures, requiring removal and restoration to farming land once no longer usable. The costs associated with this can be prohibitive, with the economic viability of such projects often being unjustifiable for farmers and landowners.

Navigating Jersey's legislative framework on the use and development of agricultural land can be complex. We highly recommend seeking professional guidance. For more information, contact a member of Ogier's expert Property team at info@ogierproperty.com.





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Genuine – but not quite – Jersey

Although historians, a long, long time ago, dutifully recorded many of the important moments in Jersey's colourful development, finding the will and the expertise to note down the comings and goings of any wild creature would likely have proved pretty low on a scribe's agenda.

Nevertheless, records do exist and show that, somewhere along the Island's fascinating timeline, a few observant record keepers thought it useful to put quill to velum in the hope that the information might prove of some future interest.

Today, anyone with a serious penchant for local natural history will be delighted that they did.

As a consequence of such thoughtful recordkeeping, a few chosen species, through no fault of their own, found themselves either permanently or temporarily recorded and branded as being 'Genuinely Jersey'.

The Rabbit

Due to its prolific breeding capabilities (as well as its attraction as a stand-alone pie-filler), the humble 'bunny' holds the Island's record for long standing status: it and its newsworthy prominence arriving during the 13th Century.

For initially introducing rabbits into the Island, credit has to be given to the Normans who were evidently particularly protective of their long-eared little 'lagomorphs'. So protective, in fact, that royal instructions from Henry III to Jersey's custodian of the Isles (Richard de Grey) demanded extra careful watch over the King's rabbit warrens at Gorey and La Moye.

Throughout this time, so controversial and competitive was the 'ownership' of warrens that feuds, court cases and heavy penalties ensured a busy schedule for the local authorities.

The Hare

A few centuries later, the rabbit's close cousin, the brown hare, made a likewise forced arrival in the Island, but again for the primary pleasure of the hunting and culinary fraternity.

In 1649, a proclamation was issued by King Charles II, no less, forbidding anyone of the lower order to shoot hares or partridges, evidence that both species were not only locally present but that their numbers ensured a tasty addition to a nobleman's weekly roast.

Despite shots being fired, traps being laid and constant fear of 'on-the-loose' hunting dogs, hares somehow held their ground until 1917 when a declaration was issued proclaiming that the animal had lost its Island residency.

A sad case of 'hare today and gone tomorrow' it seems.

The Red Squirrel

The fact that red squirrel distribution throughout Britain is regarded as less than scant, should make our own modest little band of bushy-tailed residents impressively significant.

Despite their traditional woodland abodes being hammered by historical arboreal devastation, the 'reds' have been surviving and thriving rather well since first claiming local residency in 1894.

Records show that a Mr Le Brocq of St John initially acquired a small number of red squirrels from the south of England estate of Sir Walter Phillimore.

Up until the 1940s, this modest little band of incomers had 'gone forth and colonised' in spectacular fashion, making their mark in such bizarre locations as the Royal Square and the Snow Hill bus station.

Although unable to claim any genuine 'Jerseyness', the red squirrel continues to play a significant local role as a popular animal champion.

The rabbit, the hare, the squirrel and the hedgehog. By Mike Stentiford

The Hedgehog

Introduced into the Island during the 1800s, today's Island-wide scuttling of 'hedgepigs' easily qualifies them as local residents.

However, the word 'hedge' is a bit of a misnomer as gardens, open farmland, woodland, cemeteries and urban parks all come under investigation during a hedgehog's nocturnal wanderings.

They certainly refrain from any social networking, preferring to keep themselves very much to themselves, apart that is, from brief amorous dalliances during the early spring.

According to the history books, an increase in hedgehogs occurred in the mid-1800s when the Weymouth to Jersey boat service first came into operation.

Obviously, having 'anything to declare' was not applicable to those packing a pet hedgehog in their suitcase.



Pondering pattern

By Bryony Richardson, who runs her own interior design company in Jersey

Pattern can be the cornerstone of an interiors scheme and thankfully, given its rather essential role, pattern comes in many guises.

I see 'pattern' as being something that disrupts plain. It can be a flash of incidental diversion or something that demands notice. It can be pattern through texture or pattern through colour. It can come in every size and can be applied to every surface ... the only limits are your appetite for it – and your bravery with it.

When it comes to introducing pattern into a scheme, I feel an important thing to have in mind is context. A 'token' pattern is never going to be comfortable in its surroundings and will feel all the larger and more awkward for it. You need to find a common ground – a bridge – between the plain and your intended pattern. This bridge might be sylphlike and subliminal, but it will provide the required relevance for that pattern to work. Even a little dab of cobalt blue in the corner of a piece of art hanging on your walls will provide that olive branch to cobalt pattern within your scheme.

Shape can also be another source of context.

In this mood board, the reclaimed tile in muted caramel and coffee tones has provided us with a triangle. A small pattern devoré velvet fabric refers back to the tile so as to provide relevant geometric interest.

I find introducing organic inspired patterns within a scheme reaps calming and comforting results. Biophilic design has been too beneficial to too many people to be going anywhere!

Biophilic pattern like de Gournay's Orchard embroidered linen is pictured below. The wooden floor and joinery echo the embroidered tree trunks.



And Fanny Shorter's Mill Pond fabric, featuring newts and lily pads, is used here within a leafy courtyard setting.



Pattern can also be embraced in a more cautious, subliminal way in order to create more interest within a scheme.



Here, reeded glass within a built-in cabinet echoes the fluting of the lights either side.



“It can be a flash of incidental diversion or something that demands notice



Here you have two muted forms of pattern against a uniform background. Ethereal swirling travertine and woven wicker introduce subtle patterns.

So, whether you intend approaching pattern with caution or with gusto, approach you must!

It really can transform and create an instant statement.

There's more about Bryony on her website – www.bryonyrichardson.com

Contact her on tel: 07829 880130 / e-mail: br@bryonyrichardson.com

“ I find introducing organic inspired patterns within a scheme reaps calming and comforting results

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**MATTHEW THEBAULT
STONEMASONS**



Gardening in the winter months

Ariel Whatmore, who lives at Les Aix, St Peter, describes her gardens and gardening work during the winter. Her gardens are open once every year to benefit the Jersey Association for Youth and Friendship

Every time I walk down an avenue of hazelnut trees, I continue to hear the gentle swishing sound of my steps brushing through leaves, as was the case in November. However, as I look down, I note that by December the leaves are looking a more consistent dirty brown.

Even so, they are very beneficial for the compost heap, and later on when they have rotted down with other household waste and grass cuttings, they will make an excellent spread for the borders.

“ Each year I like to treat one border to a new selection of tulips. It is fun choosing colours that blend well with the particular colour scheme of the border

Horse manure has always been recognised as one of the best manures, but is not always available. So also is seaweed, collected from beaches, but both have to be left for a while as the seaweed can carry too much salt and the horse manure may prove too powerful for some plantings.

The price of tulip bulbs has fallen on account of the lateness of the season. I have risked planting them at this time in an attempt to save on the costs, and in the past, I have found they still flower with enthusiasm.

Some experts even advise planting in November as the colder weather is supposedly a disease protection. Each year I like to treat one border to a new selection of tulips. It is fun choosing colours that blend well with the particular colour scheme of the border. Tulips do well in pots. In the past I have used some russet-coloured tulips with *cordylines* within some Spanish water pots brought from France. The leaves and flowers go well. It is important to remember that if snow is forecast it is wise to tie up the *cordyline* leaves so that the snow doesn't break or unattractively damage their attractive outline.

Gardeners always seem to find room for one more variety, so despite having acquired a considerable collection of roses, I still order one more each year as a form of reward for efforts in the garden. During this season it is a treat to browse through catalogues and pick out a gem for the future in some warm and cosy part of the house.

A while back I was painting in a garden in Wiltshire which featured a semi-double rose called Adélaïde d'Orléans. It is a rose that fades from creamy pink to creamy white and as the David Austin catalogue writes: '... hangs gracefully from the branch ... ideal for arches and pergolas: almost evergreen: delicate primrose scent; very beautiful, elegant and healthy'.

I chose two, as giving away a rose as a 'thank you' can be quite popular. In the past I have given away the climber Wedding Day as a wedding anniversary present to those who have a garden. This rose has been described as 'one of the most rampant ramblers with clusters of flowers, opening to pale creamy yellow, turning to white'. This rose has similar traits to the other white rambling roses Bobbie James and Filipes Kiftsgate.

Another rose I have used for similar occasions is the less vigorous climber Compassion, which has salmon pink

“ Remember, the health of roses is very dependent on feeding, so every time you are working around roses it is a good policy to give another dose of rose fertiliser

or apricot orange flowers with a sweet fragrance. It has plentiful dark green foliage and is considered 'one of the best in its class'. While making a small flower arrangement for the kitchen table I have still found some delightful flowers left on its branches.

Remember, the health of roses is very dependent on feeding, so every time you are working around roses it is a good policy to give another dose of rose fertiliser. In the winter season, bonemeal or fish, blood and bone are the best feeds. Seaweed or horse manure – if you can get it. At the same time as feeding the roses, it is as well to check that the labels are still in place and that you know where the roses are and that their position is recorded. When friends visit, they often like to know the names and varieties.

Now is an ideal time to get supports in place, as the flowerbeds are needing less attention and you are less likely to damage growth of associate plants. There is the choice of wooden trellis, which is very attractive, or even plastic wiring, which can come in the shade of brown and blends in well with most walls.



Aconites



A distinctive planting in January can be a carpet of yellow aconites. If they are happy, they will spread themselves of their own accord. They are lime lovers, and inevitably not suited to the acid soil of Jersey. But if an area is scattered with a spread of lime they will thrive. In my case, I have chosen a spot along an avenue opposite a planting of snowdrops. In January, when the garden seems in a rather sombre mood, this planting makes a charming display. Among the aconites there are some violets of a striking blue, the complimentary colours work so well together. Nature never ceases to amaze me.

The snowdrops have been planted on a gentle slope so that the seeds have slowly dropped down the incline and made a carpet from relatively few original plants.

The Chelsea Physic Garden in London has a winter celebration named Snowdrop Day. I once made a point of visiting their woodland area to see their wide range of snowdrops. I learnt that there are collectors prepared to pay an incredible £1,390 for a cultivar called Golden Fleece, *Galanthus plicatus*.

Other jobs for winter are cutting off the ageing leaves of hellebores to let in the light. If you have planted lilies in pots the previous year, they should be put outside to avoid the danger of becoming pot bound. In gardening it is essential to keep experimenting.

Winter may not be the most exciting period for gardeners, but there is always an air of expectation. One gardens today for tomorrow. So, I'll end the year with Kipling's last verse of 'The Glory of the Garden':

Oh, Adam was a gardener, and God who made him sees

That half a proper gardener's work is done upon his knees,

So when your work is finished, you can wash your hands and pray

For the Glory of the Garden, that it may not pass away!

And the Glory of the Garden it shall never pass away!



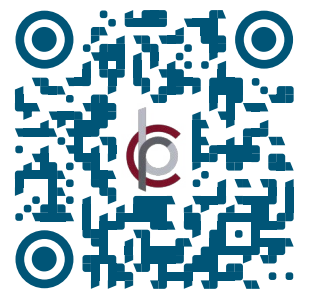
Snowdrops



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A shout-out for shrubs

Consider the shrub; a garden contender happy to grace our green space with foliage, flowers, fruit, structure and scent, a home for pollinators, demanding little more than a well-prepared planting position and an appropriate prune. By Anna Bradstock, **RURAL's** gardening correspondent

All too often shrubs get shuffled to the back of a border or banished to some awkward space where 'nothing will grow'!

After a pretty dismal summer with herbaceous plants battered by wind and rain, I have found that the flowering shrubs have come out on top, enjoying the soggy summer and extending the garden's interest well into October.

Too expensive? I would argue not, bearing in mind that a well nurtured shrub can perform well for longer than 20 years, filling space that might swallow 6-10 herbaceous plants, as well as producing cloned offspring from cuttings to increase your stock.

Dare I suggest that 'Green-blob syndrome' may be to blame? Not the fault of the shrub surely, but the blade wielder who might not be completely

'au fait' with the pruning schedule to achieve the best look for each variety ... let's be honest, the sleek 'bob' haircut is often a moderate success!

Too green and boring? Why not plant a *Clematis viticella* such as C. Madame Julia Correvon at the base to scramble up and surprise you with her rich mulberry coloured flowers in July and August. Or underplant deciduous shrubs with snowdrops for a winter wow.

No space for a shrubbery... who has? A well-placed shrub can be tamed by topiary or selectively pruned to produce a few stems of flowers of stylish foliage in a border or lawn, or in a large pot with a good loam-based compost. My preference is for autumn

“Now is the time for shrubs, find a space! Split up those clumps of old perennials at the back of your border or cheer up a dull corner

planting whilst there is still a bit of warmth in the soil, making sure you have good drainage to avoid shrubs sitting in a cold winter waterlogged pit.

Now is the time for shrubs, find a space! Split up those clumps of old perennials at the back of your border or cheer up a dull corner and add a whole new dimension to your plot!

Winter winners

Skimmia x confusa Kew Green. Invaluable evergreen for sun or semi-shade with clusters of male greenish-cream flowers November-March (1m) or choose reddish festive buds of *Skimmia japonica* Rubella (1m).

Cornus sanguinea Anny's Winter Orange. Outstanding cultivar of flame colour dogwood stems for winter floral arrangements and cream flower heads in summer (2m).

Cornus alba Sibirica. Bulletproof dogwood tolerant of wet heavy soil with rich red winter stems, cream flower heads in summer, pearly blue berries in September and purple foliage into October (2m).

Nandina domestica. One for all season interest in a sheltered pot or bed, this slow growing heavenly bamboo has evergreen ferny foliage tinged red over winter. Panicles of tiny white starry flowers in summer, followed by bright red autumn berries carried over winter (1m).



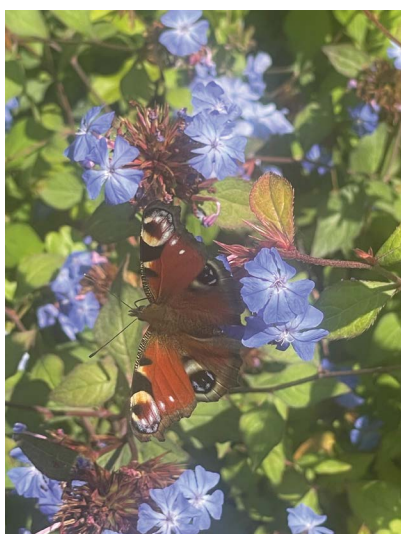
Cistus x purpureus Alan Fradd - Summer



Fuchsia arborensens - Summer



Hydrangea paniculata Phantom - Summer/Autumn



Ceratostigma willmottianum - Summer/Autumn



Viburnum opulus Roseum - Spring/Early Summer

Spring into Summer

Viburnum opulus Compactum. Deciduous, compact guelder rose with early summer cream pom-pom flower heads followed by red berries late summer (1.5m).

Deutzia setchuenensis var. *corymbiflora*. Slow growing Chinese snow flower with clusters of long lasting white star-like flowers in summer. Sun or dappled shade (1.5m).

Cornus kousa Dwarf Pink. Those lacking space for the taller *C. kousa* flowering dogwood cultivars can enjoy beautiful button green flowers with pink tinged bracts all of June, and strawberry like fruit and red tinged foliage in late summer (2.5-3.5m).

Philadelphus maculatus Sweet Clare mock orange has gloriously scented white flowers with a purple eye in June (2m).

Cistus x purpureus Alan Fradd. A stylish rockrose, papery white flowers with a purple eye June-August (1m).

Calycanthus Aphrodite. A sophisticated cultivar of the American sweetshrub, offering rich red magnolia-like flowers June-August on tips of large leafed deciduous stems May-July (2m).

Fuchsia arborens lilac fuchsia. Unlike the traditional ballerina flowers, flamboyant heads of tiny pink stars with magenta stems and foliage will wow any sunny sheltered border or pot. Fleshy black berries follow, enjoyed by birds (2m).

Interest into Autumn

Ceratostigma willmottianum. Periwinkle blue flowers cover this shrubby plumbago from July-September attracting hawk moths and butterflies aplenty. Pincushion seedheads over winter on wiry stem, likes sun and good drainage (1m).

Hydrangea febrifuga (*Dichroa febrifuga*) Chinese quinine. Domed blue flower heads for months followed by blue berries, a gem for a sheltered spot in semi-shade where it remains evergreen (2m).

Hydrangea paniculata Limelight. Justifiably popular pale green flower pointy heads tinged with pink late summer, looking good in both sun semi-shade in the ground or a pot. Prune to establish a framework of branches to cut back to in spring (2m).

H. paniculata Sundae Fraise, smaller with stronger pink flowers (1m).

Clethra alnifolia Ruby Spice. Clove scented pink flower spikes late summer cover this white alder from USA. Semi-shade (1.5m).

Anna will be talking about shrubs as one of the speakers at the monthly meetings of The Jersey Gardening Club in 2025. See their Facebook page for details or e-mail jerseygardeningclub@gmail.com for their 2025 schedule of events.



Hydrangea paniculata - Summer



Skimmia x confusa Kew Green - All year interest

Gardeners' questions

Answered by RURAL magazine's agony aunt on gardening matters – 'Aunty Planty'



From Catherine Scott, Rozel:
How and when do I prune my hydrangeas? I have some old ones that are far too big and some newly planted *Hydrangea* Limelight. When do I prune them and by how much?

Our glorious Jersey hydrangeas do get big!

The established *Hydrangea macrophylla*, mopheads and lacecap, flower on stems of at least one year old, whereas the *Hydrangea paniculata* Limelight flowers on current year's growth, so they require different pruning.

A radical renovation of your mophead down to stumps of 50cm would mean no flowers for one year. Easier in spring when you can see a difference in the stem colour, the older wood is pale and twiggy, whilst younger growth is rich tan. You will need to cut out the oldest stems which have multiple twisting branches right to the ground, leaving 10-15 less complicated straighter branches. You should also remove any weak, twiggy bits and prune tan straighter stem to a pair of fat buds below last year's flower.

Your *Hydrangea* Limelight should be pruned to a framework (from 3 years old) at a suitable height, suggest 75cm. Remember that each cut should produce 2 blooms on stems, so you might want to remove the weaker stems towards the centre of the framework – think rose pruning.

Hydrangea Annabel, renowned for large flower heads, can be cut down to 10cm, but will need support. Try hazel sticks rather than straggling string and canes.

Nick Claus, Lapland:
What would Aunty recommend for a gardening lover's Christmas present?

My best present last year was my FloraBrite Pink Pocket Pruner – fluorescent pink handled lightweight secateurs with carbon steel blade, 10-year guarantee and I haven't lost them yet!

I have a leather apron which I wear up a ladder, with pockets for string, secateurs and my phone (possibly unwise) which a friend designed. I like Bradleys green floral/leather made in UK, from Garden Divas
<https://www.gardendivas.co.uk>

Bamboo gloves are super comfy and more sustainable than plastic, from Briers, with handy clip version from The Glove Store
<https://www.theglovestore.co.uk>

Burgon and Ball (stocked at Ransoms) offer great quality tools. The herbaceous sickle, made of carbon steel, is very sharp and cuts tough stems in a swipe! B & B stainless steel ground breaker trowel with a sharp point is very effective. I would not be without my Kneelo velcro knee pads, but they may not be everyone's best look!

An annual subscription to the Jersey Gardening Club for £25 (see their Facebook page for details).

A magazine option would be Gardens Illustrated with a choice of 6 or 12 issues, the best around ... apart from RURAL of course!

From Sarah Hayes, St Saviour:
**Have I left it too late to plant
 winter bulbs and which would
 you recommend?**

Don't panic, just be sure to store bulbs in a cool dry place and plant them by Christmas.

I plant tulips in pots where they flourish for their first year, let them die back in the pot, then plant those out in less important areas where some flower again and some not. Choose a sun-baked bed if planting in the ground, 5 inches deep, with good drainage. I love *Tulipa* Spring Green ivory and green (April), elegant T. White Triumphator and darkest purple *Tulipa* Queen of Night, but for a colour hit explore Sarah Raven's selection online and Farmer Gracy, who both ship to Jersey and offer discounts as the season goes on. I top my pots with a layer of violet *Iris reticulata* or *Anemone blanda* then finish with fine gravel, a smart touch.

Daffodils cheer us Island-wide in a blast of yellow, so I have planted smaller flowered *Narcissus* Thalia with 2-4 heads of cream (40cm) also deliciously scented *Narcissus* Cheerfulness custard cream double flowers later (40cm). Indoor *Narcissus* Paperwhite Zeva supported by red *Cornus* stems planted in a bowl are a winter treat and make great gifts! If you have wet ground explore the tall blue *Camassia leichtlinii* *Caerulea* group (April) and the exquisite rich cream C. *leichtlinii* Alba (May) which is happier less wet. Snowdrops also prefer damp soil, best transplanted in late spring when they have died back (having stored energy for the following year). Split congested clumps and keep them well watered after planting.



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Created by *Blampied*



Pictured: 'St Tropez' Collier on bench peg, featuring triangle diamonds with yellow diamond haloes, and with princess, pear and brilliant cut diamonds. Pictured below: 'St Tropez' earrings featuring trilliant cut diamonds with yellow diamond haloes and with marquise diamond cascading drops. Designed and handmade in our onsite workshop.

After many months of hard work and anticipation we are extremely proud to launch our brand new handmade jewellery collection, Riviera, featuring unique and gorgeous gemstones, all set with the utmost skill into beautifully simple, yet intriguingly detailed 18ct gold and platinum mounts, inspired by and designed to embody the allure of the Riviera lifestyle.

At the very same time of completing this stunning collection of 35 unique pieces, we have been refurbishing our jewellery premises and we are delighted now to welcome you to our light and open, elegantly finished showroom... yes, it's been a very busy time for us!

Going back to the inspiration behind this latest joyful collection, the Riviera is not really defined on the map... but it's a feeling, a lifestyle that you will find anywhere along the coast; from the heady mix of lavender and rosé wine in Provence to the luxurious superyachts moored in front of St.Tropez old town, from the excitement and opulence of the world famous Monte Carlo Casino to the chilled out vibes of Portofino harbour and from the shaded lemon groves around Sorrento to the endless azure blue skies of the Amalfi coast.

We have used gemstones such as vivid pink and green tourmalines, velvety tanzanites, zesty peridots, dreamy aquamarines and mouthwateringly colourful sapphires in every rainbow hue, carefully chosen on our trips abroad, to capture the essence of Amalfi, Sorrento, Portofino. Monte Carlo, Provence and St. Tropez.





Improving the lives of horses and donkeys around the world

On the 90th anniversary of the founding of Brooke – a charity helping working horses and donkeys – Mary Gaiger is stepping down as chairman of the Jersey Supporters Group. By Ruth Le Cocq

At first, I didn't notice the three donkeys standing peacefully just outside the large picture window at Mary Gaiger's home. Their calmness was in direct contrast to her two Siamese kittens, who were playing raucously and commanding my attention, as cats do.

Mary smiled indulgently as one of them curled up on my lap. It was very clear that, in this household, the animals hold equal sway with their human companions.

It's no surprise then to learn that Mary has been involved in the local branch of Brooke, the international charity championing action for working horses and donkeys, for many years.

Dorothy Brooke established the Old War Horse Memorial Hospital in Cairo, Egypt, in 1934, and Brooke has since supported over 1.4 million working horses, donkeys, and mules directly, and 4.2 million through their advocacy work.

“ I just hope that we have brought the plight of donkeys to people, so they are aware that third world countries are built on the backs of animals like donkeys

During this, the UK-based organisation's 90th anniversary year, Mary has stepped down from acting as chairman and treasurer for the Brooke Jersey Supporters Group, paving the way for founder member, Jan Motto, to take the helm. This coincides with a shift from them supporting animals working in the coal mines in Pakistan to those living in Ethiopia.

'We are trying to raise a minimum of £20,000 each year for the next three or four years to fund one mobile veterinary unit and one static clinic,' said Mary, 'and I am delighted to say we are on the cusp of reaching that target for this year.'

She explained that in Ethiopia it is not unusual for a donkey to work for three families, with each one thinking that the other is feeding the animal who is quietly wasting away.

Mary has visited India twice and Cairo once to experience the charity's work for herself.

'I feel strongly that if you are asking people for money then you should be able to say I've been here, there and everywhere and I know where the money has been spent.'

That said, Mary will never be able to forget some of the terrible sights she has seen.

'There was a flatbed truck which was loaded up with paving slabs and this animal's hooves were slipping on the tarmac and there were three lads – one at the front waving his whip and touching the animal constantly and there were two sitting on the back and the cacophony of noise ...'

Mary's voice trailed off as she remembered watching how the donkey scabbled to stay upright while sweating and straining.

However, she also highlighted how the 'invisible helpers', the women of the towns and villages, were pioneering new ways of ensuring the health and welfare of their beasts of burden.

'It's the women who go out and make sure the animal is fed and watered and, in a place a couple of hours' drive outside Delhi, one of the women had set up a bank account. The donkey owners paid so much a month into this bank account so, if they had a problem, whether it was for medication or the replacement of an animal because it was ill, the money was in the bank,' she said.

By running their own account, the women were able to access money at 5% interest rather than the 300% charged by the local money lender.

Mary's own donkeys have played their part in raising funds for Brooke. Her beloved John Henry, who died a few years ago at the age of 33, used to spend Saturday afternoons in town and helped to raise over £16,000.

However, he didn't have the easiest start in life.

'His mother, Emily, who was my first donkey, had mastitis so he had to be bottle fed for several months.'

Talking about why she joined the local Brooke Supporters Group, Mary said: 'In Cairo, Dorothy Brooke would take

in these horses, who had been left behind by the British Army and they were in such a state of neglect. They would have greenery and be fussed and looked after for two or three days before they were euthanised.'

'You think it's nothing and yet it is just so important,' she added, before taking a breath and pausing for a moment while reflecting on the death of John Henry, who enjoyed a last meal of apples and carrots.

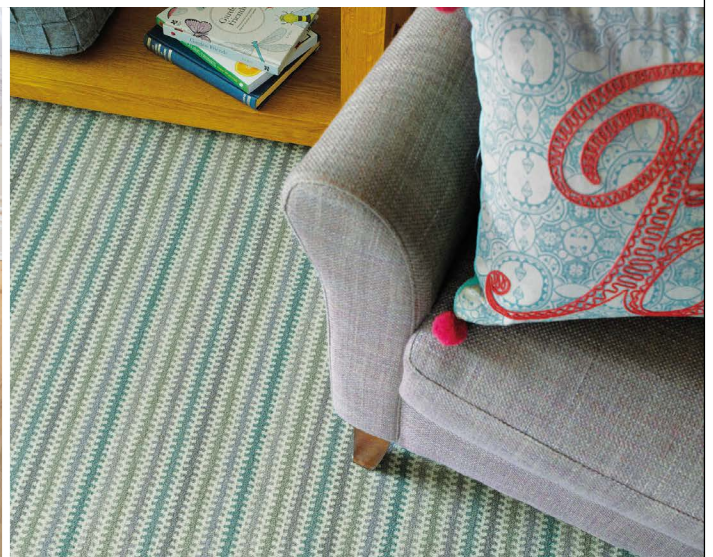
Earlier this year, Mary was fortunate to meet the patron of Brooke, HM Queen Camilla, at Buckingham Palace, as part of the organisation's 90th anniversary celebrations.

Now, she hopes that some of the local equine lovers will become more involved in helping at the charity's fundraising events, which include an annual dress sale and quiz night.

'I just hope that we have brought the plight of donkeys to people, so they are aware that third world countries are built on the backs of animals like donkeys. These animals are such willing workers – they really do deserve better treatment – and that is where Brooke comes in.'

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The power of the voice in dog training

Keep talking to your dog! By Harry Matthews of Origin Dog Training

Dog training can often rely on equipment, food or toys. Sometimes the training can over rely on these things; a lead that never comes off, a treat pouch that is always used or a toy that the dog won't give up.

But there is a tool often forgotten about. The power of the human voice.

We can change our voice depending on the situation. You may use your low, soft 'Radio 4 shipping forecast' voice for teaching a dog to settle. Sometimes it's the angry mum voice – not shouted or screamed, just letting the dog know that their behaviour needs to stop. Then we give them something better to do. Or your high-pitched fun 'Woohoo' voice for the perfect beach recall.



“ But there is a tool often forgotten about. The power of the human voice

Dogs may not know 'words' as you and I know them. To them there is a white noise of language that comes from the human's mouth. But they understand tone. And they can comprehend the odd word that resonates with them.

Recently, our 20-month-old toddler has become obsessed with hedgehogs after she found one that had got itself stuck in the garden. We rescued it. We built it a little house. We carried it to the big field across the road and gave it a new home. Since then whenever we are discussing the 'hedgehog incident', our little girl asks to go and see the hedgehog across the road. She can pick out the word 'hedgehog' out of all the words she does not know when Mummy and Daddy are talking.

“ Try saying a sequence of random words. In amongst your random sequence, say their name. They should stop what they are doing and look at you. Because they know that word among all the others

Your dog can do the same. Try saying a sequence of random words. In amongst your random sequence, say their name. They should stop what they are doing and look at you. Because they know that word among all the others.

It's the same sound recognition we have when we ask for directions in France and only know *à droite* and *à gauche*. It's French white noise but we can pick up on meaning through intonation and tone. And then when we hear a word we know, it pings and creates a little synaptic leap in our brains. Your dog is doing the same thing.

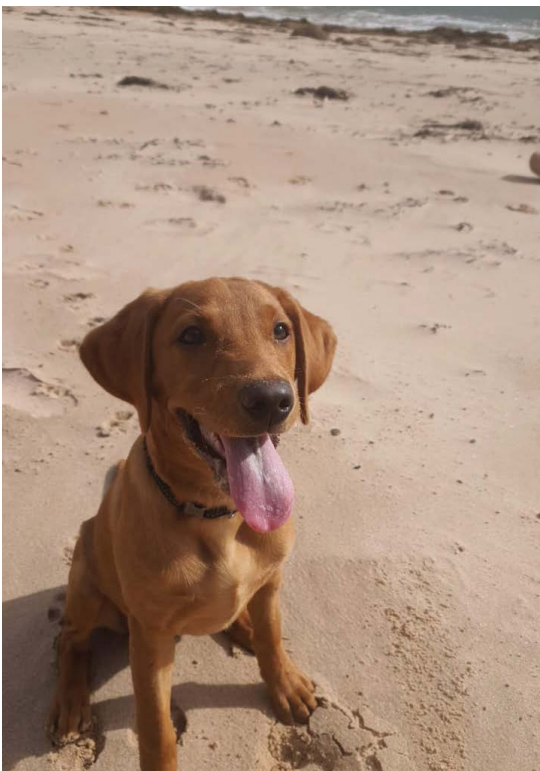
This is why it is imperative you must talk to your dog. Old fashioned dog training dictated you must only talk to your dog when you want its attention. This Victorian method is outdated and does not allow for dog training to be a dialogue, between you and your best friend – which it absolutely must be.

What we like to do at Origin is we encourage CVF – 'Continuous Verbal Feedback'. Don't stop talking to the dog, on a lead walk or practicing recall. You did not teach your child to walk while you sat in silence. There was encouragement: *that's it, keep going* and then *oopsies* and *try agains* when they fall. We do the same with the dog – Continuous Verbal Feedback.



It lets them know they are doing the right thing, going in the right direction.

So talk to your dog. We all do it anyway, so keep going.



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Capturing the spirit of the horse



Jersey artist Anita Eastwood teamed up with Hungarian-born equine photographer Janos Borbely to present an unusual exhibition in Jersey – capturing the spirit of the horse with artist's brush and photographer's lens. By Alasdair Crosby

Anita Eastwood says she is not solely an artist who paints horses, although she loves the equine strength evident in a horse's head and body.

'There's nothing like it,' she remarked. 'But then again, I love doing subjects such as zebras and giraffes, zebras particularly, which have the same type of equine shape.'

She is also an artist specialising in dog and cat portraits and receives many commissions for these. 'I get bored if I do anything for too long and I like to experiment – I also love painting landscapes.'

In September, Anita held a joint exhibition with equine photographer Janos Borbely. Although Hungarian by birth, he has been resident in the UK throughout his life.

They both support the same charity – initially the Animal Health Trust and now Racing Welfare – which is run in Jersey by Elizabeth ('Bunny') Roberts. There is an annual golf tournament, a big lunch and a charity auction. Janos donates a framed photograph and is also the photographer for the day, whilst Anita regularly donates either a piece of work or, as she prefers, a commission for painting something that the winner decides upon.

“ But then again, I love doing subjects such as zebras and giraffes, zebras particularly, which have the same type of equine shape

About 18 months ago, the two of them had a chat and decided it would be nice to work together and do a joint exhibition. Anita suggested he send her photos that he had taken, and she would see if she could transpose them into a painted image. They would exhibit the photos and the painted version jointly and explore the differences between the photographic and the painted forms.

And that is what their joint exhibition at the David Hicks showrooms and gallery was all about ... the brush and the lens.

Anita said: 'He sent me the photos, and I suggested the ones to use. He agreed – there was a lot of agreeing and not much disagreeing, which was nice! And then he started dabbling a lot more with colours, and that gave me ideas, which was great!

We are both really pleased with how it turned out.'

The one painting that she really loves – and although maybe not so spectacular as the others – is one featuring a boot of a Spanish dressage rider and the saddle.

'Not everybody wants to see a horse picture in their house. But things like a saddle or something related to an equestrian could be a welcome difference to the usual horse-y picture.

“ I love colour - I think it goes back to my roots. I was born in Africa and spent my childhood mainly in Kenya. I was always surrounded by vibrant colours, such as the saris and cottons of the womenfolk, all in beautiful colours!

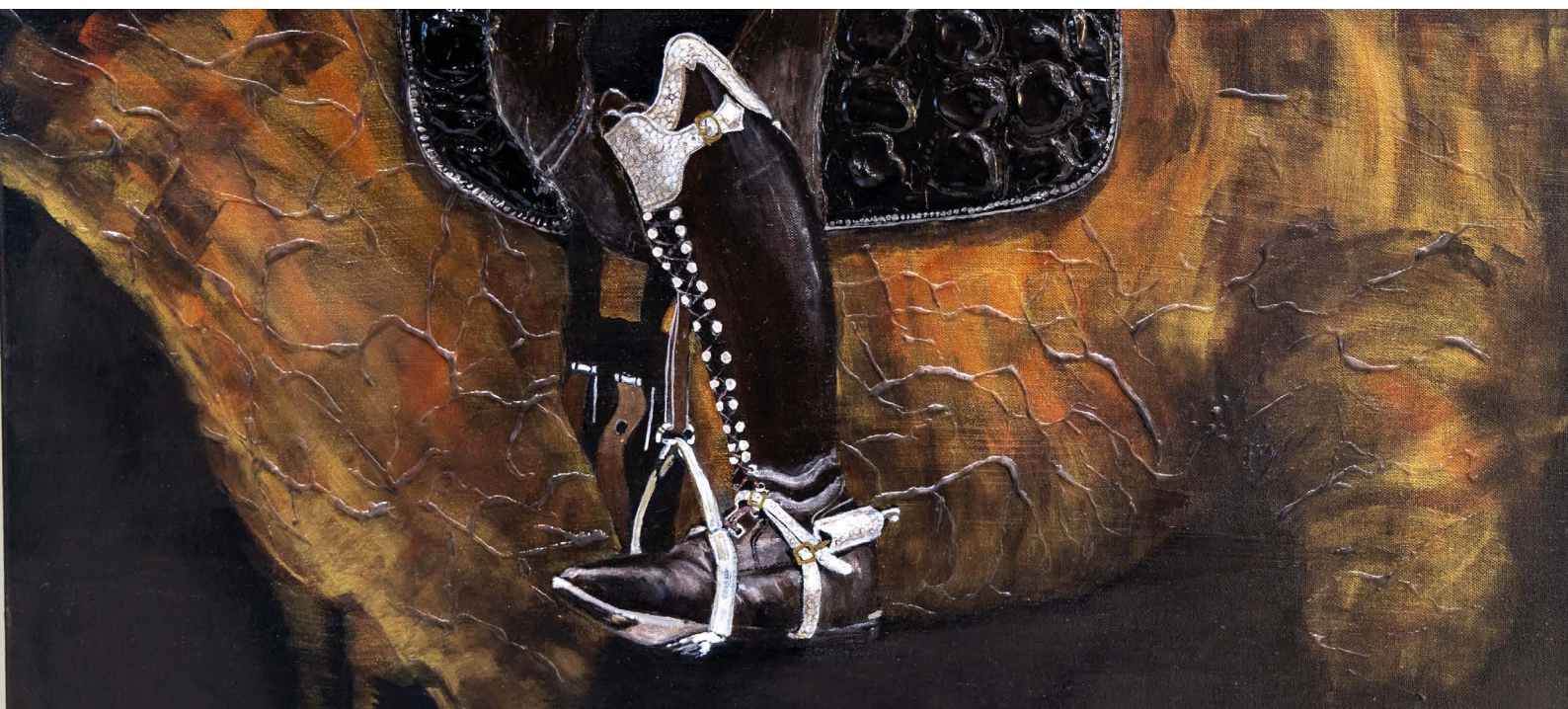
'So, Janos did a couple of saddle-type photos for me, of which one was a Spanish dressage horse, that had just literally finished its session, and its veins were sticking out from the effort, and I thought ... "yes! This is one that I want to do!"

'Plus, everything is handmade – the leather, the saddle, the reins, the boot. Spanish boot – it took me ages to get right the perspective on the boot. And that fascinated me, and I thought: how can I pinpoint that down? For me, those were the little solid silver tacks on the boot. So, I bought a sheet of silver, and I cut them all out individually, and then stuck them on to the boot, bringing my version of the handmade boot!'

There were several more comparisons between photography and painting. It was interesting to see, for example, what, in a photograph, looked like a rather menacing horse's face – not something to hang on the wall of a child's bedroom – become gentled and softened in the accompanying painting.

'I love colour,' Anita said. 'I think it goes back to my roots. I was born in Africa and spent my childhood mainly in Kenya. I was always surrounded by vibrant colours, such as the saris and cottons of the womenfolk, all in beautiful colours!

'So, although I love colour, in these paintings I've been experimenting with the dark, looming colours of Janos' photographs with their black background and atmospheric feel ... then livening them up with some colour and texture!'



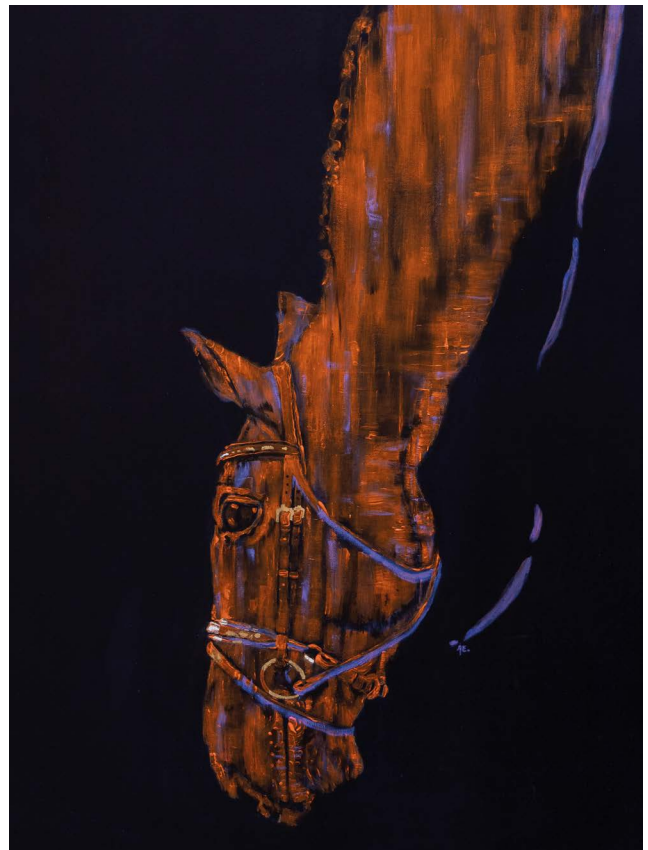


Asked if she enjoyed horse riding, she replied she did, even if she hasn't done so for some time. 'But I've always loved horses, even if I have rarely been in a situation to be around them.'

“ I believe that the horse is not only a subject in my photographs, but a symbol of strength, freedom, and beauty

Their next joint project is to take this particular exhibition over to the UK, and they are in talks with the managers of various potential locations, such as private London members clubs.

'We've enjoyed working together, and we've worked well together, fed off each other and inspired one another,' Anita said. 'For me, it has been the enjoyment of doing this and seeing how the partnership worked so well.'



As an equine photographer, Janos has dedicated his career to capturing the beauty and grace of horses through his lens. With a deep passion for both photography and horses, he strives to create stunning images that showcase the unique bond between these magnificent creatures and their human counterparts.

Janos said: 'Through my photography, I aim to not only create visually stunning images but also convey the deep connection between horses and humans. I believe that the horse is not only a subject in my photographs, but a symbol of strength, freedom, and beauty.'

Another local exhibition is also coming up for Anita – this time with Jersey photographer Phil Coleborn – and it will also be a comparison between the photographic and the painted image.

Anita has lived in Jersey since 1991.

She has recently illustrated a children's trilogy by local author Ruth Smith about 'Twinkle', a donkey. It is being written to benefit a school in Malindi in Kenya that Ruth has set up.

'That project was out of the blue,' Anita said. 'You never know what's around the corner!'

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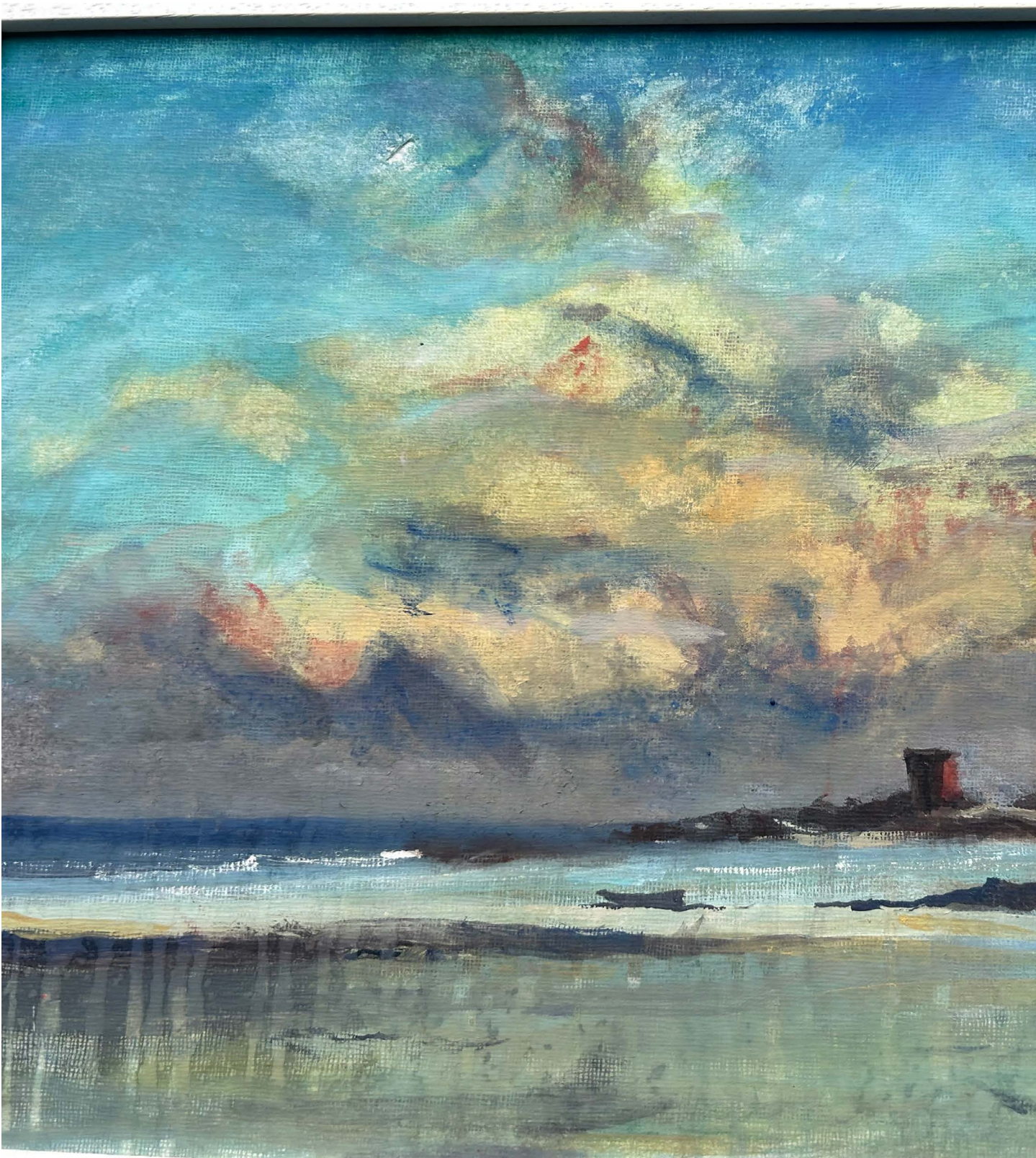
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The Jersey Society of Artists

The society's president, Sally Reading, writes

A lovely winter sky over Archirondel, painted in oils, is the subject of the Jersey Society of Artists winter contribution to RURAL magazine. The talented artist is Patricia Knee.

The Society recently held its autumn exhibition in the Barn Rooms at David Hick and was very well received. There was a wide range of media and styles.

This time we also included a sales table of art materials, as well as a fun auction with various lots generously offered by our members.

Our 2025 artists' calendar is now on sale at various outlets – look out for it as it is rather special and makes a change from photographs.

If you would like more information about the Jersey Society of Artists, or are interested in joining, please contact: aldythstansfeld@gmail.com

A life-saving New Year's gift



80 years after the arrival of the SS Vega in Jersey, Cathy Le Feuvre learns more about how the ship saved Islanders in desperate times, at the very end of the Occupation

Stored in the Jersey Heritage Archives and Museum are thousands of items and documents which tell the history of Jersey and its people. Some occasionally go on display but many more remain safely stored, ready to tell their story.

A red and white lifebelt from the international Red Cross ship, the SS Vega, represents something that was truly life-saving for the people of Jersey. It bears the name Stockholm, because that's where the vessel was registered.

“ Christmas 1945 had been pretty miserable for most, with little comfort and joy. People just did not have enough food... some were said to be on the point of starvation

On board the Vega when it sailed into St Helier harbour on 30 December 1944 were thousands of small brown parcels, about the size of a shoe box. This one came from Scotland, but the Archive has similar parcels which originated in Canada.

By this time in the war and following D-Day on June 6 when the Allies had started to retake Europe, communication between Jersey and France had been cut off, along with food and other essential supplies.

The health and wellbeing of Islanders was rapidly deteriorating and early in November, the German authorities allowed the Bailiff of Jersey, Alexander Coutanche, to message the British Government giving details of the state of the Island supplies. The Home Office issued a letter, proposing that the war operation of the British Red Cross and the Order of St John take action to provide facilities for sending food parcels to British civilians in the Channel Islands, subject to the same conditions under which parcels were sent to prisoners of war.

On 20 December, the SS Vega left Lisbon in Portugal carrying food parcels and diet supplies for the ill. She docked first in Guernsey on 27 December, and in Jersey a couple of days later.

Christmas 1945 had been pretty miserable for most, with little comfort and joy. People just did not have enough food... some were said to be on the point of starvation.

Islanders queued for hours to receive one of the Red Cross boxes and imagine the excitement to discover the contents!

Tins of butter, tins of spam, packets of tea and sugar. Powdered milk was included, marked as KLIM – milk spelt backwards – which archivists have discovered was manufactured in Toronto. The Red Cross had branches in many countries, and small manufacturing industries had popped up in Canada and Switzerland to produce the life-saving powdered milk.

Also tucked into the parcels, and a treat certainly for adults only, were packets of cigarettes. In the days before the warnings that ‘smoking damages your health’, these were a luxury that people looked forward to.

According to Jersey Heritage, there were 96,000 cigarettes in the first Vega delivery, along with 119,792 standard food parcels and 4,200 diet supplement parcels for the ill, which would have included more milk and cod liver oil. There was 1,850 kilos of medical and surgical supplies and a small quantity of clothing for children and babies.

The parcels brought hope that things would get better, and that Liberation was on the way.

The SS Vega returned a few times. Her sixth and final journey was on 31 May 1945, because even after Liberation on 9 May, supply lines took some time to be reintroduced.



“A red and white lifebelt from the international Red Cross ship, the SS Vega, represents something that was truly life-saving for the people of Jersey



Food for thought in winter

By Lucy Layton, Jersey Heritage Exhibitions Curator

As autumn turns to winter, we enter the final weeks of the 'Bouan Appétit!' exhibition at Jersey Museum, Art Gallery & Victorian House and a last chance to enjoy this engaging and colourful exploration of Jersey's rich heritage of food and drink.

In times past, with the apple harvest collected and turned into golden-hued cider or fragrant black butter, Islanders' thoughts would have turned to the long months ahead. Throughout the winter, households would host *veil'yes* – evenings of communal knitting that evolved into social gatherings with music, dancing, games and, of course, eating and drinking.

“Throughout the winter, households would host *veil'yes* – evenings of communal knitting that evolved into social gatherings with music, dancing, games and, of course, eating and drinking

The classic Jersey dish of bean crock was, naturally, a winter favourite. Known in Jèrriais as *des pais au fou* (meaning 'beans in the oven'), it was a simple country dish, perfect for sharing with friends and family. Dried beans were soaked overnight and then slowly cooked with pork. Traditionally, a pig's trotter was used to provide gelatine to make the bean crock rich and glutinous, although this is often replaced with pork belly by the modern cook.

Controversy can still occur between those whose family recipe for bean crock includes carrots, and those for whom the addition of carrots is anathema! If you visit the 'Bouan Appétit!' exhibition, you can collect a free recipe card and try making your own bean crock at home with the traditional mix of beans available to buy at local supermarkets. Our recipe has been generously shared by one of our Jersey Heritage volunteers – and yes, it does include carrots!

Famously warming and nourishing as a winter staple to keep families going during the long dark months, bean crock would have been cooked in the bread oven, using the residual heat once the bread had been baked.

Historically, keeping pigs was an essential part of Island life, and visitors to Hamptonne Country Life Museum can still see pigs occupying the granite pigsty from spring until autumn. It must be among the last of these traditional buildings to be used for its original purpose, but the importance of keeping pigs is evidenced by the number of pigsties to be spotted in the countryside. Granite pigsties are a familiar feature of old Jersey farmhouses and pigs were a valuable source of meat and fat, especially during the winter months. Pigs were fed household scraps, meaning that nothing went to waste, and traditionally they were slaughtered in time for Christmas. This provided pork for the Christmas feast and other traditional winter dishes, as well as plenty of pork lard. The lard was used for recipes such as *la gâche à crétons*, a traditional cake similar to the English lardy cake.

Islanders also made their own version of an English-style rich, heavy Christmas pudding. In contrast, the traditional Jersey Christmas pudding – *le pod'in*

d'Noué – was a lighter steamed pudding, made to be eaten straightaway rather than prepared ahead and kept for the Christmas celebrations.

Stored apples would, of course, make a regular appearance at the kitchen table during autumn and winter. They were turned into *solyi* (apple layer cake), *gâche mèle* (a traditional spiced apple cake), baked apples, and *bourdélots* (whole apples wrapped in pastry and baked in the oven).

Then as now, Christmas was a busy time in the kitchen and in traditional Jersey households the bread oven was kept busy in the days before Christmas. There was bread to be baked as well as pies and cakes, while on Christmas Day the focus was on the meat. This might have meant pork from a pig that had been killed before Christmas, or it might have been beef or poultry. Brawn – *du houard* – was another traditional dish that was made from the head of a pig, this time eaten cold. Also known as 'head cheese', it was made from chopped and boiled pig's head meat which was then formed into a jellied loaf.

Seasonal drinks – to keep the cold at bay! – might have included *lé vin brûlé* (mulled wine), *un verre caud* (hot water with brown sugar, and rum or brandy), spiced hot cider, and *chaudé* (a hot milk, cider, egg and spice drink).

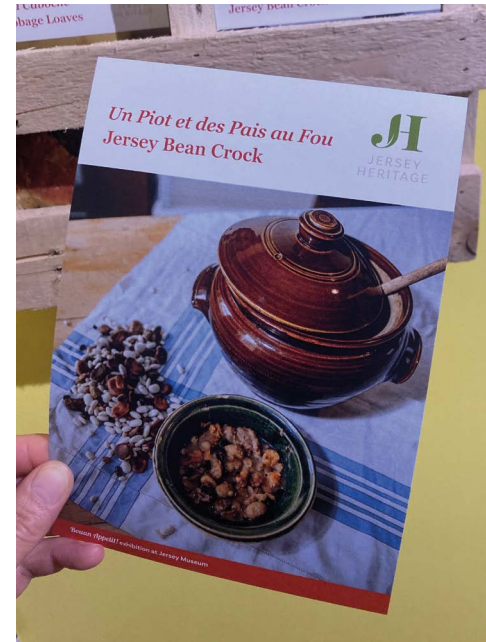
'Bouan Appétit!' is open daily from 10am to 4pm at Jersey Museum, Victorian House & Art Gallery until 30 December 2024. Entry is free.

With thanks to Geraint Jennings, Jersey Heritage's Jèrriais Promotion Officer, for his research into the Island's food traditions.

Black Butter Night by Edmund Blampied (National Trust for Jersey)



Recipe card for Bean Crock in the 'Bouan Appétit!' exhibition at Jersey Museum



Apple layer cake, known in Jerriais as solyi



The Food and Festivals section of the 'Bouan Appétit!' exhibition

Pigsties at Les Montagnes Farm, St Lawrence by Edmund Blampied (Jersey Heritage)



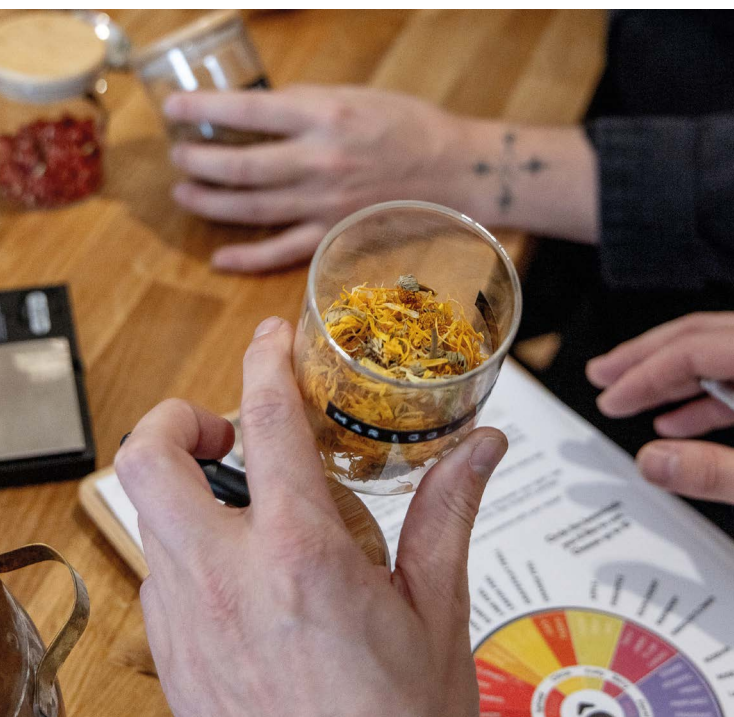
Lighting the bread oven at Hamptonne Country Life Museum



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To be used before 31st December 2025 and over 18 to enter.

Simply answer the following question:

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- a: Wheat
- b: Barley
- c: Potato

Answer can be found on page 15.

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Closing date for entries is 28 February 2025.

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For a lesson in how to adapt to changing circumstances and reinvent your business model look no further than Channel Islands and UK farmers. Whenspeaking to local farmers it is clear how many are diversifying to increase their income, secure their businesses and build resilience during uncertain times such as those we face today.

In an effort to make sure that farming remains sustainable, farmers have proven to be remarkably inventive, branching out from traditional farming by adding new revenue streams. This can be an expansion of agricultural activities into new markets , or a move into non-agricultural business types such as catering or open farms.

When visiting our clients we ensure to highlight the importance of farm safety and robust risk management. A farm can be a dangerous place, but with the right expertise and guidance many serious incidents can be prevented.

Another important subject that we discuss is the issue of Underinsurance. Many factors can influence the value of your assets such as the weather, business growth, and if you are not careful these changes could you leave you underinsured.

When it comes to insuring your business it may be tempting to choose the cheapest available option, however, if your property, stock or equipment isn’t insured for the correct amount which allows for a replacement in the event of a loss, you could face unforeseen and devastating financial shortfall.

Research in the UK shows nearly half of commercial properties are underinsured, posing a significant threat to business, the average underinsurance is around 40%, in the event of a claim this would mean receiving only 60% of the cost to repair or replace your property.

Seven signs that your farm could be underinsured: -

- 1. You haven’t had your assets valued recently** - values can change over time which is why it makes sense to consider current values of your equipment, stock and buildings. Ideally you should review asset values and sums insured each year, ahead of your insurance renewal.
- 2. Commodity prices changing** - weather conditions and consumer tastes are two factors which can impact prices and values. For example, farmers or dealers with a large store of straw and fodder will find it can increase significantly in value if it’s been a very wet or dry summer, and demand has increased.
- 3. Rising values of second-hand machinery** - good quality farm machinery and vehicles can command a strong resale price on the second-hand market, with most values depreciating at a slower rate compared to an average new car, and at times when the pound falls in value, prices of used machinery can increase further thanks to increased prices for imports.

4. You diversify into new business areas - farmers who look outside of agriculture for additional revenue streams should consider what’s covered under their existing insurance policy. Opening a farm shop or setting up a campsite may be a good way to attract paying guests, but you need to know you’re covered should anything go wrong.

5. You forget to tell your insurer about changes to buildings - in the same way that extending or altering your business can change its value and cover, if you fail to let your insurer know of any changes to any buildings or their occupancy, you could find its true value isn’t paid out in the event of a claim. You usually have an obligation under your insurance policy to report any changes that materially affect your insurance cover.

6. You miscalculate the cover you need - a common mistake that many people make when it comes to insurance is only looking at covering the market value of property. If a building is destroyed in a fire there could be additional costs to consider, from professional fees to extra rebuild costs such as those to source specialist materials or tradesmen.

7. You bring in new machinery to meet increased seasonal demand - if you are using new machinery and vehicles to increase your production make sure you tell your insurer. In the event that they break down or are stolen you don’t want to discover they aren’t covered under your policy.

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Naming your Executor:

Why you should pick the professionals

When writing a will, one of the most important decisions is choosing your executor—the person responsible for managing and distributing your estate. While it may seem natural to appoint a family member or friend, this choice should be made carefully. The role of an executor involves significant legal and administrative duties and selecting someone without the necessary skills could lead to complications. In many cases, appointing a professional executor, such as a lawyer or executor company, offers several advantages over naming a family member.

Responsibilities & Complexity

An executor's role can be emotionally and practically demanding. A family member, especially while grieving, might struggle to manage the legal and financial complexities of an estate, leading to delays or errors. Many estates involve intricate matters such as property, international assets, or complex tax issues, which may be beyond a family member's expertise.

A professional executor brings specialised knowledge and experience, ensuring the estate is managed efficiently and in compliance with legal requirements. Their ability to handle complex situations can prevent costly mistakes and ensure beneficiaries receive their inheritance smoothly.

Impartiality & Family Dynamics

Family dynamics can complicate estate administration. Even in close families, disagreements over the distribution of assets can arise, creating tension. Appointing a family member as executor can place them in a difficult position, possibly leading to strained relationships or even legal disputes.

A professional executor remains neutral and objective, focusing solely on the terms of the will. This impartiality can help avoid conflicts among beneficiaries, ensuring the estate is administered fairly and without bias. In emotionally charged situations, a professional's detachment is particularly valuable in maintaining family harmony.

Commitment & Accountability

Managing an estate can be time-consuming, and family members often have other commitments. The complexity of an estate may require significant time and attention, which can be difficult for someone juggling personal and professional responsibilities. If deadlines are missed, penalties may follow, adding stress for both the executor and beneficiaries.

A professional executor is compensated for their time and accountable for meeting legal obligations. Their focus and dedication help ensure the estate is settled efficiently, minimizing delays and reducing the risk of errors.

While appointing a family member as executor may seem like a natural decision, the complexities of the role often make a professional executor a better choice. Their expertise, neutrality, and accountability can provide peace of mind and ensure that your estate is managed smoothly and fairly, particularly in complex or emotionally charged circumstances.



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Simply answer the following question:

When did MyPad open?

- a: 2009
- b: 2012
- c: 2015

Answer can be found on mypadci.com

Please enter online at ruraljersey.co.uk/competition

Closing date for entries is 28 February 2025.

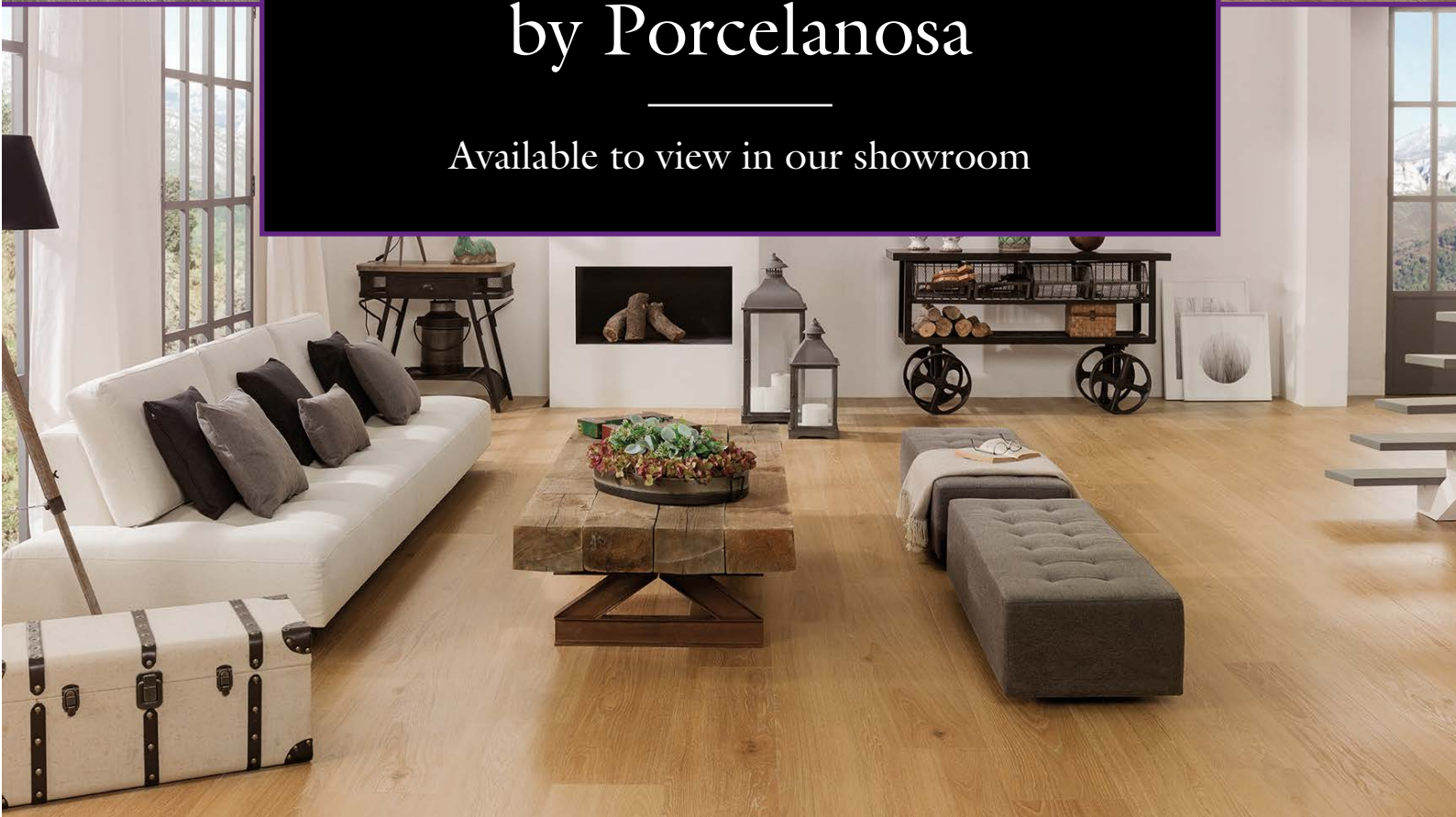
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The last of Freddie Lonsdale

- and the last word from Michael Blackie

The Evening Post for 5 April 1954 carried a brief report under the heading 'Famous Jersey-born playwright dies.' The playwright was Frederick Lonsdale, born Lionel Frederick Leonard at 15 Old Street, St Helier on 5 February 1881, the third son of Frederick and Susan Leonard.

Lonsdale's father, who already had two sons, was an assistant in his father-in-law's tobacconist shop. Young Freddie, as he was always known, hated school, played truant virtually every other day and was always considered the black sheep of the family.

At the height of his fame, years later, his father would go over to London to see his plays but would sit in cheap seats, and never went backstage. He always believed that Freddie had stolen the work of his oldest brother, who was very bright, but died of drink at the age of 29, and passed it off as his own.

Aged 17, Lonsdale joined the Army, was immediately miserable, but could not afford to extricate himself. However, the annual regimental entertainment was announced with a request for sketches. Lonsdale wrote a sketch lampooning the General, which was a hilarious success.

Shortly after, he was taken ill and was visited by the General's wife who said the sketch was brilliant. 'If I can get you out of the Army, will you promise to write plays?' He did and gained a medical discharge, returning to Jersey to work for the London and Southwest Railway.

After a brief sojourn in Canada, Freddie went to London and started writing plays. Clement Scott, the celebrated London critic, avoiding a tremendous storm, took shelter one evening in his local theatre.

Afterwards, he wrote of the play he had seen there, written by a young man called Lonsdale. It was a very bad play, but he predicted that one day Mr Lonsdale would write a very good one.

In 1904, Lonsdale married Leslie (*sic*) Hoggan, daughter of a retired colonel. It was always a strange marriage. Because there was no money, Leslie went back to her parents in Jersey which Lonsdale could not – he owed too much, which would have led to imprisonment in those days. After three daughters and a number of years, Lonsdale left the family forever, but supported Leslie generously for the rest of her life.

Over the course of his working life, Lonsdale wrote 24 plays and musical comedies (a term that was, more or less, invented for him). He was asked to submit a couple of plays to the theatre manager Frank Curzon, who was so impressed that he gave him a contract for two more.

In 1908 came his first musical – *The King of Cadonia*. Lonsdale's dialogue attracted good notices and helped the piece to a long career. Two years later came *The Balkan Princess*, effectively *The King of Cadonia* with the sexes reversed, with music by Paul Rubens (not that one!), but his most successful musical came in 1917. *The Maid of the Mountains* ran for 1,352 performances, ensuring that never again would he want for money.

Without doubt, his heyday was between 1923 and the early 1930s, a fact endorsed in 1930 by the Daily Telegraph critic who wrote: 'Mr Lonsdale is not merely the most popular playwright of the day, he is almost certainly the most popular who ever lived.'

Frances Donaldson, Lonsdale's daughter and biographer (and the source of much of the present author's information), thought *The Last of Mrs Cheyney* (1925) to be his best play and this seems to be a general opinion.

I believe its last London outing was at the Cambridge Theatre in 1980.

After the Second World War, Lonsdale's star began to wane. His last play, *The Way Things Go*, appeared in 1949 with Glynis Johns and the Old Victorian, Kenneth More.

Rather sadly, in mentioning Lonsdale's name to a number of people whilst preparing this article, I found only one person who had ever heard of him.

Sic transit gloria mundi.



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A technological in-person care innovation.

A technology solution facilitating hybrid care

Orchid Connect create a single ecosystem combining reactive alarm functionality with proactive wellbeing routine support. Passive sensors discretely provide insights on activity within the home. These insights enable us to provide feedback and actions for the carer or family member to better improve the level of care they deliver.

What are the benefits of Orchid Connect?

- Enhanced safety and risk reduction
- Live well at home for longer
- Prioritise care without compromise
- Increased caregiver efficiency

Proven in the UK to

- Reduce hospital admissions
- Enable earlier discharges to home



Scan code

Find out more

Discover more about
Orchid Connect and
improving your care
support today:



orchidconnect.je



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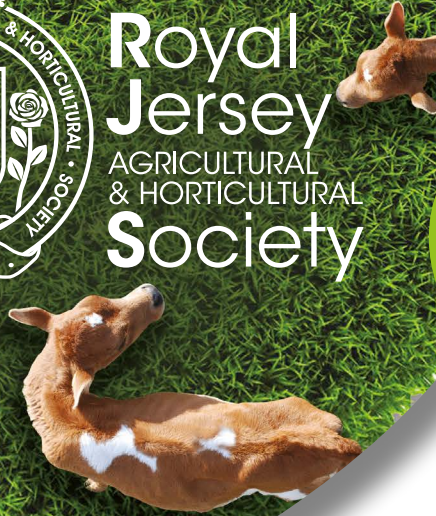
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Orchid
Connect

The Heart of Rural Jersey



Royal
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& HORTICULTURAL
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2024

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Summer Country Fair

8th & 9th June

All Island Garden Competition

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