

Twentieth Century Society South West Region
Report for AGM June 2018

RECENT MEETINGS AND EVENTS

On the 21st October our second AGM for the South West Region kicked-off with a very successful visit to Buckfast Abbey. The AGM saw the re-election of the majority of the committee and the confirmation of two new members, Nick Cahill and Robert Dowden. Nick recently led our very successful weekend event in Cornwall, so has already done sterling work for the region. Robert is planning our 2018 weekend event, based in Newquay and North Cornwall – see below.

Following the AGM, Peter Beacham gave a talk on the history and architecture of Buckfast and its site, with an emphasis on the C20 buildings. Peter has recently completed editing a book, 'Buckfast Abbey, History, Art and Architecture' incorporating a chapter on C20 Buckfast written by Alan Powers. We were based in the Conference Centre, formerly the school, (Brett and Pollen 1965-80), which features in that chapter.

We held our January committee meeting at High Cross House by William Lescaze (1932), the fine modernist house in Dartington the future of which remains uncertain since the National Trust closed it to the general public in 2014. We are in correspondence with the Dartington Trust and the recently appointed Estate Development Director, Martyn Evans, (a Society member), on their future plans for the house.

CASEWORK

Proposed Plymouth Conservation Area

A great deal of time has been taken up with the proposed Conservation Area for central Plymouth which the Society has dubbed a priority project. In collaboration with Plymouth Civic Society, Plymouth Architectural Trust, Historic England and Plymouth City Council, members of our committee have represented the regional group at meetings related to the proposed designation. This has concentrated our efforts and has been a steep learning curve for all involved. The next stage is a workshop and presentations to the Council in late July

Better Places Plymouth

We have also been involved in meetings regarding the future of Plymouth city centre, aside from its potential designation as a Conservation Area. The PCC generated 'Better Places Plymouth' allows everyone to have their say on proposals to 'transform the very heart of the city centre, renewing and rejuvenating its open spaces and pedestrian areas in the lead up to the Mayflower 400 celebrations and beyond'. We are monitoring this development.

Regional Listings

We have identified the following potential listing candidates: Gradna, Looe (built for Wills Tobacco family in 1930s, renovated by Stan Bolt 1992-2002); Theatre Royal, Plymouth

(Peter Moro, 1986): St Peter's Church, Newlyn (1859-66, but interior by Martin Travers from 1920s; and Rev. Allan Wyon, sculptor and engraver, and vicar 1936-55); St Anta and All Saints, Carbis Bay (R.F. Wheatley, begun 1929, and completed 1965-9). Landmark Theatre, Ilfracombe (1968 Tim Ronalds Architects); Shoolgarry and Lanteglos/Otter Creek (Michael Whitham); Tregannick, Sancreed (Geoffrey Bazeley, 1935). We are researching all of these and have already submitted a listing application for the Theatre Royal Plymouth, via Caseworker Tess Pinto.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

John Grindrod

We are very pleased and excited to announce that John Grindrod, author of 'Concretopia', 'Outskirts' and the forthcoming 'How to Love Brutalism', has agreed to come and talk to our group. It is likely that this will be in Plymouth, and we will combine it with a walk around the C20 city. Date to be confirmed

The Bakelite Museum and Hinkley Point Power Station

In liaison with the C20 West Region we have organised a day out on the 19 July to two very different venues: First we will have a guided tour of the Hinkley Point Power Station by EDF. We will meet at 9.15 am at the Visitor Centre in Bridgewater. After this we will travel to Williton for lunch and a wander around the world-famous Bakelite Museum <https://www.bakelitemuseum.net> with its unique collection of ordinary and extraordinary objects from the Naughty (Eighteen) Nineties to the Swinging Sixties. It includes thousands of items that were used in homes and workplaces throughout the country, things made of Bakelite and other early plastics in fabulous colours and patterns, and things that were part of everyday life in the Bakelite era. The Bakelite museum may be moving this year so this is a good chance to see it in our area.

Newquay and North Cornwall Coast weekend

This year's weekend trip is to Newquay and the North Cornwall coast. Details are still being arranged, but the dates are fixed for 13/14 October. We hope to visit Newquay Police Station and former Magistrates Court (Alan Groves, 1973), and several modernist houses. There will also be the chance to visit the Bedruthan Steps Mid Century & Vintage Fair.

OPERATIONS

We continue to work with the Cornish Buildings Group to build a record of interesting buildings, sites, murals, sculptures etc. in Cornwall dating from 1914 to the present.

The Twentieth Century Society

More details of this project and all our regional activities are found on our regional website C20sw.co.uk or via our Facebook group - search for 'C20 Society South West Group'.