



Caravan – a company of people
Caravanserai – a place where caravans meet
<http://www.caravanserai.info>

To some, the word 'caravan' means the summer is here and the roads are clogged with visitors trailing their homes down the A30 into Cornwall. Yet for *caravanserai* - the project at Treloan Coastal Holidays on the Roseland, *caravan* is used in its more historical meaning; that of 'a company of people' – a *caravanserai* is a place where such 'companies of people' would meet – a place of exchange, rest and conviviality

caravanserai is an arts residency project initiated by Annie Lovejoy and Mac Dunlop at Treloan Coastal Holidays, a caravan and camping site on the Roseland peninsula in Cornwall. In partnership with the campsite owners, they are working to promote a responsible approach to tourism through hosting creative activities that engage with, and celebrate the local environment and culture.

To date, artists, writers, musicians, storytellers, geographers, foragers, academic researchers and post-graduate students have been hosted by the *caravanserai* project at Treloan to explore and respond creatively to this unique context.

The project engages creatively with issues that are resonant within Cornwall. From local food to transport to energy, from waste to water & wildlife, as without a responsible approach to tourism that protects the specific qualities of place and people we are faced with losing the amenities and meeting places that are central to our communities.

caravanserai is 'bringing together local anecdotes and craft processes, and instigating environmental practices and discourses in an organic interlacing of histories and poetics'. Dr Harriet Hawkins – geographer-in-residence 2009

Caravanserai has been supported by:

FEAST (<http://www.feastcornwall.org>) "*Environmental issues are affecting and will continue to increasingly affect our lives in Cornwall, and we are interested in creative engagement projects which allow people to explore, debate, learn, comment, and even create solutions for some of these challenges*".

Post-Graduate placements - University College Falmouth. ESF (European Social Fund)
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Context: the villages of Gerrans and Portscatho are situated on the Roseland peninsula, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. With a resident population of approximately 900, the local community hosts a large influx of visitors either through second home ownership or holiday lets. Added to this the village camping and caravan site at Treloan attracts over 2000 visitors to the area during the high season and has a steady flow of visitors throughout the year.



Visitors provide an essential economic asset to the area, bringing trade to the village shop, pubs and local post office that might otherwise have difficulty thriving. On the other hand there are problematic environmental and social impacts (eg. traffic pollution, waste management, housing etc).

The project recognizes the importance of a responsible approach to tourism through creative engagement that offers an enhanced experience of 'the local' to visitors. The interdependent relationship between local residents and visitors / village and campsite, provides a fertile ground from which to engage creatively with the environmental, social and cultural fabric of the locality.

Discovering what's on our doorstep is an unusual and beautifully illustrated limited edition 'guidebook' that has arisen from the *caravanserai* arts project based at Treloan, Produced by artist Annie Lovejoy this 'guidebook' with a difference, offers a glimpse of the locality through the eyes of Gerrans & Portscatho residents and visitors.



The book offers information on local amenities, food suppliers, businesses and community ventures, encouraging people to engage with what the immediate locality offers. This practical info sits alongside historical anecdotes, memories, stories, traditional skills 'how to' pages, craftwork, recipes, artwork and poetry...with a 'last word' from Portscatho based historian Hilary Thompson, reminding us of the 'poetry of history' – how the well trodden paths of a place are deeply ingrained with the experiences of those that have gone before us.

A full colour 64 page limited edition (£5.00) is available from Treloan - published by RANE- Research into Art, Nature and the Environment, University College Falmouth, ISBN 978-0-9544187-7-9 (proceeds to *caravanserai* – a 'not for profit' project promoting a responsible approach to tourism that celebrates 'the local')

An absolutely amazing guidebook, which is so full of unique information. Not only useful to have, but a wonderful souvenir to keep and treasure" Roseland photographer, Mary Alice Pollard.



Insites: a notebook is a limited edition (1500) artists' book produced for the Royal Geographical Society & Institute of British Geographers Annual Conference 2009.

Developed during a residency within the *caravanserai* project at Treloan in Cornwall, the notebook attempts to make visible the processes of responsive arts practice, weaving together the meshwork of relations that arise from 'being' in a place. The book is an active object of enquiry, it is both aesthetic and functional - its blank pages offering space for input in recognition of the evolving nature of the practice upon which it reflects.

Insites: is a critical reflection on geographical ways of knowing emerging from a collaboration between artist, Annie Lovejoy and geographer, Harriet Hawkins. This open-ended creative engagement is intended as an artists' book but also a notebook, your own inscriptions, if you add any, sit alongside those already within the volume. Through its production of a particular place, Roseland Peninsula, Cornwall, UK, *insites* opens up critical space for the discussion of geographical knowledges. Working through conceptual ideas in site specific, local contexts it aims to explore different ways of knowing place, the collaborative process and the potential value of creative cultural practice in considering geographical ways of knowing.

Residencies:

insites is embedded within the art project *Caravanserai* (meaning a meeting place of caravans, companies, people) initiated by Annie and fellow artist Mac Dunlop. Central to this process based art practice are a series of 'residencies', occupations of the site that are not so much 'in' or 'about' a place, as 'of' it. The work is formed from immersive spatial practices and responsive processes through which creative activities are facilitated; activities which explore and celebrate the local environment and culture. So the 'art' of *Caravanserai* is in the relations the artists develop with and within locality.

Annie's and Mac's local interventions, along with those of the other resident writers and artists weave the community into larger networks. Compelled to make more linkages they draw attention to what is on the doorstep, bringing together local anecdotes and craft processes and instigating environmental practices and discourses in an organic interlacing of politics, history

and poetics. For Harriet to be 'geographer-in-residence' was to have the opportunity to think amidst these creative occupations of place, to critique the concept of 'residency' in the context of terms such as dwelling, duration, mobility, community and connectivity.

Field work:

insites begins from engagements with the field site, relaying between these practices of place and critical reflections on geographical knowledges, entangling image and text in a weaving of politics and poetics. Based on sustained engagements with place the challenge of such a 'deep mapping' lies not in the choice between different ways of knowing, but to compose using a range of them, and to think place in terms of width — or relations and connections (and disconnections) — as well as depth. Within *insites* creative engagement and critical reflection coalesce in an aesthetic which is, at once, rich with multiple ways of knowing, but which is equally ghosted with silences. For within vocabularies of place and the rites and ceremonies which fold self into landscape are the as yet unknown and the unknowable

Creative engagements:

instites poses questions of researching and representing place, space and site visually. If the volume develops a 'deep mapping' it does so through deep design: responsive creative cultural practice informed by experiential understanding of place. Photographs, drawings and maps bleed together, texts form pathways through pages, meandering across the images, trailing off before building again. Such open-ended and at times uncomfortable inter-textualities allow for a blending of knowledges and experiences as different registers of information blur but also strike and jar: there is great critical value and reflective potential in these jarrings. Such an aesthetic also makes room alongside accumulative entanglements for tacit knowledges, for those neglected, discredited or just more quietly spoken ways of knowing as well as for all the things, places and people we can not know or did not engage. The collaborative process which had began with reflections on what was shared, became an exercise in exploring the value of alterity, seeking not to sweep away the differences and challenges of such comings together but rather to find the courage to delight in new relationships, new possibilities and new political spaces.

The research for and production of *insites* was supported by:

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RANE, University Collage Falmouth

A word from the artists...

Caravanserai is a 'do tank' - not a *think tank/blue skies/outside the box* scenario - with a nod to Gavin Pretor-Pinney we like clouds (<http://cloudappreciationsociety.org/manifesto>) & don't see situations as being boxed - caravanserai is a connective / responsive / doing / learning / making social space.

The project began with starting a garden in Middle Close (*the project field*) and establishing a residency space (*the project van*). This provides food, flora and a live/work space for people interested in developing social & environmental activities in response to being at Treloan.



*Hospitality
a connective tissue of relational sustenance
a gift of fish*

*it was a late fire as he sat telling us about the moon
and the behaviours of clouds - suddenly he was gone
to return with a box of eggs, 6 beautiful bluegreen eggs
for our friends. He didn't know who made the label -
it was a carton someone had given him.*

Discourse, and the trust necessary for discursive interaction and identification, grow out of a sustained relationship in time and space, the co-participation in specific material conditions of existence.

Kester, paper presented at Critical Sites 1998



It's fantastic to be able to offer a residency space to artists, writers, foragers, geographers (anyone who is able to engage creatively with *being* here) as their input helps make the campsite special – encouraging a multi-faceted sense (or senses) of place. At the heart of *caravanserai* is *being and connectivity* ... with the locality, people, land and environment. Events such as the annual 'FEAST' and 'fireside sessions' bear witness to this.

Linked to *caravanserai* are Annie's PhD studies with RANE (Research in Art, Nature and the Environment) at University College Falmouth and Mac's ongoing literary and (Un/Be) Spoken Word projects.

All of our work as artists, stems from being immersed in particular contexts. We have worked collaboratively and independently for over 2 decades on projects that span a wide spectrum of activities, situations and sites. These include public art projects, commissions and invitations to work in places as diverse as new build schools, lightships, hotels and ferryboats.

Annie Lovejoy and Mac Dunlop.

<http://www.annielovejoy.net>

<http://thepoetrypoint.wordpress.com>

