



in the beginning...

It was 1982, and Robin Penna read a copy of the Crantock Village newsletter and was impressed. So impressed that he put the idea of a Port Isaac newsletter to the Village Hall committee, of which he was a member. Our own newsletter, he told them, would provide an answer to the perennial question "What do you do here in the winter?". It would tell everyone what was going on. The Village Hall committee liked the idea, but as is often the case, they had no money to fund such a venture. But Robin was keen and had the bit between his teeth, so much so that he paid for the first issue himself (this was later refunded to him by Cornwall Community Council). Some 35 years later, that same village newsletter is still going strong.

Initially called "News", a competition was held to name this brand new publication and Mrs Gwen Billing thought up the winning title of *Trio* as it would include information from Port Isaac, Port Gaverne and Trelights. Kathie Carney was editor for some time and some of her thought-provoking editorials are included in this exhibition. However, it wasn't too long before the Village Hall Committee felt they didn't have time to be involved so Robin took *Trio* on, publishing it himself with Fred in charge of raising revenue from advertising and sales.

And that's how things stayed right up until 1999 when they were succeeded by the current editors and publishers, Sam and Dee Littlechild. They had been persuaded that they were the right people to take on *Trio* but it was a very apprehensive Dee that put together their first issue in May 1999. Dee's experience was very traditional - hand cutting galley proofs and manually doing a layout (the original cut and paste!) before sending it to the printer - in the same way that Robin described in the February 1987 issue

But surely it couldn't be that difficult to do on the computer ...
and she had four whole weeks to learn!

By trade, Robin was a typographer and ran a small village printing business, the Blackthorn Press. It was here that he duplicated *Trio* up until he closed his business in 1997 and the printing was taken on by Francis at Wakefields Printers in Camelford. Francis was a lovely old world printer and *Trio* had a great relationship with him right up until his retirement in 2007. Everything then changed at Wakefields and after looking into lots of different options, Sam and Dee decided that the best way forward would be to do the printing themselves. Various machines were looked at and on the way they met John Hooker at Concorde Copiers, an Exeter based company. No-one could have been more helpful and this was the start of a very happy relationship that continues to this day. The "Beast", as it became known, was installed and the September 2007 issue of *Trio*, number 278, was sent to the machine from Dee's computer and, lo and behold, a collated, folded and stapled, black and white copy of *Trio* came out the other end. Not only that but by doing the printing in-house they were able to reduce the cover price by 10p. For four years the "Beast" churned out the monthly *Trio* but he began to get a bit tired and teasy and in late 2011 he was replaced with an even more all-singing, all dancing "Beast" ... issue number 325, the bumper Christmas issue, was printed in full colour.

There can be no better record of modern village social history than *Trio*. It paints a vivid picture of village life over the past 35 years. So many people say that Port Isaac has changed beyond recognition. That it is not the village that it was. Take a look round this exhibition and you will see that this is not the case. Whilst the people may change, the concerns and causes and good heart of our precious village remain the same.