

Village's anti-drink banner is restored to old glory

A RALLYING standard used to deter the people of Port Isaac from partaking of the demon drink has been lovingly restored by a group of local ladies.

The temperance banner dates from the late 19th century and was discovered last October underneath the stage of the village hall, formerly the Temperance Hall.

It was in an appalling state, but the banner has now been brought back to its former glory and is on display again in the hall once used by those who preached the dire consequences of a booze-sodden life.

And in those days the people of Port Isaac must have liked the odd dram or two, because there were two temperance societies in the village, each with their own standard.

Village hall committee member Annie Philp, who has been prominent in the banner's res-

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toration, explained how it was discovered.

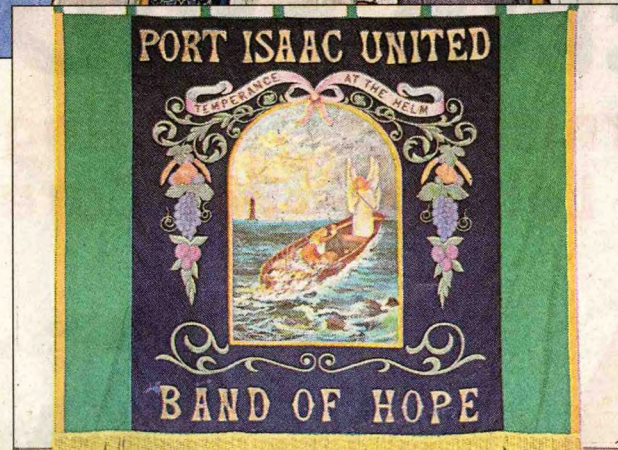
"We were cleaning out the hall and found it underneath the stage rolled up in a ball.

"It really was in a dreadful state – it looked as if the mice had taken quite a liking to the banner, it looked terrible.

"It must have been stored there since the late 1930s. Before that, it was used by a local temperance society when they marched through Port Isaac, which they did quite regularly, along with another society who had their own banner.

"Port Isaac must have been a terrible place for drinking in those days if the village had two temperance banners, but I think the start of the war put a stop to all that – people were probably glad of a drink."

A group of women from the village got together to work on



restoring the old standard, and enlisted the help of professional seamstress Sue Rescorla from St Columb, who gave her services free of charge.

It has taken around eight months to restore the decorative standard, and it's now back on display in the hall.

◆ The British and Foreign Temperance Society was formed in May 1836 in London, and other temperance organisations soon followed, including the Band of Hope. All members took a pledge of total abstinence and warned people of the evils of drink.

■ The ladies of the restoration team, from left, Vanessa Isaacs, Mary Reid, Annie Philp, Paula Scott, Janet Chadband, Edna Davies, Margaret Johnson, Joan Murray, Yvonne Cleave, Ann Steer, Edith Parsons; and left, the results of their handiwork.

Martin Broadfoot