



St Aubyn collection

News on the project – May to July 2008

Saturday 10 May 2008

Today, Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery set up a small stall at the Local Studies Day Event in The Robbins Conference Centre. We wanted to show everyone at the event the work that we had been doing and talk about Sir John St. Aubyn. A small display case of his minerals was taken to the occasion and were on show for everyone to see. The day was extremely productive and there was a lot of interest shown in the collection.

Thursday 5 June 2008

This week, the natural history department finished scanning in Sir John St. Aubyn's herbarium at the Bristol Record Office. A member of our team stayed in Bristol for six days in order to scan every sheet using their large inverted scanner. Now that we have the entire collection imaged, we can start cleaning the very dusty sheets with our paper conservator.

Saturday 7 - Sunday 8 June 2008

During this weekend we visited Cornwall to photograph all the places that played an important role in Sir John St. Aubyn's life. Thankfully the weather was really sunny, and the trip was very successful. Firstly, we visited Clowance, which was Sir John's house and estate. The area had not changed greatly, and the gardens that he landscaped were still very beautiful. We even found a mineral grotto, which we think was made by him. After visiting Clowance we drove on to Pencarrow, which is the house of the Molesworth family. They kindly gave us a tour of the house and allowed us to take photographs of the portraits. There were many paintings of Sir John St. Aubyn and we think he must have visited the house regularly to see his sister Catherine, who married into the Molesworth family in 1790.

Friday 20 June 2008

In order to carry out some research, Jess Shepherd from the museum's natural history department travelled to London for the day. As soon as she arrived in London she went to the Natural History Museum to look at 12 mineral specimens that were originally part of Sir John St. Aubyn's collection. After talking to Michael Rumsey at the Natural History Museum and taking some images of the specimens, Jess then walked to Golden Square to take pictures of Sir John's birth place. After this she visited Putney to find Lime Grove, the place where Sir John died.

Monday 30 June – Thursday 3 July 2008

During this week, Plymouth City Museum sent a member of their team to Kelvingrove Museum in Glasgow to have a look at their mineral collection. Since the task of finding other St. Aubyn minerals outside Plymouth City Museum began, a number of private dealers and other museums have been in touch with us. One of these museums was Kelvingrove Museum in Glasgow, which owns the Glen Collection. Alastair Gunning, the Curator of Geology at Kelvingrove, wrote in to tell us that a small proportion of the Glen collection has labels very similar to the ones found on St. Aubyn minerals. During the week, we managed to spend three days working on the collection at Kelvingrove and took over 600 photographs. We plan to use these images to help us with our research and to deepen our understanding of the provenance of their collection.

July 2008

The Royal Society has made Sir John St. Aubyn their 'fellow of the month' for July. You can see an illustrated biography of Sir John on their [website](#)