

# HARBOUR OF LOVE

There is a warmth in these valleys and hills  
That counters the winter's gales and chills  
The merciless cold of granite and slate  
Is tempered by souls that know not hate  
A helping hand, and there's plenty here  
Will lift a heart that knows despair  
Eyes that are filled with tears of grief  
For a child's voice stilled, a span too brief  
Are dried with a tender hand that's caring  
Together as one in sorrow sharing  
A mural in a chapel, a bench with a plaque  
Our sons and our friends, the memories flood back  
Not all of us Cornish, not even one race  
United in love of this God-given place  
A wedding of souls 'midst the rocks and the foam  
With a passionate pride in this place we've made home.

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

# THE OLD LADY'S JEWELS

The old lady called Port Isaac, is in a bit of a state  
Though it isn't Christmas yet, it's getting rather late.  
She's very agitated, and there's a special reason.  
She likes to sport her jewels, around the Festive Season.

Last winter we had lots of rain and the gales were rather reckless,  
She lost a lot of sparklers and her best Roscarrock necklace.  
She needs a bit of money to restore her decorations  
So now we are appealing to her friends and her relations.

We need every penny we can beg, steal or borrow.  
Don't forget our Jumble Sale on Saturday (tomorrow).  
Linda's coffee morning on November seventeen  
Come and spend a quid in Fairholme's pleasant scene.

We hope to switch the lights on the 12th of December,  
St Breward Band and carols on the night and remember  
Hot wine and mince pies. We hope you'll all be fed  
So dig into your cupboard for that odd pint of red.

50 pence will help to buy another coloured light  
You must admit our village is a very pretty sight  
So come along and sing a song as we light up for a while  
Let's celebrate our Christmas in a very special style.

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

# THE DAY THE WORLD MISSED THE NEWS

This is a true story. Around 1947 my company was engaged in the maintenance of Public buildings and a 'brickie' and his mate were despatched to the top of Big Ben, for minor repairs. The 'brickie' was Bill Duran and his stocky but thick mate was Charlie Rook. Panting their way to the top of the clock tower, a Ministry official showed them the repainting, etc. and then the keeper of the clock uttered a fateful warning! 'Please be quiet at noon, as the BBC transmits the chime preceding the 'World News'.

A wicked glint came to Charlie's eyes! Sure enough at noon, the Westminster Carillon thundered out its sixteen boingg preamble and then - BOINGG !! S\*#\* - a four-letter expletive echoed around the world!! BOINGG !! - A\*#\*#\*#\*s - an even worse nine-letter ditto shattered the fabric of the Empire!! BOINGG!! - B\*#\*# - a five-letter oath sent mothers in Manitoba shooing their children out of log cabins, and pedal-driven generators in the Australian Outback ground to a disbelieving halt. BOINGG!! - Charlie was now in full obscenity and a further expletive sent rubber planters in Malaya bouncing backwards and tea growers in the Raj stirred to the core. BOINGG!! - F\*#\*#\*#\* - Charlie's repertoire was limitless, and grizzled African goldminers couldn't believe their grizzled ears. BOINGG!! - but by now, a stunned BBC technician switched off the BOINGGS, and what sounded like a world-wide round of applause for Charlie's dirty debut, was merely ten million or so colonials clapping their hands over their daughters' ears.

There was a pregnant silence all over the globe as men fanned their prostrate wives, and then - 'This is the BBC World Service, Here is the News' - but the world was not listening. Seeds of Independence were sown that day. Come to think of it, Charlie Rook was probably responsible for the Dissolution of the British Empire !!!.

**Eric Stokes**

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

# PORT ISAAC PIE

For a tasty dish that's hard to beat,  
Try this delicious Cornish treat.  
The main ingredients have to be  
Good fishing stock, who live by the sea,  
A wealth of BROWNS and ROWES to savour,  
A CLEAVE, MAY or KNIGHT, improves the flavour.  
Add a sprig of LARKIN and lightly fry,  
We recommend an ounce of SPRY.  
A hundred more names improve the eating  
Recognised by their smile, and friendly greeting.  
Cook slowly, then on gas MARK 3,  
That's TOWNSEND, PROUT or PROVIS maybe,  
A pinch of overseas spice when ready  
Try a THOMPSON or ROSS  
(they're both labelled FREDDY).  
For sweetness add a touch of HONEY,  
It's a cure-all if served with Scottish LUNNY,  
Garnish it with a 'Scouser' pickle,  
A colourful spoonful of FRANK McNICHOL.  
To all the items listed above,  
Serve on a bed of friendship and love.  
That's Port Isaac Pie full of good cheer,  
Ask our friends, they come back for more every year.

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

## A TRUE STORY

It started off, just an ordinary day,  
A hospital run, I think it was May.  
A charming dear lady, 80 summers or more,  
Was ready to go, as I stopped at her door.

Trelights to Bodmin, we chatted awhile,  
'I can tell your'e not Cornish', she said with a smile.  
I had to admit it, I said 'Sadly, no,  
I'm from South London, near Croydon you know'.

'Do you remember your teachers?' she said.  
I named quite a few, including the head.  
'You've made me so happy' she said.  
'You see, One of the names you mentioned was me'.

In the capital's streets, far off to the east,  
Sixty-five years ago, at the least,  
A fledgling teacher, gentle and kind,  
Lit the spark to learn, in a young boy's mind.

We talked of old times, of the year '28  
Reunited again by the long arm of fate.  
Bless you dear lady, may God light your way,  
I owe you a debt I can never repay.

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

# SUNSET FROM THE CLIFF PATH

Blood red with mysterious forces  
Gilding the green wave  
Caparisons the white horses  
With glittering gems of foam  
Bedecks the mariner's grave  
With chaplets of fire  
Beyond Pentire  
And our island home  
Surrenders to the battering jewels  
Like slow fire upon a frosty brand  
A flame that lights the dark sea  
From Lobber to Moulds  
And who are we?  
Mankind, all souls  
A brief tick in God's time  
Countless eons after the sun  
Has set upon the last man,  
Triumphant it will run  
The Heavens, as it began,  
And we shall be dust, not forgetting  
We have relished a glimpse of  
Paradise at your setting.

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

# THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS (LIGHTS)

On the first day, we switched on, and had a lovely do  
Then the lights up on Church Hill blew.  
On the second day, a juggernaught fetched a few down  
Ten bulbs just outside Harold Brown's.  
On the third day it rained a storm, high winds and sleet  
And the Platt string ended up in the leat.  
On the fourth day, some kids, or a bunch of loutish fellers  
Nicked a dozen bulbs just behind the cellars.  
On the fifth day, the lights on the gig went out  
And ditto the string from Mark Prout.  
On the sixth day of Christmas, it blew a hurricane  
Up the street chugged the Playgroup's little train.  
On the seventh day the line blew outside the Liberal Club  
And the tree wasn't yet in its tub.  
On the eighth day of Christmas, we mended quite a few  
Then the line up from Tony and Pat blew.  
On the ninth day of Christmas, the weather had us beat  
And bang went the lights in Middle Street.  
On the tenth day of Christmas, I nearly went insane  
When Mark Prout's blew up once again.  
On the eleventh day of Christmas, the weather really bad  
Three strings went, and I started to go mad.  
'What about the twelfth day?' I hear you say-  
On the twelfth day, a gibbering lunatic, frothing  
At the mouth, and capering on the cliffs,  
Looking for a launch pad to eternity, was  
Led away by the men in white coats,  
I hope to be in till AFTER next Christmas.

**Eric Stokes**

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

# THE EXTRA CREWMAN

You'll meet the boat's crew as they stop for a chat,  
Playing darts in the Lion, swapping yarns on the Platt.  
There's fifteen or more, some old hands, some new,  
But always enough to make up a crew.  
When the rockets go up, and the gulls rise and screech,  
They'll stop in mid-sentence, and make for the beach.  
Launched and away, oftimes it's calm,  
They may be recalled, just another alarm.  
But when the sea boils, force six or more blow,  
It's left to the crew, they vote, and they go!  
Someone's in trouble, no ifs and no buts,  
Tramping round Lobber, three lads with guts.  
Ask the folk of Penlee, the maroons doublecrack  
Means you have to go out, not always come back.  
Two hours or more, before they come in,  
Sometimes exhausted, and soaked to the skin,  
Wash down the boat, check fuel's O.K.  
It's not unknown, for three 'shouts' a day  
A chalk board's updated, 200 lives saved,  
A surfer or sailor escapes a sea grave.  
Proud of their job, proud of success,  
Proud to be helping someone in distress.  
So pause if you see our 'D' Class afloat,  
Ask God to go with them, there's room in the boat.

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*



# FRANCESCA'S LAMENT

*This is a poem that I hope my baby grand-daughter,  
Francesca, will never write, twenty years from now.*

Where is the springy, clifftop turf,  
You said you trod above the surf?  
The winding, rocky path you strode,  
Now sodium-lit and tarmac road?  
Where once the seagulls wheeled supreme,  
Now double-glazed, suburban dream,  
Each villa with its glimpse of water,  
The thrift entombed beneath the mortar,  
With serried ranks of patios,  
The birdsong drowned by stereos.  
It was there, once, a reamer's haven,  
Now roughcast blocks from Platt to Gaverne,  
Yes, and beyond man's desecration,  
Blights this world of God's creation,  
Contemptuous with your planners' scorn,  
Betraying us and those unborn.  
This year of Our Lord, two thousand and seven,  
You left us a hell, that once was Heaven.

*This was a poem in protest at cliff development at Port Isaac*

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

# THE SOFT HEART A'BEATING

The Port huddles down on North Cornish shores,  
Round-shoulder'd Roscarrock and Overcliff are its doors,  
Hard men, stone walls, slate roofs and floors,  
But beneath it a soft heart a'beating.

A warm Sabbath eve, and sea hymns fill the skies,  
With a descant of surf, and sea birds cries,  
Praying for men, with salt-weary eyes,  
Voices of God, entreating.

Steep lanes that lead, from the stormy, grey sea,  
Escape only upward, as ever twill be,  
The heart-rending hill, can be broken in three,  
With many a chat at a meeting.

Oft-mentioned names, on a cross on the hill,  
Names that live on, in Port Isaac still,  
Voices that melt a cold winter's chill,  
With the warmth of a soft Cornish greeting.

I came as a stranger, you called me your friend,  
With these humble verses, this 'thank you' I send,  
God prosper your village, and still to the end  
Keep your soft heart a'beating.

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

## JANUARY '85

Winter chills, Winter ills,  
White carpeted the fields and hills,  
Frosty boots that slide and slip,  
Port Isaac's in the Winter's grips.

Nothing grows in drifts of snows,  
A wind that's never ceasing blows,  
A biting mist of freezing spray,  
(Delabole's cut off, they say).

On Beaufort's Scale, a force 9 gale,  
Means mending gear to them as sail,  
Descendants of Trelawny's Celts,  
Bad weather just means tighter belts.

“Old ‘ard m’dear, the sky is clear”  
A touch of sun brings thaw and cheer,  
Spring's not far, a month or so,  
When laughing blooms make hedges glow.

Come April, May, the S.R.J.  
And Orcades will dance away,  
Diana Marion will tread a measure  
Hunting for the silver treasure.

The bright JU-EL breaks Winter's spell,  
Blue Hooker, too, will breast the swell,  
And Palores (the Cornish Chough)  
Baptising bows in every trough.

It's food for thought, they fear for naught,  
“It's food for folks,” they say, “we caught.”  
God smile on all your hard endeavour,  
Winter cannot last for ever

**Eric Stokes**

## **A CHRISTMAS PRAYER-POEM**

Let's count our blessings this December,  
Folks carry burdens, just remember,  
If you've no shoes, your tears are all in vain,  
Cry for those who'll never walk again.

If 1985 brought pain or sorrow,  
Pray God will smile on you tomorrow.  
To those alone, the greatest joy on earth  
Would be, to share with friends, the Saviour's birth.

Wounds that opened through the year  
Can be healed with words of Christmas cheer.  
We thousand souls, our village is too small  
To be divided by a Rose Hill wall.

To unkind words that, maybe, meant you harm,  
Unclench the fist to show an outstretched palm,  
And, as the curtains draw on this year's end,  
To everybody say, "God bless you, friend".

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

# THE PRICE OF FISH

Some ladies were complaining up in London Town,  
The price of food keeps going up,  
It never does come down.  
In Fortnums and in Harrods,  
their voices sounded clear,  
'I think the working classes  
are overpaid my dear.'

A lady standing with her son, sadness in her eyes,  
Overheard their comments  
about the latest rise,  
'I agree with most of what you say,  
I'm from Padstow, he's my lad,  
The price of fish went up today,  
And he paid with his dad.'

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

## OUR KIDS

We blame them at times, for all sorts of crimes,  
Calling them louts and yobs,  
But at 16 years, they're out on their ears,  
From school, no hope and no jobs.

Sure, some of them fail, and go off the rail,  
But one failure is not a disgrace.  
Most you'll agree, are like you and me,  
And their hearts are in the right place.

Where is the soul, in a 30 quid dole?  
When all our kids need is pride.  
Grey men in power, earning 100's per hour,  
Wring their hands and say 'We have tried.'

But their crocodile tears, fall on deaf ears,  
These kids don't need consolation.  
They need work and pay, and be able to say  
'We are the wealth of the nation,

Throw us some rope, give us some hope,  
And we'll show you what we are worth,  
Open the gate, and we'll make Britain great,  
For we are the salt of the earth!

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

# THE GUN WITH THE FOUR INCHES BORE

She ploughed through the Bay, that September day  
In the war that was meant to end war,  
From Brest thro' to Barry, on her stern Milly carried  
A gun with a four inches bore.

She ran out of luck, as a torpedo struck,  
And blew up with an almighty roar,  
The gallant old tub, was sunk by a sub,  
With her gun with the four inches bore.

Brave men died that day, and Endellion's clay  
Holds their mortal remains evermore,  
Let's remember with pride, the day they died,  
With the gun with the four inches bore.

She lay down on the bed, protecting her dead,  
Five miles from Port Isaac's shore,  
Just one more statistic, her only ballistic,  
A gun with a four inches bore.

Seven decades went by, some lads said they'd try,  
To bring the old ordnance ashore,  
Toiling deep under waves, they raised from its grave,  
The gun with the four inches bore.

Free at last, and afloat, a fisherman's boat,  
Laid it gently on Port Isaac's floor,  
Set up, she stands guard, in the Bloody Bones yard,  
The gun with the four inches bore.

She points to the Bay, silent today,  
Like her shipmates, who went long before,  
Whisper a prayer, for those who were there,  
With the gun with the four inches bore.

*In memory of two brave seamen: W. S. Eaton and A. K. Hocking*

**Eric Stokes**

## THE ROARING NINETIES

With fading memories of golden June  
Now Mother Nature calls the tune  
Swirling winds make sea-birds frantic  
From the storm-tossed grey Atlantic  
Force nine or ten or even more  
Shake our village to the core  
Tangent rain like icy lances  
Probes battered roofs, and tiling dances  
A swollen leat, full pelt runs down  
And stains the harbour, earthen brown  
Each boat in breakers lurches, strains  
Full month a prisoner, of mooring chains  
Shattered debris carpets streets  
In maelstrom wind that ever beats  
Perhaps He'll hear, this reedy wail  
Our plea for calm, above the gale  
These hardy folk of high endeavour  
Know that storms can't last for ever

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*



## CHRISTMAS '89

The old lady called Port Isaac,  
has seen decades come and go  
Thought she'd see the Eighties out  
with a very special show  
With Christmas trees and fairy lights,  
prepared to greet old friends  
The Spirit of Goodwill shone down,  
as the 80's decade ends.

Her joy was tempered still with  
grief. The old lady shed a tear  
Three friends were taken from her,  
in the last weeks of the year  
Gentle Bert, and Olive, and Brian  
we'll remember  
Your passing filled our hearts with  
pain and darkened our December.

But life goes on and babies born  
to Andrea and Jill  
Perhaps in some small measure,  
the void they'd help to fill  
The old lady called Port Isaac  
brushed away her tear  
Put on her jewelled necklace  
to greet another year.

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

## ST ENDELLION

The Spirit of God shall guide thy tread  
Where lights of laughing flowers spread.  
Fresh interred, old friends lie here  
Yet in our minds, they still live dear.  
Loved ones, now freed, from earthly care  
A widow kneels in soundless prayer.  
Young men from near-forgotten wars,  
Sailors borne from Cornish shores,  
Lichened names with mossy fungus  
A century on, still lives among us.  
Rich and poor, share on great maker  
Death levels all, in God's green acre.  
Endelienta's granite shrine  
Guards their souls with Love Divine  
Whilst I who muse, when life's coil ends  
Will join a thousand treasured friends.

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

# A THOUGHT FOR CHRISTMAS

There is a warmth within these bare hills  
That seems to repel all winter's chills  
Not the heat of the brazier's brilliant flare  
Or the sun with its harsh, abrasive glare.

It's a warmth that transcends all glowing coals  
Its fount is in Port Isaac folks' souls  
Unquenchable flames on a cold winter's day  
Pierced the heart of a stranger who came to stay.

A stranger who forsook the streets of locked doors  
Found men with free hearts by the ocean's grey shores  
Hearts that were open, kindness without end  
Hands that reached out, and said 'Welcome friend'.

Mine was the hand that you shook long ago  
A lifetime of friends in a few years or so  
May the good Lord repay you, for the kindness you've shown  
God bless you, for calling me one of your own.

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

## SPRING IN PORT ISAAC

If the spring is as bad, as the winter we've had,  
Lord help us in our little village.  
With westerly blows, and Atlantic 'lows',  
Have nigh drowned us all with their spillage.  
Snow, blow and sleet, we've all grown webbed feet,  
And are walking like gulls with the gout.  
You'll be off your trolley if you carry a broolly,  
You can bet it will turn inside out.  
Isobars close together, means really bad weather.  
It'll blow like a bat out of hell.  
With the next pressure ridge, let's blow Brunei's bridge  
And sail further south for a spell.  
Like Captain Bligh's Bounty, our old sodden county  
Could anchor right near the Equator.  
We'd have endless fun, and bask in the sun  
And think that life held nothing greater.  
Wait a bit, in the blue, the sun's poking through,  
Two days and not one drop of rain,  
S. W. Water will say, "There's a drought on the way  
Get out the standpipes again!!"

***Eric Stokes***

*taken from Port Isaac - Harbour of Love, published 1994*

## **Closing Time**

*written on hearing that my friend, Robin Penna,  
was going into a care home*

Not quite time yet for a last look at things,  
but each new day's painful; it casually brings  
one's friends all going down as 'Last Orders' they sing.  
It's closing time.

Each one of us gets there, it's chilling not bracking.  
We're not really pleased with the endings we're facing.  
No time to finish all the projects we're chasing.  
Yes, closing time.

Gather together the small comforts you'll need.  
Get rid of the others; the essence is speed.  
Be ready for the off – it's an old racing creed.  
That's closing time.

What else can one do except offer affection  
to those who are called in an unknown direction  
to face – by themselves – that insoluble question,  
their closing time.

*by Graham Tayar, 31/03/09*

*Trio, No:298, July 2009*

# **A Lonely Maroon**

## ***Dedicated to the Port Isaac Coastguards***

A lonely maroon shatters the sky,  
A siren wails, gulls scream and cry,  
Radios crackle, blue van speeds away,  
A drama unfolds on Polzdeath's bay.

A surfer's heaven, many may tell,  
But paradise too can turn into hell,  
With roaring seas and crashing waves,  
Two boys are lured to premature graves.

Their young hearts filled with careless adventure,  
Ours is not to condemn them or censure,  
Instead, hail those who took on the sea,  
Coastguard and Lifeboat and Culdrose '193'.

A chattering Sea King, bringing new hope,  
Al lonely man on a fragile rope,  
Time and again this valiant soul,  
Tries, but the sea exacts its toll.

Whisper a prayer for those who died,  
Their families, friends, and the heroes who tried,  
Returning to bases, now silent, these crews,  
May God go with you, it's not often you lose.

***Eric Stokes***

*Trio, No: 160, November 1996*

# The Old School

Built of granite and slate, when Britain was great,  
1875, so I'm told,  
Serving its duty, In Victorian beauty,  
A cathedral of learning, so bold.

It stands there still, on Port Isaac's hill,  
Its mass overshadows the port,  
With its oiled wood floors, and pitch pine doors,  
Where the kids of the village were taught.

Its bell summoned lasses, and boys to their classes,  
Moulding each generation in turn,  
Some went to college, gaining more knowledge,  
Helping the torch still to burn.

They learned how to spell, maths, grammar as well,  
Daydreaming as kids always will,  
Some dreamed of fame, but many a name,  
Is carved on a cross on the hill.

Girls with long tresses, and pinafore dresses,  
Were to wed these young lads through the years,  
Making homes for their men, mostly fisherfolk then,  
A lifetime of love joy and tears.

Now silent the bell, at the Old School Hotel,  
Ghostly echoes are still heard today,  
Many now old, some in God's fold,  
Some in lands far, far away.

These boys and girls grew, and grandchildren too,  
Now live in a life with more stresses,  
But they'll prosper it seems, like the boys with their dreams,  
And the girls in their pinafore dresses.

***Eric Stokes***

## Summer Tide in Port Isaac

With the schools of England silent, still,  
The human tide foams down the hill,  
The man who's spent his life on ships,  
Hears snatches from a thousand lips,  
    "Johnny's got 'is trousis wet"  
    "Peter's pinched me fishin' net"  
    "I think it's coming on to rain"  
    "Mother wants the loo again"  
    "Ay say, Landlord, two large ports"  
    "She should never be in shorts"  
    "How quaint this ducky fishing place"  
    "Wipe that ice cream off yer face"  
    "Ou est le café, s'il vous plait?"  
    "Throw that smelly fish away"  
On and on until September  
Safe journey home, and in December,  
Softer voices at the meeting  
On the hill, a quiet greeting,  
    "Mornin' Jack, Hello Harold"  
    "Nice day Mark, How's young Carole?"  
The tide has ebbed and gone away,  
Welcome back again next May.

***Eric Stokes***

*Trio, No: 38, August 1985*



## **And Will You Sup With God**

Once more we toast our good Lord's birth,  
Goodwill to men upon this earth.  
But pause awhile and let us wait,  
Have we the right to celebrate?

Men fight still, God stop their slaughter,  
Children die for food and water.  
We can help in some small way,  
Among us, want exists today.

The workless strive to make ends meet,  
Give their kids a Christmas treat.  
The aged poor, too proud to mention,  
Some food will help eke out their pension.

If all who have a pound to spare,  
Helped these folk to show they care,  
At Christmas time your true reward  
Is God will share your festive board.

***Eric Stokes***

*Trio, No: 117, December 1992*

## **A Blank Canvas**

A work of art really glows on a wall  
for 90 odd years, a cord snaps, it will fall  
We are left with just a faded square  
to remind us of beauty that once was there.

Such was Frank, proud of his art  
A small gentle man, big in talent and heart  
Hosts of good causes, shared his endeavour  
A square on life's wall we'll cherish forever.

***Eric Stokes***

## These I Have Known

In my autumn of life, I look back in pride  
These I have known, friends far and wide.

A Padstow bound boat, smashed by an error  
Matchwood and souls in a cauldron of terror  
A Mayday call shatters the day  
A Port Isaac fisherman robs the sea of its prey  
His Dad, a gentle soul that I knew,  
With his 'bright-as-a-button' Winnie the Pooh.

A lady who made tea for firefighting crews  
And wept bitter tears at the dawn's early news  
For a lad with his name on a plaque by the shore  
And his smile is etched on my heart evermore.

Lifeboatmen and coastguards, I knew them so well  
Put their lives on the line in a Bossiney hell.

A climber who nearly entered death's door  
Smashed by a fall on a cathedral floor  
Between life and death, a division so fine  
He clawed back to life with the heart of a lion.

Memories made, friendships that last  
Some in a war half a century past  
Now in this village, this harbour so brave  
Young folk and old, light my day with a wave  
As mortals, of course, one day we'll be gone  
But your courage and love will always live on.

***Eric Stokes***

# **This Village**

This royal flush of Knights  
This Monkish order of Christmas lights  
This little port clad in glad regalia  
With fishy friends (bound for South Australia!)  
This rocky pile, this septic isle  
This earthly clutch of Cleaves  
This other Eden project, pubby paradise  
This fortress built by Billy for himself  
'Gainst airborne Rovers and the hand of Dawe  
This happy breed of Browns  
This ragged realm of Rows  
This jewel set in a windy bay  
With which we hope to keep away  
All Bodmin alcoholics  
And looting, pillaging Delabolics  
This blessed Platty plot  
This Secret Sammy spot  
This Philpy, Phelpy fiefdom  
This soggy, saturated hamlet of rain  
Where sun has promised ne'er to shine again  
This earth, this Port  
This Village – God bless it!

***Eric Stokes***

*Trio, No: 205, December 2000*

## Port Isaac Illuminations

Raffles and Bingo and a jumble sale planned,  
Eighty-five quid from the Parish was grand.  
The bulbs at cost from Steve Hewett,  
Tony Sweet fetched the tree from the forest that grew it.  
A stout gang of lads hung the lights in the streets,  
Mike Daly and Neville performed prodigious feats.  
Switching-on night, a maroon hit the skies,  
The band from St Breward, hot wine and mince pies.  
Carols were sung, the weather was fine,  
All thanks to Muriel and the crown from the Lion.  
The gales did their worst, for the next week or so,  
But we managed to keep most lights all aglow.  
The rain it lashed down, and the wind was a blowing,  
They built a wind farm to keep us a going.  
The 'juice' was supplied by a dozen or more,  
From Rogues Retreat to Graham's Drug Store.  
Mark Provis and Barry lit up the valley,  
Mary Reid lit the gloom in Squeeze Belly Alley.  
To Calum and Neville I take off my hat,  
Mouse Robinson gave us the juice for the Platt.  
Andy Walton, he set Rose Hill all aglow,  
The tree was lit up by Jon Cleave – PO.  
Dave Philp and John Coshall lit the top of the hill,  
Northcliffe's new owner paid the Roscarrock bill.  
Mike Warner's Old School set Fore Street alight,  
(Plus litres of wine for switching-on night).  
Bless all you good folk and for this very reason  
I wish you good luck for the '92 season.

**Eric Stokes**

## **Penniless in Port Isaac**

*(sung to the tune of 'My Way')*

I'm skint, I'm boracic lint,  
The Royal Mint's refused me money,  
I've tried to tap Jack Spry  
He said, "Goodbye, try Ian Honey",  
The Rows – Bruce, Pete and Jack  
Said theres' a lack of folding ready,  
Put the grabs on those 'handsome' cabs  
Young Sian and Eddie.

The Browns all turned me down  
And then left town in their posh motors,  
They said, "We're in the red,  
Fishing's dead, thr' lack of quotas",  
Dennis Knight ignored my plight  
But gave me a bite (the head of a sea cod)  
A likewise pledge for dodgy veg  
At David's Peapod.

I'm sick, I tried to nick a stripey shirt  
Or a posh new barbour  
Jon Cleave said, "Kindly leave"  
And promptly threw me in the harbour.  
What's more, at the Old Drug Store  
Graham said, "I'll not be nasty,  
For a fiver tip, I'll fry a chip  
And a month old pasty".

For what is it like? It makes me crosss  
No beer from Mike or Rothschild Ross  
I'll say the things I truly feel  
I'd sell my soul for one square meal  
The village knew my pension's due  
A week next Friday  
But for today, I have no pay  
And it's a dry day!

**Eric Stokes**