

“POETRY is PROSE bewitched MUSIC made of VISUAL thought the SOUND of an IDEA”

The people, the place, the events ... they have all inspired poems ...
... in the beginning there was the late Eric Stokes and more recently the late Richard Cook who took on the
mantle of Port Isaac Poet Laureate ... along the way others, young and old, put pen to paper ...
here are just a sample of their words ...

Spike

You smiled as if life didn't matter
You laughed at an old man's idle chatter
Too busy to think of pain or sorrow
Sadly for you, there is no tomorrow.
You touched my life so briefly and yet
I'm left with a memory I shall never forget.
God bless you, son, I hope and pray
We'll meet and laugh, again, some day.



Eric Stokes

Song for Spike

Although you're no longer with us
You never really left.
- Your smile is still reflected
Back to us from the sun,
And the memories of you
Held closest to our hearts
Ride forever on its back
Whilst it tracks its endless journey
Through the heavens every day.
But when the sun is hidden
In the cold grey of the morning
The sky cries tears of ice
For a friend who left too soon.
If we go to the beach
When we want to be alone,
We can listen to the sea
Whispering your name
As it nudges up the shingle
And joins us in our grief.
But it is in the still of night
When we know that you're not gone
When we can look up to the sky
And see you shining with the stars.
Good bye my friend and Thank You.

A Well-wisher.
September 1997

The Town Platt

“Platt” normally means “flat”,
But the Town Platt isn't that.
And, (not to put it down),
Port Isaac's not a town.

Yet, Town Platt is the name,
And therein lies its fame,
A place where people meet,
Adjacent to Fore Street.

The Wheelhouse at the side
Once Tommy Atkins' pride.
The Slipway and the Lake,
The other side do take.

The lower boundary
At high tide meets the sea.
The harbour sits before,
Banked shingle on the shore.


Upon the Town Platt's slope
Lie punts, crab pots and rope.
With fishermen who talk
As to and fro they walk.

“Platt” normally means “flat”,
And the Town Platt's far from that.
Misnomer it may be,
But its good enough for me.


James Platt
September 2010

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 a 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
February 2002



Spring



The garden's turning green again -
new shoots are now in sight
and bulbs are pushing leaves
up through the earth to greet the light

The days are getting longer
as the dark nights slip away
and soon we will be waking to
a warm and sunny day

Easter's coming early
to shrug off the winter gloom -
no longer will we shut ourselves
within the warmest room

This winter can be tucked away
and locked into the past
as winter turns to spring
and then to summer sun - at last!!

Richard Cook

March 2012

A Christmas Thought

in memory of Peter Savage

It was always about this time of year
He'd wish us all Christmas Cheer.
In his denim suit and tortured frame
He'd have a grin and never complain.

His Savage name belied the part
He was a gentle man at heart.
A braver man you'd never meet
You made my life much richer, Pete.

We strewed your ashes on the fields above
Between the sea and the village you loved
Blown by the wild Atlantic shore
You will be among us, ever more.

December 2005

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.

I'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 here with free hearts,
by the ocean's grey shores
Hearts that were open,
kindness without end
Hand 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.

December 1990

Dear Sir, Whenever we had a foggy day,
my late husband, Jim May, used to re-
cite to us the following:

A foggy day in wintertime,
A woman on the road I met,
Not old, not young, but something
past her prime,
And like a Roman matron was her
mien and gait.

Does anyone know more of this, what it
is from or who wrote it?

Mrs. Elizabeth May,
Withy Garden, Port Gaverne.

August 1987

Old Port

The winds begin to blow and the sea starts to swell

The boats start to rock but so far all is well

The pub door flies open as the winds get higher

We talk and drink our beer all sat round the fire

No one will be out tonight the wind is far too cold

You can hear the rattle of a dustbin lid rolling down the road

The old houses in the harbour were built to last forever

But some of the new ones up the top won't stand this sort

of weather

January 1986

Cornwall happy joyful and warm,
Cornwall fierce, fierce as a storm,
The land of piskeys, Cornish men say.
Fishing rules, rules the way.

For my teacher Mrs. Scown.

By Alice Stratton, 9 years old nearly 10.

June 1992

OUR VILLAGE

On Cornwall's grand and rugged coast,
Twegen sheltering cliffs it nestles there -
With harbour small, and screaming host
of circling gulls, and forgeshore where
from time unknown, brave men have plied
their silver trade, save when in war
they fought for all they loved, and died
brave men, nor feared to cross the bar.
Close housed, with narrow winding ways
of white walled cots, where years ago
old fisherfolk live out their days
in haven fair, and peace - hard won.
And now to this dear spot they come
from far and wide, to see and love
this cove, these steeply streets, and some
to paint its shingled roofs above
quaint angled walls. So ever will
this beauty live, and take its place
in England's fame, and Cornwall still
her charm uphold, by God's own grace.

Found by Yvonne Cleave in a box
of Uncle Bill Brown's bits
August 2009

This Village by Eric Stokes

With apologies to John of Gaunt, Willy Shakespeare and half the 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, puppy 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 Delaboles
This blessed Platty plot
This Secret Sammy spot
This Philpy, Phepy 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)!

December 2000

'JANUARY '85'

Winter chills, Winter's ills,
White carpeted the fields and hills,
Frosty boots that slide and slip,
Port Isaac's in the Winter's grip.
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 Trelawney's Celts,
Bad weather just means tighter belts.

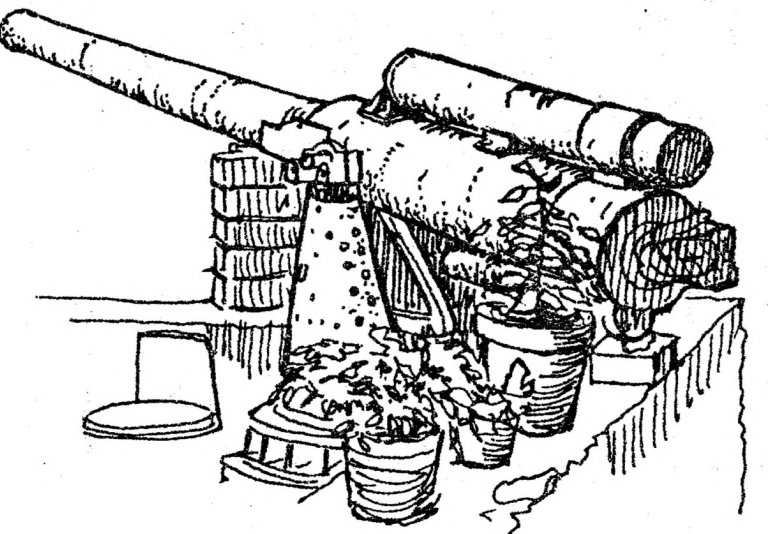
"'Old 'ard m'dear, the sky is clear"
A touch of sun brings thaw and cheer,
Spring's not far, a month or so,
When laughing blooms make hedges glow.

Come April, May, the S.R.J
And Orcaides 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 Cough)
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 forever.

Eric Stokes



The Gun With The 4 Inches Bore

She ploughed through the Bay,
that September day,
In the war that was meant to end war.
From Brest thro' to Barry,
our stern 'Milly' carried,
A gun with 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 that they died
With the gun with the four inches bore.
She lay 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;
Tolling 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 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.

Eric Stokes.

September 1991

Horses

H is for Horses, My favourite thing,
O is for "Oh dear" when I fall off,
R is for riding; Cross-country's the best
S is for stable, all cosy and warm,
E is for eating, When ever they can,
S is for horse show, clear round I hope,

I LOVE HORSES

By Meg Greenhalgh.
October 2000

Tomorrow is Christmas

Tomorrow is Christmas and oh!
what a fuss!
Have we got the holly and the
mistletoe,
and do not forget the tree.
Must go to the village in the
bus,
I forgot the tinsel for the tree
and not to mention the mince
pies
and a cake for tea.
Back from the village
which looked liked Fairyland
with all the
twinkle lights so very bright in
the dark.
Tomorrow is Christmas Day
Must say goodnight to all,
Sleep tight, Happy Xmas.

Molly Farmer

December 1996

The Picnic

They drive their cars onto the
beach,
Take out their picnic chairs,
Their windbreaks and their tables
and some blankets from upstairs.

They then set up the barbeque
and clear a space all round,
And strip down to their shorts
and throw their clothes upon the
ground.

Then they light the barbeque,
Which causes lots of smoke,
Oblivious to folk around
who all begin to choke!

The sausages start sizzling
and the burgers catch on fire ...
The smoke is getting thicker
and the flames are getting higher!

Now by the time the food is done,
The smoke's reached Delabole,
And what they put inside the bread
Looks like a piece of coal!

But then the August weather comes
and lends a helping hand -
Blows down the billowing windbreak
Knocks the barbie of its stand.

The shower of rains so heavy
That it puts out all the flame,
And makes their clothes so wet
That they just can't be worn again.

Their car alarm is going off,
And Dad can't find the key ...
He thinks he may have dropped it
When he paddled in the sea.

But in the end they sort it out
and all is put away,
And off they go, up to the pub -
they've had a lovely day!!

Richard Cooke
written from personal observation!!
September 2010

ROMANCE IN SPRING

'There's no sense', said the robin
'In your getting fighting mad -
I won't come home with you tonight
To meet your Mum and Dad.

You needn't throw hysterics
And scream and weep and beg,
I don't care in the slightest
That you're to lay an egg.

We've had some fun, and both enjoyed
Our amatory wrestlings,
But I don't like building birds' nests
And I don't like feeding nestlings.

I don't like spending sunny days
Collecting twigs and grasses
When I might be whistling pretty tunes
At every bird who passes.

So fare you well, my feathered friend,
May happiness pursue you -
Beware the cat at number five -
I'm off to date a cuckoo.

Maggie Cook.
May 1994

SUNSET FROM THE CLIFF PATH

Blood red sun 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 Mousls
And who are we?
Mankind,
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.

September 1987

Christmas Time

The ground was covered with
thick white snow
The wind was howling blow blow
blow

As everyone will remember
That night the 25th. of December
When angels came to fill the sky
And one by one they started to cry
Come come come and see
They all sang happily
A new born king is born today
Come come come and pray
by Natalie Andreus (age 9)
December 1998

A LONELY MAROON

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

Dedicated to the Port Isaac Coastguards.
November 1996

The Poetry Bit

Oh I wished I'd looked after me belly
Instead it wobbles like jelly,
I should have done scrunchies
Instead of eating munchies
And sitting in front of the telly!

My face has come adrift
And needs a bit of a lift
With a bit of a tuck
And a slice of Good luck
I wouldn't be feeling so miffed!
Cheryl 'Pam Ayres' Webster
CAN YOU DO BETTER?
SEND YOUR POEMS TO TRIO

March 2013

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 there's a lack of folding ready,
Put the grabs on those 'handsome'
cabs
Young Siân 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, thro' 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
cross

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 pensions due
A week next Friday
But for today, I have no pay
And it's a dry day.

Eric Stokes
July 2000

HARBOUR OF LOVE

There is a warmth in these
valleys and hills

That counters the winters
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

October 1986