

# Excavating the Archive: Heritage-making Practices in Cornwall's Clay Country.



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All of the observations and recommendations presented in this thesis are those of the author. The generous participation of the Wheal Martyn Trust (including the staff and volunteers of the Wheal Martyn Museum and the China Clay History Society) in the research does not imply their endorsement of the analysis presented, and the responsibility for conclusions drawn remains entirely with the author.

Cover Image: Filing cabinets in the Wheal Martyn Museum offices.

## Abstract

In 1999 English China Clays (the then principal china clay producer in Cornwall and west Devon) was acquired by the multinational industrial minerals company Imerys. Shortly after, a group of concerned clay workers and local historians came together in a salvage mission to recover historical documents which had been deemed expendable during the business takeover. Together they ransacked offices and emptied filing cabinets collecting historic documentation about the industry. In the eighteen years that have followed, the china clay industry and its associated landscape have undergone immense change and transformation. Meanwhile, that small band of individuals has grown into the China Clay History Society (CCHS). CCHS is now in the process of formalising their salvaged collection, with curatorial expertise from the Wheal Martyn Museum (of which the CCHS is a component part). In this thesis, the CCHS archive and its associated community relationships are examined in relation to experiences of past loss, present instability, and the hope of future renewal.

Over an extended period of participant observation working alongside the caretakers of the archive, I explored the different practices of collecting, sorting, and valuing which are making and remaking china clay heritage in mid-Cornwall. Drawing on heritage studies and past studies of collecting, as well as professional museum and archival scholarship, this thesis emphasises the role that practice and material relationships play in the assembling of heritage (Macdonald 2009). Two distinct modes of ordering (Law 1994;2004) – ‘Passion’ and ‘Purpose’ – are identified as central to this research, which aims to show how different practices of collecting and valuing have profound implications for the ways china clay heritage may be performed in the future.

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## List of Acronyms

**AHD** – The Authorised Heritage Discourse (originated by Smith 2016)

**CCHS** – The China Clay History Society

**CBA** – The Council for British Archaeology

**CoP** – Communities of Practice (originated by Wenger 1998)

**ECC** – English China Clays

**ECLP** – English Clays Lovering and Pochin

**ICS** – Institute of Cornish Studies

**SWLT** – South West Lakes Trust

**WHS** – World Heritage Site (UNESCO)

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# Chapter 1: Tehidy

“It’s not just collections and artefacts; its stories and the contexts of the people who tell them - and very often, the ways those stories evolve and take their places in the following generations”

(QU-233)

## 1.1 Tehidy

There is nothing particularly welcoming or even informative about the entrance to the Tehidy Centre. Concealed down a narrow country lane our destination exists purely on a need-to-know basis; chance encounters would be inconsequential and improbable. Just in case the six-foot steel fencing, protruding in uniformity from the concrete and overgrown verge, proves to be too tempting curious passers-by should note that there is:

“No admittance except on business”

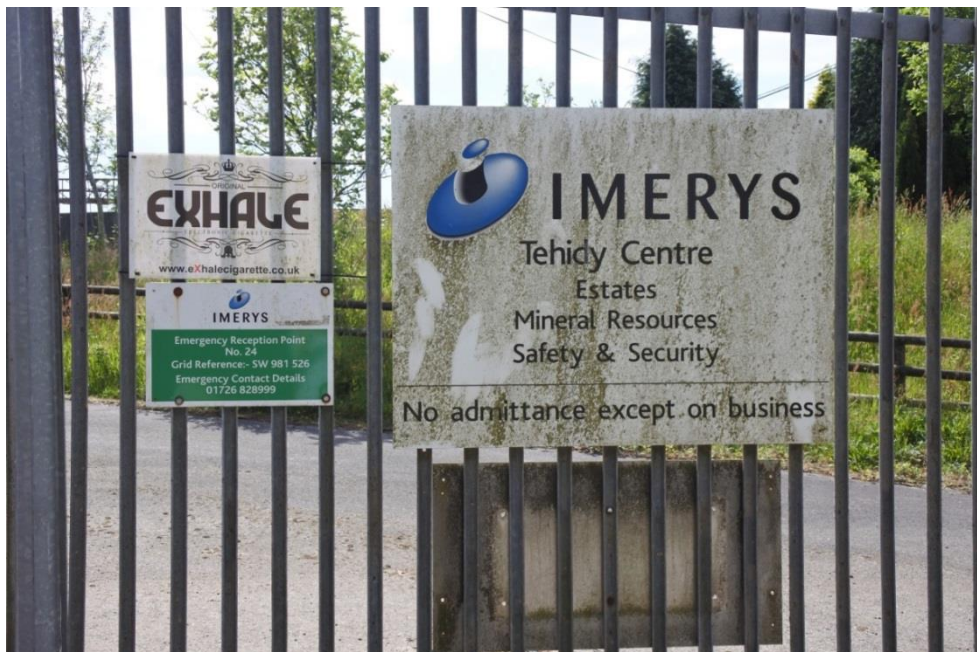


Figure 1.1 The sign at the entrance to the Imerys Tehidy Centre. Photo by Author



The sign makes it quite clear that *their* business really is none of *our* business. There is a subtlety to the directive; nowhere is it expressly written “Keep Out” yet Keep Out is written everywhere. Of course, like anywhere, for those in the know the signage means very little. It is unlikely that attention is even paid to it anymore as they drive down the familiar lane and through the open gate, but for the rest of us the threshold fear (Gurian 2006) creeps in. The familiar questions begin to form in the back of the mind: Is this right? Am I supposed to be here? Have I made a mistake? We might check our notes and maps, just to double, or triple, check we’re in the right place until driving through that gate can be avoided no longer.

Entering the site does little to assuage our confusion. In the near distance five tall concrete silos rise high into the sky, a brazen relic of the nearby Blackpool drying complex that now lies disused and dormant. The dryers were once a key part in the refining of liquid china clay, which was transported by pipelines from the nearby Blackpool china clay pit, now a flooded reservoir located at the top of the steep hills that dominate the skyline to the north. In practice these dryers were seldom used; the cylinders were poorly designed, and the clay stuck to the insides, but still they stand proud. However, it is not the dryers that we have come to see.

A sharp right-hand turn leads to a small car park hemmed in by more grey concrete and bright purple heather bushes. At the far end of the carpark the building ahead is unremarkable, dated and industrial. The structure is slightly sunken, a short set of steps leads down to the brown metal front doors. There is still no indication that this might be where we have come to visit. Glancing up at the lintel we see “IMERYYS Reception” in various shades of deep blue and white.

Taped to the door, among other printed notices, an A4 sheet of laminated white paper reads “Endeavour Club” in a bold black typeface. Another sign stands out however: “The China Clay History Society”. In amongst the concrete and vegetation this enigmatic collection is well-hidden. This is why we are here.



Figure 1.2 Car park and entrance to Imerys Tehidy Centre. Photo by Author

Push (or is it pull?) the heavy metal doors and enter in to an empty carpeted lobby. The door immediately to the left is locked. Peering through the narrow rectangular window reveals a jumble of left over items, spare chairs and A2 photo-boards. Perhaps try the next door? A quick glance through the identical glass window confirms that the room is also empty, save for a central table and a variety of bookshelves and photographs adorning the walls. It's locked too, and silent.

Continuing on, we pass through a set of double doors that lead us out of the lobby and into a much larger space. Observing the scene that confronts us, the threshold fear that we thought we had left at the front gates begins to surface once more; few historical collections are housed in a space which also boasts a full-size table tennis table and fully functioning gym complete with a modern workout soundtrack.



Figure 1.3 Pool table and table tennis table inside the Tehidy Centre. Photo by Author

It is a unique space, and it informs us that the purpose of this building is shared between housing historical documents and photographs of the industry in time gone by and providing leisure space for current Imerys employees. The past and present interact side by side in the most peculiar way.

The latest pop music blasts from the radio at the far end of the room and the rhythmic clink of weights echo. Other noises nearby catch our attention though, a printer shunting into life somewhere in a side room, bursts of loud laughter, thick Cornish dialects conversing with the Queen's English. A small group of men are huddled around a black and white photo; they're squabbling over a date and putting names to familiar faces, some seeing their own younger selves smiling back.

We're ushered into what seems to be the busiest room and are invited to sign in as either a visitor or a volunteer. Beneath the dated ceiling tiles up above and hidden around corners, hundreds upon hundreds of static images are stored in an array of faded box files. This room, we're told is known as the 'White Room'. It is just one of several rooms occupied by the collections of the China Clay

History Society. Quickly we learn that the rooms in the central archive space are colour coded and, for ease of identification, sport a corresponding coloured sticker on their door handles. At the far end of the archive space we are shown the 'Blue Room', where historic maps hang uniformly in metal cabinets or lie flat in heavy wooden drawers. Next, roughly in the centre of the space, the 'Green Room' is home to oversized, dusty, and delicate ledgers and minute books. These are the intricate records of the minutiae of the day-to-day running of the multiple china clay companies that once worked the china clay pits of the mid-Cornwall Hensbarrow Downs.

To be shown the other rooms we have to double back on ourselves, towards the entrance lobby from where we entered. Sandwiched between the 'Green Room' and a small kitchenette we find the 'Yellow Room', by far the largest, which is populated by boxes of all shapes and sizes (375 or there about) slotted neatly into metal shelving and filled with documents and records. Of all the rooms that hold the collections of CCHS this is the one which is most commonly referred to as 'the archive room' by the volunteers. We're told that there is one final room of collections left to see: 'Room 1'. It is concealed back through the double doors in the entrance lobby itself, so innocuous that we didn't even notice it on our way in. In this final room we're shown a cacophony of assorted materials documenting the last 70 years – if not more – of the china clay industry. It contains a haphazardly arranged collection of oversized images and photographs documenting topics from pit machinery to workers housing, retirement parties to royal visits, as well as numerous aerial surveys and multiple copies of defunct catalogues and educational pamphlets.



Figure 1.4 (left) Profusion in the CCHS archive. Photo by Author

Figure 1.5 (right) Aerial photograph of the Blackpool pit in the CCHS archive. Photo by Author

Finally, we find ourselves standing back outside those two locked rooms we passed on our entry. The first, 'Room 3' as it is known, it is confirmed, is merely storage. 'Room 2' however – the silent room with the central table – doubles as an additional work room and as a secluded space for members of the History Society to carry out oral history interviews with retired members of the china clay mining community. If walls could talk this quiet and somewhat inconspicuous room could recount for us a near comprehensive history of china clay mining in mid-Cornwall. It could give us specific dates of pit openings and closures, the names of long retired managing directors and pit captains, and details of the tonnage of china clay extracted over the years. Perhaps just as importantly, it could also recount for us the laughter of old friends and colleagues reunited over tea and biscuits, harmless gossip about ex-managers, fond remembrances of those who are no longer with us, and maybe one or two cheeky anecdotes of office and pit banter. In this otherwise unassuming room all these memories and stories have been meticulously recorded. Just imagine,

“two men who haven't seen each other in 30 years together (one over 90!), talking over each other, [interviewer] included, not always answering the questions. Lots of old gossip and impressions of former

bosses. All being recorded for CCHS oral histories - heritage in the making!”

(Fieldwork Diary 19/10/16)

And so, we have arrived in the China Clay History Society archives; in amongst the abundance, where shall we begin?

## 1.2 Introduction

Propped up in the corner of my small writing desk is a large photograph. Fifteen familiar faces watch over me as I begin to tell their stories.



Figure 1.6 Photograph of the members of CCHS. Photo by Author

In late 2014 a flurry of emails between staff at the Wheal Martyn Museum, the volunteers from China Clay History Society (CCHS) and researchers from the University of Exeter in Penryn, Cornwall, discussed the advertisement for a PhD studentship to investigate the cultural and historical geography of the ‘Clay Country’, a region of mid-Cornwall that for over 200 years had been the centre of china clay extraction in the United Kingdom. The proposed PhD study was to be informally co-produced and was to be undertaken in collaboration with both the Museum and CCHS and as part of a large Arts and Humanities Research

Council funded interdisciplinary project entitled *Heritage Futures*. *Heritage Futures* was made up of four work-packages and comprised a team of 10 researchers and 21 academic and non-academic partners (one of which was the Wheal Martyn Trust, encompassing the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS), and later would be joined by three PhD students. The project aimed to develop a broad, international and cross-sectoral comparative framework for understanding heritage in its most expansive sense.

The work-package theme to be addressed by the University of Exeter team in Cornwall was 'Transformation'. Research in the 'Transformation' theme asked how cultural remembrance can be sustained when materials and landscapes undergo active processes of change. In Cornwall this meant understanding the changing landscape, and the changing industry, as well as collecting and caring practices associated with the heritage of the area. In the email exchange, the chairman of the History Society at that time forewarned that the archive that CCHS managed on behalf of the Museum was, 'extensive'. He was also keen to highlight the importance of the Society's wide range of contacts, all of whom who had *knowledge of, and had worked in, and had lived in the environment of,* the industry. Nevertheless, the Society was pleased to support a research project that examined the heritage of Cornwall's china clay region.

My first visit to the China Clay History Society was on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 2015. My doctoral fieldwork had not yet begun; I was a stranger to Cornwall and the Clay Country. Around 10am that morning I had driven out from the university to meet a member of the History Society, and three of my new *Heritage Futures* colleagues in the car park of the 'White Pyramid' pub in the Clay Country village of Trewoon. From there the four of us bundled into one car and followed, in

convoy, down the narrow winding country roads that led to Tehidy Centre, the home of the CCHS collections.



Figure 1.7 The White Pyramid pub Trewoon. Photo by Author



Figure 1.8 The Cornish lane that leads to the Tehidy Centre. Photo by Author

The experience was simultaneously exciting and bewildering. The Centre was nothing like any museum or archival space I had ever seen; it was unorthodox, profuse and full of duplication, and (at that time) there wasn't a latex or cotton glove in sight. I also later learned that the roof sometimes leaked rain water. And yet it was one of the most dynamic spaces of heritage and memory I had ever encountered. I was astounded by the knowledge about the industry the emanated from each member of the Society I met and the impeccable attention to detail in their understanding of the collections. Over the next year, I visited CCHS and the collections several times and, after a few false starts, began regularly visiting/volunteering with the Society during October 2016 to carry out research on the collections and CCHS's heritage-making practices.

### **1.3 Research Aims and Questions**

Working alongside the *Heritage Futures Transformation* theme, in this thesis I examine the heritage-making practices that are taking place in mid-Cornwall's china clay region. Specifically, I examine the multiple, and sometimes uneven,



practices of collecting and valuing. I started from one very basic question: **How has the heritage of the clay mining region in mid-Cornwall been produced through practices of collecting, archiving and curation, in both the past and the present?**

Heading deeper into the archives prompted other questions however. I found myself asking a second question: **Who has authority and ownership over these different collections, and what are the relationships that exist between professional and amateur collectors?** In order to research these ideas further I adopted a mixed qualitative methodology (that I explain further in Chapter 4) that unfolded around an extended period of participant observation. From there, notions of community and identity became increasingly apparent and I began to ask a third question: **Who are the people who care for the collections of the Clay Country and what motivates them to undertake these caring practices - what makes these collections special to them?**

At the heart of the Clay Country is a highly transformational landscape; active quarries continue to work alongside disused china clay tips and resting pits. Over the years villages had sprung up amongst the works; some became established settlements, and others were swallowed whole by the expanding industry. The landscape itself, local relationships to it, and notions of change and transformation were a constant backdrop to the research. This thesis therefore pays particular attention to notions of the unsustainable and celebrates the ephemeral. It shows that not all things that we want to keep can be saved in their current forms, and conversely sometimes things which are lost may come back in unexpected ways (see DeSilvey 2007a; 2007b; Houston 2013). The final question this research addresses relates to the past and

preservation. I asked: **In moments of change how can ephemeral things be made durable – what can be saved for the future and what cannot?**

This research also offers an examination of the concept of heritage dissonance, through questioning the role that dissonance plays within a wider heritage-making assemblage. In academic discussions, dissonance is often seen as an unavoidable feature of heritage-making practices (Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge 2000). In practice, and for practitioners, however, this is not always the case. This thesis therefore takes an approach which, instead of seeking to pin-point contention and disagreement, seeks to highlight the – sometimes hidden – productive benefits that dissonance can have when viewed alongside organisational processes such as John Law’s (1994;2004) modes of ordering, and relationships such as Wenger’s (1998) concept of Communities of Practice.

#### 1.4 Where Is the Clay Country?

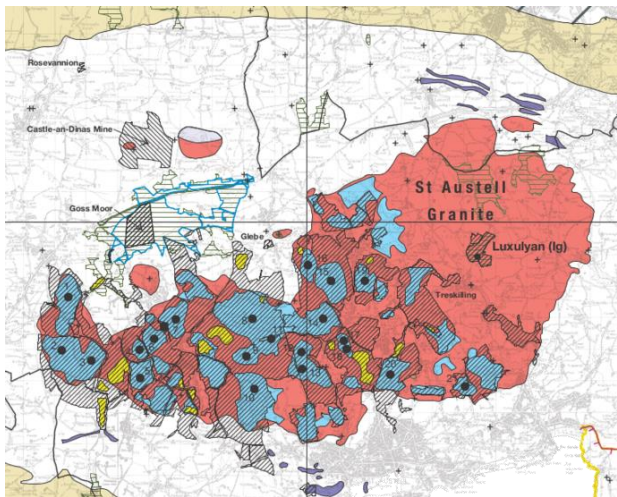


Figure 1.9 Geological map showing the area of granite that surrounds the town of St Austell. Red denotes granite deposits; china clay pits are shown in blue. Map © British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright 1997

Cornwall’s Clay Country covers an area of roughly about 25 square miles to the north and west of the town of St Austell. It is a region within the constituency of Newquay and St Austell, which spans mid-Cornwall from north to

south coast. Prominent settlements within the Clay Country are St Austell, Par, St

Stephen in Brannel, St Dennis and Roche, although the area is made up of many other smaller villages and hamlets. The name ‘Clay Country’ takes its

name from the prominent china clay mining industry which has dominated the region for the past 200 years and, for example like the Black Country in the West Midlands, corresponds to a cultural and industrial region, the borders of which are largely self-identified. As such the Clay Country is not a distinct geographic region. It is also not formally recognised as a district region of cultural or natural heritage, like the nearby Cornwall and West Devon Mining World Heritage Site. The region does however correlate roughly with the geologic presence of the St Austell granite in which the china clay is formed. As the region is largely self-identified, and practically unheard of outside of the counties of Cornwall and Devon, there is often a lack of consistency in syntax; a first glimpse into the uneven nature of landscape designation in the region. The clay producing area of mid-Cornwall is variously known in writing as the china-clay country, the clay country, the Clay Country, or simply as Clay Country; in spoken word it is common to hear references to ‘the Clay’. Shelly Trower (2011) also notes that the clay country, historically, was most often employed by ‘outsiders’ to the region, however many local people now also use the term when referring to the region. For consistency I refer to the Clay Country throughout and I choose to use capitalisation as it has been styled this way more recently both in community consultations (Clay Futures 2009; WildWorks 2008) and in technical reports (Cornwall Council 2012). Capitalisation also recognises the distinctiveness of the region.

### **1.5 Practices of Heritage**

This thesis is grounded in a critical engagement with heritage theories and practices, and draws on emerging research in critical heritage studies that questions how heritage is made and represented. As noted by Harvey (2008) a strict chronology of heritage is not easy to come by. Various interventions can

be noted such as 1882 (the National Monuments Act), 1895 (the founding of the National Trust), or perhaps the cultural change surrounding the conclusion of the French Revolution in 1799 (Harvey 2008; Harvey 2001) but these do not necessarily capture an inception of heritage. Similarly, despite its ubiquity in our everyday language, heritage is often difficult to accurately pin down with neat descriptions, especially when talking about the past and the places we inhabit. Laurajane Smith (2006, 11), for example, confidently declares there is “no such thing as heritage”. This is because, in current academic contexts, heritage is often understood as a cultural process (Smith 2011). Heritage is seen not as a ‘thing’ but as a discrete set of understandings about the past which arise from – and produce – mutable values that often (in Western societies) are attached to objects, buildings and places (Harrison 2016; Harvey 2001). We have, therefore, come to know heritage by its outward facing elements – grand country houses, archaeological sites, museum objects, cream teas, fish and chips – but heritage itself, it is argued, is not any of these things; heritage is a process that operates under the radar as set of meanings and value judgements (Corbishley 2011; Smith 2006). Heritage, Smith (2007, 44) argues, is what happens in places, not the places themselves. Indeed, this point of view has been shared widely among heritage scholars (see Ashworth, Graham and Tunbridge 2007; Dicks 2000; Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge 2000; Harvey 2001; Lowenthal 1985; Waterton 2014).

Heritage, additionally, as either a process or in the form of durable material things, does not exist in isolation. Instead, heritage relies on complex interactions between economics, politics, and culture (see Harvey 2008) and the materials that are framed as heritage play a part in the wider interactions in which they are enmeshed (Macdonald 2009). As such heritage has become

“interwoven within the power dynamics of...society and intimately bound up with identity construction at both communal and personal levels” (Harvey 2008, 19). In everyday life, however, most people do not approach heritage as a theoretical concept, or even readily as a process. Instead we equate it to things we can see and hold or places we can visit and experience. The heritage process is therefore somewhat of a paradox, and the cultural phenomenon of attending to value ‘in place’ simultaneously makes places, and heritage, durable (Cresswell 2015). Through heritage-making, meanings become manifested in specific material remains or sites of heritage, and, in the process, heritage becomes a ‘thing’ once more.

As I will show over the course of this thesis, the practices involved in making heritage, both as a meaning-making process and heritage-as-durable-thing, are wide and varied. I will briefly introduce, however, two over-arching strategies here that I have observed taking place in the Clay Country. I have termed these ‘Practices of Passion’ and ‘Practices of Purpose’ and I will explore these further throughout the discussions in the coming chapters. The identification of these two different practices draws strongly specific types of Foucauldian performative strategies known as ‘modes of ordering’ (Law 2004; Hinchliffe 2010), which offer multiple responses to the same materials and places. Practices of Passion (or Passion), as I will show, is rooted in emotion and enthusiasm (Geoghegan 2013), as well as personal connections to heritage places and materials. Practices of Purpose (or Purpose), on the other hand, is characterised by strong feelings of stewardship and best practice. A sense of duty to preserve the past for future generations is key as well as a strongly developed sense of the ‘right’ ways of interacting with heritage objects and places.

## 1.6 Thesis Structure

John Law (2004) has suggested that methods themselves are often the primary producers of different types of knowledge which, in turn, produce different worlds and realities. We primarily disseminate these different realities or understandings of the world, however, through the production of different types of texts (Latour and Woolgar 1986). Consequently, as multiplicity is a key theoretical perspective that has informed this research, multiplicity has been written in to this thesis through a conscious decision in naming chapters. Each chapter refers to a different facet of the story of the Clay Country, or 'The Archive': as something to be *Approached* (Chapter 2), as *Historical* (Chapter 3), *Performed* (Chapter 4), *Situated* (Chapter 5), *Ephemeral* (Chapter 6), and *Practiced* (Chapter 7). The final discussion chapter (Chapter 8) brings together these themes to discuss one multiple *Future* archive, with many individual, and sometimes contradictory, qualities that come together to make a heterogeneous whole.

***Approaching the Archive***, is the first of three chapters which explores and elaborates on the academic literature and theoretical frameworks which have underpinned this thesis. This chapter explores the multiple facets of collecting as a complicated and intricate human material relationship; an assemblage that encompasses different understandings and applications of value (Macdonald 2009; 2011). In this chapter I delve further into the concepts of multiplicity and assemblage in order to make sense of the messiness of heritage-making in the Clay Country (Law 2004), paying particular attention to how modes of ordering can be used to further understand the heterogeneous nature of heritage-making. Alongside the theoretical literature examined in this chapter I also review literature related to collecting, heritage, museums and archives, as well

as literature from the disciplines of heritage studies, museum studies and anthropology. I also introduce collecting and heritage-making across private and public spaces with a focus on museums, archives and the home, as well as other spaces that slip through the boundaries and fall in-between.

Following this, ***The Historical Archive***, begins to pick up the archival threads of the china clay industry, examining the Clay Country through the published works of historians and in the words of those who lived and grew up in the region's towns and villages. I give an overview of industrial heritage in Cornwall more generally and the history of the china clay industry specifically in mid-Cornwall to contextualise this study, and to give a flavour of the sorts of knowledges that are privileged in the making of china clay history and heritage. I then present the institutional histories of the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS. I trace some of the social and industrial developments in Cornwall, and the wider UK cultural sector, during the latter 20<sup>th</sup> century which contributed to an environment where an industrially-sponsored museum for china clay could come into being. I explain how over the Museum's 40-year history different management practices have contributed to the position the Museum finds itself in today. I also explain how acute changes to the china clay industry motivated local historians and retired clay workers to take an active approach to the salvage of historical documents, and to form the China Clay History Society. In mapping the history of the china clay industry, the Wheal Martyn Museum, and CCHS, I provide a platform on which to begin navigating the complex web of entanglements which bind the two together and to juxtapose their practices (cf. Thomas 2016).

Following this, *The Performed Archive*, charts my own arrival in to the CCHS archive, eighteen years after the inception of the History Society. In this chapter I explain the different methods that I utilised in order to carry out my research in the Clay Country. I show how a combination of questionnaire distribution, semi-structured interviews, and an extended period of participant observation allowed me to become a part of the heritage-making community that exists within the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS, and to trace my own journey from arriving as a visitor in the archive space to becoming an active volunteer (Cragg and Cook 2007; Laurier 2010). In doing so, I also explore how understanding heritage-making in the Clay Country as a Community of Practice (Wenger 1985) helps bring together amateurs and professionals engaged in different methods of caring for the history and heritage of the region.

In the second part of this thesis I draw on specific elements of the china clay case study to explore heritage-making processes. *The Situated Archive* applies literature concerning heritage value and place-making to the dynamic landscape of the china clay region. Beginning with an examination of Tim Ingold's (1993) concept of 'taskscape', this chapter examines how the mid-Cornwall landscape and the communities that live within it have shaped engagement with the history and heritage of china clay. I then highlight the different ways that the china clay landscape has been valued in the past to explore how these different landscape valuations have fed into past and present heritage-making practices. Lastly, drawing on a questionnaire survey distributed to members of CCHS and from interviews carried out with local people involved in china clay heritage, I explore how personal connections with the china clay industry and landscape shape the ways that heritage has been approached in the Clay Country.



Following this spatial examination, *The Ephemeral Archive* explores the temporal dimensions of collecting, focussing largely on CCHS and its vast collection. In a play on words, the ephemeral archive relates to many of the materials themselves as items of ephemera, but also the story of how the collections of CCHS were salvaged and retained. This is a collection of documents and records which were never intended to survive, destined for the scrapheap, and yet eighteen years later continues to grow thanks to the efforts of CCHS volunteers and interventions from the Wheal Martyn Museum. I deal heavily with loss in this chapter and the feeling that many members of CCHS have that they constitute the last of their generation as china clay workers. I document, through my observations and drawing on interviews, the intensely personal practices of memory-making that have shaped the way china clay heritage has been made. In doing so, I highlight how the mode of ordering I have termed 'Practices of Passion' has influenced the collecting and heritage-making practices associated with the CCHS archive. This chapter also explores an uncomfortable element of the CCHS archive, that its practices are unsustainable in their present form. Finally, I propose that through multiple modes of ordering, and the influence of another mode of ordering, 'Practices of Purpose', there can still be sustainable future for this ephemeral archive.

Chapter 7, *The Practiced Archive* expands further the relationship between Practices of Passion and Practices of Purpose across the Wheal Martyn Museum and the CCHS archive. By delving deeper into the relationships between these two modes of ordering, I uncover some of the professional practices implicit in the care of the past and the making of heritage in the Clay Country. This chapter shows how differing personal and professional attitudes and responsibilities to the collections shape how heritage materials are cared

for. In this chapter I most clearly juxtapose the different practices of heritage-making encountered in the Clay Country, and the competing influences on these spaces of heritage-making. This chapter examines the different ways that knowledge and power are executed in spaces of heritage-making, and how different practices are privileged in the making of 'official' heritage. It also shows that diversity in practice is often crucial for long-term sustainability.

Finally, the concluding chapter, *The Future Archive* contains both a discussion of the thesis as a whole and a conclusion, which draws together the threads of the multiplicity in the archive and heritage creation in the Clay Country. This chapter considers the hopes and fears for china clay heritage that have emerged through this research. I discuss how new developments in heritage-making across the Clay Country may impact on how the history and heritage of the china clay industry is approached in the future. I explore the multiple futures open to the collections of CCHS and the Wheal Martyn Museum, and I also address notions of organisational sustainability, multiplicity and succession. This chapter perhaps produces more questions than it answers, however it seeks to openly consider what the future might hold, for this unique landscape, industry and collections.

## **Chapter 2: In the Reading Room: Approaching the Archive**

This chapter reviews the literature that has shaped and informed this research. I first tackle some of the complexity that surrounds the concept of heritage, in order to frame the ways that heritage has been approached in this research. I then explore Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge's (2000) notion of heritage dissonance and, related to this concept, Smith's (2006) Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD). I explore the advantages of these two terms for the study of heritage, but also aim to critique and test the limits of their usefulness in relation to this research. Building on this critical perspective, I then explore how a theoretical position oriented towards assemblage and ordering strategies (Law 2004) can provide new insights into the nature of heritage-making. Assemblage and modes of ordering are just two ways of addressing the messiness of heritage, which can be conceptualised as both a process and a durable material 'thing' in equal measure.

Alongside these theoretical perspectives, I also explore the literature about museums and archives, the places where heritage-making is located and made durable. I highlight work which has taken place in the spaces that fall in-between, and where the processes of heritage-making become more readily visible.

## **2.1 Heritage and Place**

The research presented in this thesis seeks to uncover how heritage has been, and is being, made in the Clay Country. But before I can fully begin to unpack this question, it is useful first to explore the relationships between heritage and place, and the ways these concepts have been presented and applied. In doing so I will also address what I believe to be one of the key contradictions of

heritage: that heritage is often simultaneously described as an intangible process *and* as something that is material and durable.

Heritage, it has been argued, is “inherently a spatial phenomenon” (Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge 2000, 4) in that it takes shape in places (and spaces) and across scales. Tim Cresswell (2012) and Gareth Hoskins (Cresswell and Hoskins 2008) have explored the relationship between the heritage-making process and material remains through their exploration of two American historical sites, the Maxwell Street Market (Chicago, Illinois) and Angel Island Immigration Station (San Francisco, California). Their studies have highlighted the propensity of official heritage-making organisations to privilege the material structure of places, highlighting the sometimes awkward relationship between the “experiential fluidity and material obduracy” of places (Cresswell and Hoskins 2008, 392). Thus, Cresswell and Hoskins (2008) have suggested that it is the relationship between heritage processes and places that, in part, allows heritage to become durable, drawing on Casey (1987) who states,

“It is the stabilizing persistence of place as a container of experiences that contributes so powerfully to its intrinsic memorability. An alert and alive memory connects spontaneously with place, finding in it features that favor and parallel its own activities. We might even say that memory is naturally place-oriented or at least place-supported”

(Casey (1987, 186-87) in Cresswell and Hoskins 2008, 395)

Cresswell and Hoskins (2008) also, however, draw on other readings of place which are much more fluid in nature, to highlight the juxtaposition between understandings of place as fluid and transformative and perceptions of the relative stability of material over time; experiences of, and in, place are rarely the same twice, or for two people (Cresswell and Hoskins 2008, 396). Although Cresswell and Hoskins (2008) stop short of applying these same ideas to

material objects, throughout this thesis I draw on Cresswell's later work (2012) alongside others (e.g. DeLyser 2015; DeSilvey 2007a; 2007b; Miller 2009) to suggest that objects as artefacts, and found or salvaged material things, also have strong connections to memory and heritage-making. Through studies such as Cresswell and Hoskins' (2008) we can better understand how heritage is approached by different people in different ways. Furthermore, heritage might be approached as a touristic opportunity, but also as a mode of community engagement, as a political statement, or merely as an object of study or interest. Additionally, heritage can be understood as an immutable right, something that we have inherited and belongs to us, which can be personal or universal (Stig Sørensen and Carmen 2009, 3).

There has of course also been much work which sits in between the micro, personal heritages, and the macro, regional or national heritages, often moving between the scales to build up a picture of how place and identity meet against a backdrop of 'heritage' (for example, Crang and Tolia-Kelly 2010; DeSilvey 2003; Laviolette 2003; Pollock and Sharp 2007; Poullos 2011; Stig Sørensen 2009; Uzzell 1996). Most importantly for this research are those studies that have explored the notions of collecting and memory in relation to landscapes and communities. The ways that built and natural environments come to be valued often influences how we interact with them (Cresswell 2012). Lars Meier (2012), for example, has demonstrated how an abandoned steelwork can have lasting emotional effects on the population of ex-steelworkers still living nearby.

A difference between these personal and emotional responses to place and more official recognition of heritage, however, is that often the official spaces (especially large-scale manifestations of heritage) can be seen to be created

and regulated by the production of 'texts' (Stig Sørensen and Carman 2009, 6). Built heritage, in particular, is often organised and designated by obligations, guidelines, charters (e.g. the Venice Charter; the Burra Charter), and lists (e.g. World Heritage List). These texts often regulate what is included in the privileged collection of places, sites, and landscapes which constitute 'official' or national heritage. Cresswell (2012) also argues that the practice of collecting and archiving not only bestows value on the collected things, or places, but also gives a benign power to those doing the collecting as the ones who are able to determine value, share value, and protect their collections from 'valuelessness'. When heritage discussed in this way it often centres heavily on the present. Ashworth, Graham, and Tunbridge (2007), for example, state quite plainly that their conceptualisation of heritage is a present-centred phenomenon, in which the future and the past play an ancillary role. The problem is that when heritage is conceived in this way it often cements heritage buildings and objects firmly in the present. Furthermore, the preoccupation with fixing and stabilising heritage objects (or 'assets' as they have become known in professional circles) in order to 'properly' conserve and manage them, naturally lends itself to a notion of fixity and a desire to 'arrest' decay. This, therefore, problematizes the understanding of heritage as a process. As such, some heritage scholars, such as Caitlin DeSilvey (2012; 2017), have advocated for a renewed consideration of the materiality of heritage assets, including accepting and embracing material change and future loss. This is a progressive, even radical, suggestion that challenges traditional conservation approaches, which strive to preserve and protect and make heritage durable, and ultimately uphold that heritage is intrinsically valuable and therefore must be passed on to future generations, who are characterised as grateful recipients (Holtorf 2007).

### **2.1.1 Heritage as Future-Making**

The temporal nature of heritage, and the interplay between past and present, have been addressed by geographers and heritage theorists alike (Harrison 2015; Harvey 2008; Tilley 2006). Tolia-Kelly (2006, 215) has asserted that “by acknowledging power geometries of our present as linked to our pasts” we are able to better understand the affectual nature of the everyday, whilst Harvey (2001, 378) claims that heritage is “a value-laden concept, related to processes of economic and cultural commodification, but intrinsically reflective of a relationship with the past”. Further, Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000, 2) suggest that “heritage is a view from the present, either backwards to a past or forward to a future”. What has been missing from most of the discussions concerning heritage and temporality, however, is what bearing our present acts of heritage-making may have on the making of future heritage. Partly this could be because, the future is imagined as a time where the present no longer exists, rather than simply a continuation of the present through time. This in turn necessitates the preservation of the things we find valuable in the present so that they will be available to the future (Vidal and Dias 2016, 5).

To bridge this temporal gap, Rodney Harrison (2015; Harrison et al. 2016) has drawn attention to the role that present heritage practices play in “assembling futures” (2015, 24). Harrison (2015, 34) has theorised that as heritage is often involved in preserving the past for the future, heritage can be seen to be “actively engaged in the work of assembling and caring for the future”. This new scholarship represents the beginnings of a shift in the way that heritage can be considered, not as a present-focussed use of the past but towards a study of heritage that questions how we wish to construct the future (Harrison 2015, 35). Harrison (2015; Harrison et al. 2016) additionally draws on ideas of

endangerment (Vidal and Dias 2016), which often acts an impetus for preservation and conservation for the future, and an object's relationship to endangerment often has a direct correlation to the effort made to conserve or protect it. Endangerment is further perpetuated by the object's inclusion in various documents, lists, inventories or rankings which act as "mechanisms to produce knowledge, pursue ideals and enact policies" (Vial and Dias 2016, 1).

Similarly, Smith and Campbell's (2017) conceptualisation of 'nostalgia for the future' can be seen as one of the driving forces which compels people to collect and save heritage objects and places for the future. Smith and Campbell argue that a progressive sense of nostalgia can be an important tool, used particularly by marginalised or working-class groups, in order to envision new futures for their communities based on important values from the past (although it is also noted that nostalgia and emotion more generally have been mistrusted in the academic literature). Smith and Campbell's (2017) study typifies heritage sites, drawing heavily on the industrial museum as a community meeting place, where those connected with a shared past can come together and enter into a dialogue with the past and in doing so mobilise heritage-making as an aspirational future-making device for celebrating a shared past that remakes and reimagines a sense of community. Drawing on these concepts, this thesis seeks to envision the possible futures that are being made in the Clay Country by those who seek to preserve the region's history and heritage.

## **2.2 Heritage Dissonance and the Authorised Heritage Discourse**

From this short introduction it can be seen that the term heritage is often made to work very hard in the literature, covering a wide range of concepts and meanings. It may be applied to material 'things' museums, archaeological



objects, monuments, and country houses, but also to processes of meaning-making and feelings of belonging, identity, and community (Waterton 2014). Moreover, Stuart Hall (1999) suggests that heritage-making is more or less a discursive practice; by telling stories about the past people share in and create a social memory that selects the most memorable achievements and assembles them into single intelligible narrative. As Sharon Macdonald (2009, 2) puts it “having a heritage...is integral to having an identity and it affirms the right to exist in the present and continue into the future”. Hall (1999) also famously questioned however, “whose heritage” do these narratives tell? Heritages that are framed alongside narratives of identity and belonging tend to consequently be seen as somewhat exclusive, and therefore the stories they tell can be unequal. This feeds into Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge’s (2000) concept of heritage dissonance, and Smith’s (2006) Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD). The following discussion will explore and critique dissonance and particularly the role of dissonance and the AHD as useful concepts for addressing disagreements between different types of heritage. However, I propose that dissonance can also be advantageous within heritage groups for making future heritages.

Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge suggest that heritage dissonance results from the “zero sum” (2000, 24) nature of heritage itself: they argue if heritage belongs to one particular group or individual then it cannot equally belong to another (in their subsequent work (2007) they later temper this statement with an assertion that heritages can also be plural or overlapping, which I will return to). In their initial assessment, however, in the words of Lowenthal, “history is enlarged by being disseminated; heritage is diminished and despoiled by export” (Lowenthal 1998, 128). Over the course of this thesis I will examine

notions of identity and community in heritage-making and explore how notions of succession and letting go of ownership of some heritage collections to be cared for by others may perhaps 'diminish' the collections in one sense but can also enrich them and give them possible new futures.

Explaining the theory and thinking behind heritage dissonance, Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000) assert that heritage has both cultural and economic value. Heritage, as an industry and as it is approached by Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge, is a hugely profitable enterprise that has the capacity to commodify the past and offer it up for sale as part of the modern entertainment and tourism industries. Indeed, the past as a tourist attraction originated during the 'heritage boom' of the 1970s and 1980s (Merriman 2004, 88), coinciding with the rise in scholarly interest in heritage. It is this dual value and the disagreements surrounding the way heritage is used and presented which is a key contributor to heritage dissonance (Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge 2000). In Cornwall, as well as many other places across the world, heritage contestation is often expressed through accusations of "theme-parking" (Orange 2012, 301) or "Disneyfication" (Kennedy and Kingcome 1998; Laviolette 2003, 229; also see Morris 2016). This refers to the eclipsing of 'authentic' heritage values by 'inauthentic' money-making schemes closely related with mass tourism, that have occurred due to the promotion of Cornwall as a popular tourist destination (Hale 2001).

Part of the problem is that it is often assumed that heritage values are self-evident and therefore incontestable; this is, however, rarely the case (Fredheim and Khalaf 2016). Value, like heritage, is semantically loaded and has been debated in depth from the ancient philosophers to modern anthropologists

(Hoskins 2016). Daniel Miller (2008) has suggested that despite the intellectual attention given to 'value', much like Smith's 'no-such-thing' assessment of heritage, as noted in Chapter 1 (2006; 2011), 'value' has become somewhat ubiquitous in everyday parlance, capable of meaning so much that it consequently ends up meaning very little.

Anthropologist Daniel Miller (2008) reduces 'value' to two opposing definitions. The first defines value in monetary worth, largely synonymous with 'price', and the second definition denotes a state of 'pricelessness' – in that an object, a building, or even a person or place, accrues value in part because no monetary price can capture its worth (Miller 2008, 1123). In this sense, parallels can be drawn with Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge's assessment of heritage. For most of us, the things we choose to retain and care for – the things that have value to us – are seldom prized for their economic value alone. To that end, Susan Pearce has described heritage objects as "selected lumps of the physical world to which cultural value has been ascribed" (Pearce 1992, 4) and cultural, personal, or sentimental values are often cited as prominent reasons why people choose to collect things.

Yet, one of the most common ways in which Western society habitually categorises material things is as commodities to be acquired (Appadurai 1986, 5). In Arjun Appadurai's (1986) evaluation, all things – objects and materials – are embroiled in a cultural system where "economic exchange creates value" (Appadurai 1986, 3). We know, however, that all things are not free to be exchanged. Appadurai therefore looks to George Simmel (1907), who suggests that objects accrue value not because of our desire to possess them but through an object's resistance to our desires (Simmel 1907, 67 in Appadurai

1986). Often, the harder an object is to acquire, the rarer and more valuable it becomes. Following Simmel's (1907) thought, it could be suggested that the objects that we choose to keep achieve the highest value because they permanently resist the attempts of others to possess them, existing, for a time at least, outside of the realm of exchange (see Macdonald 2011, 82). Heritage as a commodity is complex however in that the economic value it commands is not only monetary. Heritage is also conceptualised as an 'economic good' which contributes to one of the facets of human wellbeing (eftec 2005). In heritage management terms, heritage assets are often believed to have a solely positive contribution to wellbeing— although in practice this is not always the case (eftec 2005). Alongside there is also, of course, the broader relationships with cultural value and heritage as a means of representation and identity.

This mutability of value is complicated. Michael Thompson's *Rubbish Theory* (2017 [1979]) gives some indication how economic value, or absence of it, can become transformed into the durable kind of value which is associated with heirlooms and collectables. Thompson (2017) classifies all matter through three categories: *the transient*, *the durable* and *rubbish*. The transient, the closest to what is classically termed a commodity, decreases in value over time whilst the durable, what would usually be considered antiques and collectors' items, increase in value over time. The third category of rubbish exists for valueless 'waste' items, and in part as a transitory category, which allows matter to transition between the two former categories. Thompson explains it like so: a transient object will reach the end of its useful life, declining in value until it reaches a state of valuelessness. On reaching this state, Thompson argues, in an "ideal world—a world uncannily like the one that is assumed in neoclassical economics—it would then, having reached the end of its usefulness, disappear

in a cloud of dust” (2017 [1979], 10), but this rarely happens. In actuality these objects linger in a state of limbo, as rubbish either awaiting a final destruction or transition into a durable object. This is not a perfect analogy for heritage values, but as will be shown in Chapter 6, Thompson’s *Rubbish Theory*, is a useful tool for understanding how some collections of seemingly valueless objects can come to be heritage collections.

Although there is dissonance between the two understandings of heritage, both cultural and economic uses of the past largely rely on the conservation and protection of past artefacts, including both buildings and objects, as well as the cultural meanings attached to them (Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge 2000, 22). An extensive review of heritage value typologies has recently been published by Harald Fredheim and Manal Khalaf (2016) which, like Hoskins (2016), calls into question the practice of assigning predefined value to individual heritage sites. Fredheim and Khalaf have stated that although the origin of value-based approaches is often seen to be the Burra Charter (1979), it was not until the 21<sup>st</sup> century that ‘inherent value’ came to the forefront as a reason to preserve and protect heritage buildings and objects. Crucially for this research Fredheim and Khalaf’s review showcases a problematic fact: most current value-based approaches are ill-equipped to deal with change and do not suitably address mutable value systems in the past, present and future (2016, 470). Instead a more holistic approach to professional heritage management is needed which articulates clearly the individual features of the heritage object or tradition which is intended to be protected or that makes it worthy of protection in the present, but also remains open to revision in the future (Fredheim and Khalaf 2016, 476).

Gareth Hoskins (2016) too has explored the disconnection between economic and non-economic value, in a study of the proposed closure of a number of Californian State Parks. He argues that value is inseparable from politics and the practice of assigning value to a particular place serves to further “existing social privilege” (Hoskins 2016, 303). He critiques the nature of heritage listing, describing the practice as “a peculiar form of spatial beauty contest” (Hoskins 2016, 306). Furthermore, value attributed to listing is centred on establishing a sense of order and control; however, Hoskins notes (quoting Harrison (2013) and Mackintosh (1985)) that for some, overzealous listing may risk decreasing the value of heritage overall (2016, 306). In distinguishing the value of parks to be closed and parks to remain open, Hoskins (2016) noted a contradiction between government notions of economic value and the expression of local values.

Closely related to heritage dissonance and a key text in the literature surrounding heritage-making and valuation is Laurajane Smith’s (2006) *The Uses of Heritage*, which comprehensively lays out the notion of the ‘authorised heritage discourse’. Over the last fifteen years, Smith has written extensively regarding the ‘authorised heritage discourse’ (hereafter referred to as AHD). The AHD is identified by Smith as a particular type of valuing which,

“focuses attention on aesthetically pleasing material objects, sites, places and or landscapes that current generations ‘must’ care for, protect and revere so that they can be passed on to nebulous future generations”

(Smith 2006, 29)

Through the above practices the AHD attempts to create a common and shared identity in relation to a communal past (Smith 2006). In doing so the practice of creating and maintaining heritage becomes self-referential, and the versions of history that are passed down as heritage are made up of hegemonic values which are considered universally applicable (Smith 2006, 11). Smith (2006) has further argued that due to the elite values which are often perpetuated by the AHD there is a tendency for heritage to “privilege the grand narratives of nation and class...technical expertise and aesthetic judgments” (Smith 2006, 11). An obvious consequence of this privileging of values is that ideas, practices and indeed people that do not fit are often obscured or erased

Recently, Smith and Campbell (2017) have contended that the AHD is sustained by the myth that heritage management is apolitical and that there has been a general failure within heritage studies to engage with the effects that emotion, particularly nostalgia, have on the preservation and conservation of heritage, although Emma Waterton’s engagement with non-representational heritage, and Divya Tolia-Kelly’s many interventions into heritage and museum spaces are notable exceptions (Tolia-Kelly 2006; 2011; 2016; 2017; Tolia-Kelly and Crang 2010; Waterton 2014). Another consequence of the AHD relates to scale, both topological and temporal. The AHD emphasises the importance of monumentality, expertise, and time-depth (Smith 2006, 11) which negatively impacts values associated with the transient, the ephemeral, the emergent and the amateur. In discussing the writing of the history of geography David Harvey (2008) has approached the idea of ‘small heritages’ pertaining to localised and personalised memory. He concludes that due to the general distrust circling the meta-narratives of heritage, small heritage could be the central tenant of the

heritage practices we pass on to the future as part of what he terms “our prospective memory” (2008, 33).

For the AHD, dissonance is an intrinsic and inescapable part of heritage creation. Dissonance and the AHD often become most problematic when notions of power become entangled with notions of the past. Like Hall (1999), Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000) highlight the example of national heritage, mediated by a ruling party or an elite group, however as I will show in Chapter 7, power and knowledge frequently become intertwined with heritage creation at a smaller scale and local level as well. Through work on the development of the role Smith’s concept of the AHD plays in heritage creation and sustentation, the concept of dissonance has too been furthered and advanced. A key component of later revisions to the concept of dissonance by Ashworth, Graham and Tunbridge (2007) is the emphasis placed on the pluralities of heritage and the endless opportunities for heritage to be remade and reframed (see Johnson 2013). Ashworth, Graham and Tunbridge’s (2007) revisions to the concept of dissonance focus heavily on the nature of modern society as multicultural, or as they prefer, ‘plural’.

Although dissonance is seen to be inherently divisive, Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000) suggest that steps can be taken to manage and reconcile dissonance, often by separating dissonant heritages, either by location or by market segments (basically by who they attract). Although these solutions minimise conflict, they are not particularly inclusive, as Ashworth, Graham and Tunbridge (2007) later qualify. Instead, they propose a multicultural, ‘heritage diversity’, approach to heritage management where a balancing of majority and minority values work in harmony to provide benefits for all. In practice (and for



large scale management purposes) this is indeed a sensible suggestion.

Although a discussion of multiculturalism and heritage goes beyond the scope of this thesis, I argue, however, that these suggestions often focus on what separates certain types of large scale heritage expressions and does not always address the dissonances that can arise within practices of heritage-making at the smaller scales.

It is worth noting here that plurality and multiplicity, although often used interchangeably by Ashworth, Graham and Tunbridge (2007) in their later revisions of their thesis, and indeed by many others, are not necessarily synonymous. Following Mol (2002), I suggest that heritage in the Clay Country is made up of an assemblage of human-material relationships and that within this *singular* china clay heritage – the china clay industry itself – the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS are *multiple*. In doing so, and following Law and Singleton (2005), this moves away from the plurality that is suggested by Ashworth, Graham and Tunbridge (2007) and a suggestion that there are different heritages attached to the Clay Country and looks instead at a single Clay Country heritage that is multiple and enacted through difference practices of heritage-making. It is this multiplicity that makes this a shared heritage which is rich and varied and able to encompass heterogeneous viewpoints. By viewing heritage as multiple, rather than plural, through this research I offer a critique of the concept of heritage dissonance as it unfolds in the Clay Country.

As such, I will now explore literature that supports an understanding of difference in heritage-making, not as something that divides heritages and leads to dissonance, but instead as a stabilising feature that allows mutable heritages to become durable.

### 2.3 Thinking with Assemblage

It is widely accepted that working towards common goals often serves to alleviate some tensions, but could tension and difference also be a productive element in heritage-making? Recent developments in critical heritage studies (Bennett and Healy 2009; Harrison 2013; Harrison et al. 2016; Macdonald 2009) have posited that the messy people/object relationships involved in heritage-making might best be approached as an assemblage. Firstly, in a literal sense, objects and places are gathered together in the museum or archive, or inscribed on regional, national and international lists, forming an assemblage. Secondly, heritage can also be approached as a heterogeneous grouping of component, and contributing, factors with wide-reaching histories and agencies which go beyond individual people and materials (Harrison 2013).

Traditionally, metanarratives of 'the social' and 'society' have been used to explain all manner of cultural phenomena (Bennett 2007), collecting and heritage included (Macdonald 2009). In response, sociologists such as Bruno Latour began to call for a reassembling of the social which reconfigured sociology as the "tracing of associations" rather than a "science of the social" (Latour 2005, 5). Latour's assertion that the social is not a special or particular domain but rather a "very particular set of movements of re-association and reassembling" (2005, 7) has given rise to a particular lens through which to view social and cultural phenomena that privileges the networks of associations and relationships that prelude the creation of 'society' and enable 'the social' to be perpetuated (Latour 2005, 8). Latour (2005) has termed his lens as one of a 'sociology of assemblages' or Actor Network Theory. In the following sections I lay out the usefulness of thinking with assemblage, in a more general sense, for

the study of materiality and heritage drawing predominantly on the work of Tony Bennett (2007), Sharon Macdonald (2009) and Dan Swanton (2013).

Assemblage has become a familiar concept in socio-spatial studies (Anderson and McFarlane 2011). In general, assemblage allows for a reconstruction of the social which blurs the divisions between materiality and sociality, as well as structure and agency (DeLanda 2006 in Anderson and McFarlane 2011).

Rather than focusing on an individual entity, assemblage draws attention to the relationships and processes that allow the entity to come into, and remain in, existence (Swanton 2013). Assemblage allows engagements with the “active, ad hoc and on-going entanglements” (Bingham 2009, 38) of culture and materiality and proposes that social entities are made up of associated heterogeneous components, both human and non-human. In this thesis, I draw on assemblage to highlight the heterogeneity that can exist within the singular, and the sometimes tentative way that things are put together (Anderson and McFarlane 2011).

One other element of assemblage thinking has relevance to this study is that as each component part maintains its own autonomy, separate from the whole, assemblages do not last forever (Bennett 2010; Marcus and Saka 2006). To explain this, George E. Marcus and Erkan Saka (2006) appeal to Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘desiring machines’ as a form of assemblage, stating that it “is the nature of such machines to break down, evoking a principal of entropy.

Assemblages are thus finite, but they have no specific or distinctive life span” (Marcus and Saka 2006, 103). Swanton (2013), in discussing assemblage and the processes of making and unmaking of a steel plant, highlights that not only are assemblages finite but they also can, and do, fail – violently, sometimes –

as was the case in Port Talbot in 2001 where an industrial accident at a steel plant resulted in the loss of three steel workers lives (Swanton 2013, 289).

### **2.3.1 Material Agency**

Agency, as a human capability, has been debated and refined through the anthropological tradition and it is now taken for granted that all humans have the capacity to actively influence and impose their individual choices on others through their social interactions as social agents (Gell 1998). To what extent non-humans (i.e. animals, objects and physical forces) also have agency is a far more divisive topic (see Law and Mol 2008; Whatmore 2006). For the purposes of this discussion I will focus mainly on the debates surrounding material agency rather than animals or physical forces, although both have been explored extensively (for example for animal agency see Lorimer 2006; Lorimer 2015; Whatmore 2002; for an example of electricity see Bennett 2010).

Using the above example, Swanton's (2013) presentation of the steel plant as assemblage combined the actions of steel workers (individual and collective) molten steel, steam and water, with exterior capitalist frameworks. Swanton's (2013) assemblage presents a fuller and thicker analysis of economic activity which ontologically challenges the notion of material production as a mere "expression of capitalist logic" (Swanton 2013, 286). Swanton's use of assemblage is effective in this context. One of the consequences, however, of incorporating the role of non-humans in assemblage and actor networks is that often the most pertinent examples tend to include materials which are visibly active in their interactions with other actors in the network. For example, in Swanton's steel plant assemblage, it is easy to see how molten steel – an unstable and unruly material – would actively influence human agents to abide

by rigid health and safety regulations, as the consequences of not doing so would be catastrophic (Swanton 2013, 289).

The vibrant materiality of molten steel is self-evident (cf. Bennett 2010), however much of the discussion of material agency surrounds materials and objects that do not necessarily act independently but instead elicit a human response. Specifically, I am referring here to objects such as art works, heirlooms, religious icons, photographs or items with sentimental value. For example, Daniel Miller (2009) has demonstrated that even the most commonplace of objects may exert a powerful hold over their owners or keepers, whilst Hilary Geoghegan and Alison Hess (2015) have described the powerful emotions tantamount to love that some curators feel for the objects in their care. Gell (1998) has argued that all non-human objects, animals included, draw a type of 'secondary agency' (Gell 1998, 17) from their human interactions which enables them (the objects) to act socially. Objects can influence and enliven social situations due to the secondary agency given to them by humans, and although objects can legitimately be seen as actors, their actions are always mediated by the relationships in the actor network or assemblage (see Hetherington 1997 below).

In applying assemblage and material agency to the museum and heritage context directly, Smith and Foote (2017) have contested that within the museum assemblage, the arrangements of text, "media, and artifacts [sic] shape narrative storylines and suggest sequences, connections, progressions, and pathways within and between exhibits" (2017, 131). Smith and Foote (2017) deploy a type of assemblage here which attends more directly to the types of stories which are told by collections of objects within the museum space. In

doing so they utilise discourse analysis to navigate the multiple stories and narratives told by different configurations of objects and space; the use of assemblage in this context investigates different notions of power, control and social positions (Smith and Foote 2017).

Some objects in heritage contexts also have the capability to order and influence spaces of display and storage by virtue of their individual material properties and states (see Hooper-Greenhill 1992). Different materials require different types of conservation practices and storage conditions. In some cases, objects could be seen to have agency in their own right, for example in the case of those with decaying materials with mutable properties. Other situations may elicit a protective or salvage response in human actors, for example where external forces threaten the stability of an object or building's materiality (see DeSilvey and Edensor 2013). Regarding archival material, individual documents also maintain strong relationships between each other and the organisation or collection in which they originated. These original relationships play a key role in the subsequent storage and treatment of the archival material, a concept known in archival theory as *respect des fonds* (Bettington et al. 2008).

Kevin Hetherington (1997) has argued that individual objects can upset the metaphorical 'topography' of the museum, creating folds in the rhizomatous space (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987). To illustrate, he utilises the case of 'Ozzy the owl' at the City Museum and Art Gallery in Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent. Ozzy, a crudely made 17<sup>th</sup> century slipware jug/owl, burst on the scene in 1990 when he was discovered on the antiques roadshow and valued at twenty thousand pounds. Ozzy was later purchased by the museum and displayed in the most prominent position in the galleries, a case that originally housed Dr

Robert Plot's 1686 "*The Natural History of Staffordshire*". Plot's history was the natural introduction to the galleries collection, as it predated the main thrust of the industry and contained the first accounts of the manufacture of Staffordshire pottery. With Ozzy's entrance, Robert Plot was demoted to storage and replaced by the ceramic owl, whose presence, in-turn, reframed the gallery (Hetherington 1997). Hetherington, like Gell (1998), argues that objects, like Ozzy, do act, but their actions in themselves are "blank". What gives these actions meaning is the "inscriptions generated by a heterogeneous network upon his blankness" (Hetherington 1997, 214). In other words, it is the relationships, between people, spaces, and things, within the network, which allows the object to become an actant and therefore for the actions of that object to have meaning.

### **2.3.2 Heritage as Assemblage**

Sharon Macdonald (2009) (among others, see Bennett and Healy 2009; Harrison et al. 2016) has utilised assemblage thinking to characterise the construction of heritage and the wider social arena in which heritage operates. In examining the way that heritage became enmeshed with the rebuilding and reconceptualising the German town of Nuremberg (infamous as a National Socialist (Nazi) rally ground during the Second World War) Macdonald (2009) draws attention away from the more commonplace discussions of the political uses of heritage by discussing the role of heritage itself as a 'mediator' (Latour 2005) of interactions. Macdonald (2009) argues that what assemblage does for heritage is to strip notions of the 'social' or the 'ideological' from explanations surrounding the existence of heritage, and instead shifts the focus on to the individual actions, policies, skills and techniques which bring heritage into being in particular situations. The outcome of this is that the heritage-making process

is seen as messy and often unfinished, rather than something that is taken for granted or perpetuated through the 'magical' catch-all of 'the social' (Macdonald 2009, 118). Additionally, recent developments in heritage studies has seen work by Rodney Harrison (et al. 2016), as well as others, combining assemblage with an ontology of plural heritages to address the,

“future assembling capacities of heritage practices of different types and the ways in which different heritage practices might be seen to enact different realities and hence to assemble radically different futures”

(Harrison et al. 2016, 70)

It should be noted that assemblage is not a universally agreed upon 'theory' and must itself be assembled from the writings of those such as DeLanda (2006), Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and Latour (2005) (Macdonald 2009). Therefore, there is not a commonly accepted methodology for 'doing assemblage', nor is there a distinctive framework which can be applied to research (Latour 2005). The ways of 'doing', however, that actor networks and assemblage methods promote, such as tracing interactions, and the acceptance of mutability and multiplicity (Law 2004; Law and Mol 2008), have had a strong influence on this research and this thesis.

## **2.4 Identifying Patterns**

By thinking about heritage as an assemblage, the heterogeneous nature of heritage-making becomes open to examination and exploration. In discussing his ethnographic study of the Daresbury SERC Laboratory, John Law (1994; 2004) recounts the difficulties and complexities of undertaking ethnography in a large-scale research institute. The problem he stated was that,



“in the ethnographic method assemblage *the practices that I needed to make certain silences and unrealities were not in place*. I was being overwhelmed by the presence of too many inscriptions or realities in-here, and the manifestations of too many realities out-there”

(Law 2004, 108)

Law notes that after spending more time in the laboratory the “ethnographic dazzle” (2004, 108) he had been experiencing lessened as different patterns began to emerge in the laboratory. In order to identify patterns emerging Law has argued that a systematic ‘othering’ needs to take place; certain similarities are selected whilst others are ignored. As part of this ‘othering’ however, certain patterns arise as being more reflective of reality than others, whilst others fade into the background ‘noise’. Separating ‘patterns’ from ‘noise’ is partially empirical and partially theoretical. Patterns are discoverable in the materials gathered in the field (in interviews and observations) and partly in how these patterns correlate with existing theoretical literature, the result being that the two together “resonate and amplif[y] one another to produce pattern and repetition” (Law 2004, 111).

During much of the time I initially spent in the Clay Country (and in the CCHS archive in particular), I found myself dazzled by ‘background noise’ (Law 2004). There were so many opinions, histories, and perspectives I often felt completely overwhelmed. I had always intended to focus on the material collections of the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS but the landscape of china clay and the experiences of those who had lived and grown up in it also caught my attention. The competing narratives surrounding other aspects of the Clay Country also fascinated me. It became hard to focus and filter all the information I was acquiring. Things began to change, however, once I began to accept there could be multiple versions of china clay heritage. There was a version of the

industry that is in decline and fading, but there was also another version which was thriving. Similarly, there were many versions of the china clay story being told – the types that celebrate the industry, and others that were fearful and wary of putting the past on a pedestal. There were also versions of this landscape story that omitted the china clay story all together, although these were few and far between. Once I accepted there could be multiple stories, I began to make sense of the mess (cf. Law 2004).

#### **2.4.1 Multiplicity and Modes of Ordering**

Stemming from origins in Foucauldian discourse, modes of ordering represent different types of strategies used by individuals to arrange and order material heterogeneity (Law 2003). As summarised by Steve Hinchliffe (2007, 178), modes of ordering are “performative ‘little narratives’... which are told and embodied in the non-verbal practices and materials of an organisation”.

Hinchliffe (2007) condenses five characteristics of modes of ordering as:

First, in any setting there will be more than one mode of ordering at work. Second, they often depend on one another for their existence, but may be in competition, may go on despite one another, and so on. In other words, they often interact or relate to one another in ways that can assist each other or threaten the other's existence. Third, they mark attempts at ordering rather than orders. They are not logics or rationalities visited on the scene from outside, but endeavours to enact something that are bound, through their socio-material heterogeneity, to perform themselves imperfectly. Fourth, and following this, modes of ordering simultaneously make actors and contexts, agents and organizations. Neither comes before the other. So modes of ordering do not have a thinker or actor at their centre, they are non-anthropocentric. Modes of ordering make many things, including in some circumstances actors and things, individuals and organizations. Fifth, and finally, they are devices that are crafted from ethnography and fieldwork, and in that sense are a product of field site and fieldwork. They are both out there, being done, but also categories devised by a fieldworker to sense and intervene in those practices.

(Hinchliffe 2007, 178)

In Law's (1994) study of the Daresbury Laboratory he identified four discrete modes of ordering: enterprise, administration, vision and vocation (Hinchliffe 2007, 178; Law 2004). In different scenarios, however, different modes of ordering can be identified. For example, in Hinchliffe's (2007) discussion of urban community gardens, the modes of ordering identified included 'enterprise' and 'administration' but also 'remediation' and 'care'. In John Law and Annmarie Mol's (2008) study of the effect of foot and mouth disease on Cumbrian sheep flocks, the modes of ordering were articulated very differently, characterised as, 'the veterinary sheep', 'the epidemiological sheep', 'the economic sheep' and the 'farming sheep'. Law (2003) explains that different modes of ordering produce different material arrangements as well as specific subject positions and certain types of knowledge. In my analysis of heritage-making in the Clay Country I suggest two modes of ordering for consideration, Practices of Passion and Practices of Purpose, and I will expand on these throughout this thesis.

For modes of ordering to accurately reflect the social patterns and practices as observed in the field, the research must have an ontology which accepts multiplicities, although not necessarily pluralities, as discussed above (see Law and Mol 2008, 65). Law (2004) argues that methods are not neutral when it comes to multiplicity: methods do not simply depict realities, they shape them as active participants. Multiplicities therefore are "the product or the effect of different sets of inscription devices and practices...producing different and conflating statements about reality" (Law 2004, 32).

For this study, modes of ordering are one (although by no means the only) way of thinking about the previously discussed concepts of assemblage and heritage

dissonance. To explain this, however, a deeper explanation of Law's modes of ordering, is needed.

#### **2.4.2 Material Obduracy**

In 2003, nearly ten years after his original Daresbury Laboratory (1994) study, *Ordering Modernity*, was published, John Law proposed an updated discussion of his observations and findings that paid closer attention to material obduracy. By way of introduction Law (2003, 1–2) recounts key claims from the original study.

Firstly, he states 'an organisation' is better understood as a verb, rather than a noun and is constantly in a process of movement. Additionally, Law notes that this movement from things, (and nouns), to processes, (and verbs), is a surprisingly difficult transition to make. Here we see the first comparison that can be drawn between Law's organisational sociology and the study of heritage (as both a thing and as process), as it has been described earlier in this chapter.

Secondly, Law recounts that, much like in Macdonald's (2009) application of assemblage to heritage-making, an organisation is "a materially heterogeneous set of arrangements processes, [sic] implicated in and implicating people, to be sure, but also including and producing documents, codes, texts, architectures and physical devices" (Law 2003, 1), and that agency in this arrangement is not the preserve of humans alone. Thirdly, Law contends that material heterogeneity is enacted through implicit strategies. These strategies are the 'mini-discourses' he terms modes of ordering, and fourthly, these strategies are not singular; they are multiple.

Lastly, Law notes these modes of ordering are made up of complex and sometimes contradictory relationships that simultaneously undermine and support one another. And lastly, and perhaps most importantly for this study, organisations work precisely *because* they are non-coherent and messy entities. Law states “an organisation which is gripped by a single version of reality – like a polity which suffers the same indignity – is not very long for this world” (Law 2003, 2).

Law’s concept of modes of ordering, and the multiplicity that they rely on, lend themselves as just one way of thinking through the concept of heritage dissonance, as well as the relationship between heritage as a process and heritage as a durable (and often material) ‘thing’. As in the discussion above regarding heritage assemblage, Law’s view of organisations is that they are not purely social; they are a “material heterogeneous set of arrangements” (Law 2003, 1). As such strategies – or modes of ordering – work to address heterogeneity and the different ways these arrangements are assembled and continue to work together, more or less.

A question that I am interested in unpicking throughout this thesis is how heritage, as a process can become fixed and stabilised as an enduring, sustainable, material ‘thing’. Law (2003) asks a similar question,

So my question (not such a novel question, to be sure) is this: if everything is process, everything is change, if everything is flow, then how come so much stays in place? How is it that through those flows some kind of quasi-stability is secured? Some kind of obduracy is assured? Certain kinds of distributions of productivity seem, hegemonically, to sustain themselves?

(Law 2003, 3)

To propose an answer to some of these questions, Law suggests that it is modes of ordering that ultimately 'fix' organisations in place; when one mode of ordering fails, or comes to a halt, another will step in to fill its place.

This, however, suggests a relatively clean process of succession, which is rarely the case. In reality these interchanges are messy and partial. Law uses the example of two modes of ordering he identified at Daresbury Laboratory, 'administration' and 'enterprise', within the laboratory's archives to illuminate this point. He states,

The ruthless logic of *administrative* propriety would have had the organisation spending untenable sums of money to put its archives into order, something which appeared to be a legal requirement, but one that had not been fulfilled. This expenditure might not have brought the organisation to its knees – but equally, it made little sense from the point of view of turning the organisation into a successful *enterprise*. The solution? One that was messy: some money to make sure that the records were properly kept in order in the future; but no money to sort out the backlog of mess. Both these strategies, then, were partially blocked. Neither, by themselves, would (perhaps) have been tenable. Purity in ordering was not here an option, and the multiple orderings of the laboratory rolled on.

(Law 2003, 5 (my emphasis))

Modes of ordering are not perfect; as Law demonstrates, they are frequently messy, competing as well as supporting one another. They do, however, offer interesting ways of conceiving how dissonance and different ontological positions can work together within a complex assemblage, such as heritage.

As Law discusses his modes of ordering to one organisation, the Daresbury Laboratory, in this thesis I apply my modes of ordering to one of the key heritage-making organisations in the Clay Country, the Wheal Martyn Trust - that comprises the Wheal Martyn Museum and the China Clay History Society

and the Society's archive. As discussed previously, museums, galleries, archives, monuments, and heritage sites are all typically places where the heritage process becomes fixed and located and made durable. Furthermore, many of these places become culturally important due to the collections that are housed and displayed within them. Practices of collecting can be seen as discrete enactments of heritage-making and as a way of seeing and feeling the past (Smith 2011). Material collections become part of the heritage assemblage, a complex interweaving of tangible materials, and intangible political interests, policy and actions which allow certain parts of the past to be retained and others forgotten (or possibly mediated) (Harrison 2016; Macdonald 2009).

## **2.5 Collecting**

Despite the critical understanding that heritage is primarily a social process of meaning-making, as discussed above durable materiality is often privileged to the Western understanding of heritage and heritage values (see Cresswell and Hoskins 2008; Smith 2006) and although there has been much critical evaluation of the somewhat unhelpful dichotomy between tangible and intangible heritages (for example Winter 2015; Kaufman 2013), this material privileging has left its own legacies for us contend with. The valuing of materials and the tangible remains of the past has produced vast national museums and galleries filled with 'priceless' objects, utilising material things as signifiers of a perceived place in the world. In the later 20<sup>th</sup> century this was broadened through the development of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and programmes such as UNESCO's World Heritage List.

Collecting, as a form of heritage-making, is also based on a complex relationship with risk and loss. Through research among enthusiast

conservation groups, Craggs, Neate, and Geoghegan (2013) have suggested the same emotions that move people to become passionate about things are also mobilised when that thing is seen to be at risk. Put simply, it is emotion – specifically the fear of loss – rather than reason or logic that provides the impetus to preserve. Successfully protecting something is also often linked to strong feelings of accomplishment, and a sense that something ‘good’ has been achieved (Holtorf and Ortman 2008). Care, and the desire to care, is particularly important to conservation and preservation efforts and it has been argued that care is “one of the most important themes shaping our society” (Jenson 2001, quoted in Holtorf and Ortman 2008). As discussed previously, conservation actions grounded in endangerment (cf. Vidal and Dias 2016) rely heavily on a belief that the things that we seek to preserve have inherent value. This has been discussed by Harrison et al. (2016) to large scale heritage environments and preservation practices, but what I am proposing to show in this thesis is there is also a smaller scale, more commonplace, understanding of risk or endangerment, one that is personal and, to those on the outside, sometimes somewhat enigmatic (see Chapter 6).

Understanding what drives us to collect is an important part of understanding why institutions such as museums and archives have grown into the prominent institutions they are today, and why individuals place such importance on their own personal collections. Collecting is a complex human-material relationship (Macdonald 2011), one which is based on, a “heady mix of partially connected motivations and concerns” including social anxieties about forgetting the past, antidotes to the consumer society, a desire for learning, and an impulse to address fragmented identities (Macdonald 2011, 5). Here I explore different facets of collecting and material relationships starting with an examination of the



ways materials might become valued, before considering different types of collecting practices carried out by amateur and professional collectors across a variety formal and informal settings.

## **2.6 Formal and Informal Collections**

Collecting comes in many forms and through different types of collecting different understandings and uses of the past (as heritage) are made. Collecting can be both a highly personal practice of memory-work as well as a formally sanctioned practice. Additionally, heritage-making that includes the assembling of material collections may be used to shape discourses at a nation-state level (Hall 1999; Nora 1989), whilst collecting in its most intimate settings can be a deeply private experience. Heritage-making in these intimate settings may emerge through encounters with photographs and images (see Rose 2000), engaging in practices of collecting itself (Mackenzie 2004; Miller 2009; Parrot 2011; Warren 2014) or through bodily experiences with, or related to, these collections (Waterton 2014). Many of the collecting practices I observed in the Clay Country began as personal endeavours but, as they developed over time, have now become professionally mediated. To set my research in the context of wider literature regarding collecting practices, I will explore the development and formation of museums and archives as formal spaces of heritage-making and describe the interactions between researchers and objects that have played out in these spaces.

Museums and archives can be seen to be very similar cultural institutions. Both archival and museum spaces are highly controlled and intentionally arranged environments which aim to gather knowledge from and about the collections. As such they share many similarities in their overarching activities, but it is

important to note also that museums and archives developed separately from one another and, as such, have distinct institutional identities and supporting theories and literatures that underpin their practices. To compliment the discussion of formal spaces of heritage-making I will also address the role of informal and home-based collections, as well as collections within spaces which fall between the two, or are left out and marginalised by official designations. I finish this section by exploring the role that history and memory play in these spaces, drawing on, and critiquing, Pierre Nora's (1989) arguments regarding the relationship between history and sites of memory (*lieux de mémoire*).

### **2.6.1 The History of the Museum**

There is a large body of literature which addresses the use and construction of the museum and museum spaces (for example, see Driver 2001; Geoghegan 2010; Geoghegan and Hess 2015; Hetherington 1997; Hill 2006; Macdonald 2011; Macleod 2005; Macleod, Hourston Hanks and Hale 2012; Naylor 2002; Phillips, Woodham and Hooper-Greenhill 2015; Smith and Foote 2017; Tzortzi 2015). Although collecting and display can be seen throughout human history, until the late 16<sup>th</sup> century collecting had largely been a private, contemplative activity (Abt 2011; Geoghegan 2010; Macdonald 2011; Pearce 1992). The earliest precursors of the modern public museum can be found in the cabinets of curiosities of the late-Renaissance elite. Flinden (1989, 59) suggests public collections became prominent in this period as the rise in humanist thought and interest in scientific study was coupled with an innate need for social prestige. The cabinets, therefore, were often filled with exotic artefacts characteristic of an age of discovery and exploration of new worlds. It was not until 1683 that the Ashmolean Museum was founded as the world's first public museum, displaying

a vast collection which was donated by Elias Ashmole to the University of Oxford in 1677 (Ashmolean Museum 2017).

Geographers have been engaging with museum collections for many years largely through traditional museum-as-source research methods, although there have also been critical evaluations and examinations of the museum from a geographical perspective, some of which I discuss below. As such, 'museum geography' has been identified as an emerging sub-field (Geoghegan 2010). Phillips, Woodham and Hooper-Greenhill (2015) additionally highlight the examination of the spatiality of the museum and geographies of collections by Driver (2001), Hill (2006), and Geoghegan and Hess (2015), and the geographies of display by Naylor (2002) as particularly key areas of contribution by cultural and historical geographers to museum geography. Additionally, Hilary Geoghegan has authored several publications regarding museum geographies (2010), including the themes of "object-love" (Geoghegan and Hess 2015) and enthusiasm (Geoghegan 2013). Geoghegan's studies have often focussed on less publicly accessible areas of the museum, such as storerooms (2015) and the contribution that museums have made to notions of identity building (2013). A 'spatial turn' has also occurred in museum studies (Geoghegan 2010) and consequently, the examination of museum space, namely museum architecture and exhibition space (MacLeod 2005; MacLeod, Hourston Hanks and Hale 2012; Tzortzi 2015), visitor orientation (Griggs 1983) and, threshold fear and threatening spaces (Gurian 2006) have become increasingly more dominant in museum studies literature, bringing the disciplines of geography and museum studies into closer contact.

Additionally, publicly accessible museums are often seen to bridge some the gaps between history, heritage, and tourism, and are also tourist destinations in their own right. Indeed, for the last ten years the British Museum has been the UK's top visitor attraction with just under 6,000,000 visitors a year (ALVA 2017). As such museum professionals are often perfectly placed to play the role of a mediator between heritage and tourism (de Blavia 1998). Although today the twinning of heritage and tourism does not seem out of the ordinary, at the time of de Blavia's writing (1998) museums embracing tourism coincided with the new way of formulating the museum space. Instead of a sacred space of "entombment" (de Blavia 1998, 23) of culturally important artefacts the museum became a space of conversation and communication between heritage and the public (de Blavia 1998).

## **2.6.2 The History of the Archive**

Like those of museums, scholarly engagements with collections that can broadly be termed as archival have also been wide and varied (Ashmore, Craggs and Neate 2012; Bailey, Brace and Harvey 2009; DeLyser 2014; 2015; DeLyser and Greenstein 2017; DeSilvey 2007a 2007b; 2017; Dwyer and Davies 2010; Gagen, Lorimer and Vasudevan. 2007; Lorimer 2003; 2009; Lorimer and Philo 2009; Mills 2013; Steedman 2001). Studies have also taken place in private homebased collections (Blunt 2005; Crewe 2011; Hurdley 2013), as well as thorough reconsiderations of place as archive (Cresswell 2012; Cresswell and Hoskins 2008; Houston 2013). The physical and intellectual formation of archives has also received critique from geographers (Gagen, Lorimer and Vasudevan 2007; Lorimer 2009; Lorimer and Philo 2009), especially in relation to the formation of the imperial and colonial archives (e.g. Craggs 2008).

Unlike museums, public archives are protected and regulated by law – namely the Public Records Act (1958) and the subsequent revisions to include the Freedom of Information Act (2000) (National Archives 2018) and, as such, public archives have specific legal duties. Private collections of records, however have no such legal obligations, and therefore may or may not adhere to professional standards, which has led to a flexibility around what is meant by the wide-reaching term of ‘archive’. The broader concept of ‘the archive’ has been extensively addressed by Michel Foucault (1972), Jacques Derrida (1996) and to an extent, Pierre Nora (1989) (discussed further below in section 2.7.1), as places where power becomes legitimised through text, and memory interacts with history. These ideas informed influential publications such as Carolyn Steedman’s *Dust* (2001) that has unsettled the practices of archival research and the writing of history. Both Nora and Derrida’s notions of the archive have also gained a following, and drawn critique, among cultural and historical geographers.

Derrida (1996) also highlights that archives too have their roots in the classical area. ‘Archive’ takes its roots from the Greek *arkheion*, the house of the *archons*, senior magistrates wielding considerable social power and who were entrusted to keep documents relating to the law (Derrida 1996). The archons were guardians first and foremost but in addition they had the power to interpret and impose the law based on their position of responsibility (Derrida 1996).

Renaissance travellers have also been credited with collecting archival documents, often collecting those records that were prized for their exceptional materials, penmanship and visual motifs (Vismann 2008 in Lester 2018, 75).

Archives took on a more scientific quality towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century

(Lester 2018) and the modern professional archive emerged in France and Germany.

Modern archivists can trace the origins of their professional practice almost directly to a single publication: *The Manual for the Arrangement and Description of Archives* written in 1898 by a trio of Dutch records managers, Samuel Muller, Johan Feith, and Robert Fruin. It was from this publication that the modern principles of archival management emerged. Today, materials within professionally managed archives are stored more or less as was originally set forth in the '*Dutch Manual*' (as the influential publication became known) (Cook 1997), ideally in the original order of their active use and according to provenance or context (Milton 2008). Additionally, the work of two 20<sup>th</sup> century archivists, Hilary Jenkinson in Britain and Europe and T. R. Schellenberg in North America has been noted as particularly formative. Both Jenkinson and Schellenberg were advocates of a "bottom up" records-based approach, although their methods differ significantly; Jenkinson advocated that the archivist's role was to preserve not to appraise, whilst Schellenberg's method took a more active role in the sorting and, if necessary, destruction of archives (Cook 1997; Loo, Eberhard and Bettington 2008). Since the 1990s with the rise of digital media, a different method has dominated: the macro-appraisal, or top down, method. This method focuses more on the context in which the record was created rather than the record itself (Loo, Eberhard and Bettington 2008). Archive practice further advanced in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with the publication of *Archives, Records, and Power: From (Postmodern) Theory to (Archival) Performance* by Terry Cook and Joan Schwartz (2002). Cook and Schwartz argue that the archivist's practice should be an open and accountable performance, where power, such as that discussed by Derrida and Foucault

(also see Macdonald 1998), is shared and refocussed. In doing so the archivist is empowered to envisage and enact new practices (Cook and Schwartz 2002, 185).

As the profession has progressed, the focus on the archival materials themselves has returned in archival studies, combined with an interest in the way that archives shape, and are shaped by, society. As Lester (2018) remarks, archival materials are not only sources of information but objects in their own right, capable of producing “cognitive and sensory responses” (Lester 2018, 74), an observation which has been common among visitors to the archive from geography and other disciplines but less often publicly acknowledged by archivists themselves (Lester 2018). Within archival literatures, however, Cook and Schwartz (2002) have argued archives should be seen not just as passive storehouses but instead as active spaces where social power, social politics and memory are played out, made and remade.

### **2.6.3 Informal and Private Collections**

Much work on collecting, memory and heritage has been situated around personal and private collections. For geographers, the home and domestic collections have been particularly rich grounds for exploration (Blunt 2005; Crewe 2011; Hurdley 2006; 2013; Tolia-Kelly 2004). For example, Paul Ashmore, Ruth Craggs and Hannah Neate’s (2012) account of working with and sorting the private archive of Derek Ingram (a journalist and political commentator) reignited debates surrounding archival formation and methodological practice. Fictional collections too have been influential, such as Leanne Shapton’s (2009) *Important Artifacts and Personal Property from the Collection of Lenore Doolan and Harold Morris, Including Books, Street*

*Fashion, and Jewelry*, which highlight the lasting power of personal possessions, and their ability to endure, long after their useful purposes have expired. Shapton (2009) followed the imagined lives, loves and eventual failed relationship between Doolan and Morris by way of an evocative auction catalogue featuring clothes, objects, and ephemera owned and shared by couple during the period of their fictional life spent together in New York.

Objects gain value when we live among them, transferring little pieces of ourselves into them (Crewe 2011). As was once remarked by Walter Benjamin, “every passion borders on the chaotic, but the collector’s passion borders on the chaos of memories” (1968, 60). Reflecting on her experiences in the Victoria and Albert Museum’s Hawarden photographic archives, Gillian Rose (2000) brought the encounters of the archive back into her own private study space, facilitated by replica postcards from the collection. Both the study and the archive, Rose argues, were “(partly) disciplining spaces” (2000, 563) but in the archive the photographs were simultaneously threatening and threatened; in the study Rose describes how they became a part of her, mirroring and shaping her own desires.

More recently, Katie Kilroy-Marac (2018) has re-examined the distinction between domestic collections, domestic hoards (as opposed to a more ritualistic understanding of hoarding behaviours encountered in archaeology and anthropology) and home archives and generally concludes that what separates hoarding and collecting is not the size or nature of the accumulation, but instead the notions of care that are implicit in having a collection. She also argues for two distinctions in collecting habits, firstly an aesthetic distinction relating to how collections are displayed and presented and secondly, an affective distinction,



which relates to what people think about their collections, how they feel about them and, in turn, how their collections make them feel (Kilroy-Marac 2018).

## **2.7 Spaces In-Between**

Many of the collections encountered through the research presented in this thesis do not fit neatly into the category of formal museum or archival collections, but nor are they completely informal private collections. They inhabit an awkward hinterland of human-object relationships. These collections range from eclectic village collections, to personal collections curated over decades (individually numbered and catalogued), to semi-official volunteer-run archives physically separated from the professional museum. Each collection was as individual as the people who had constructed and curated it, personal, full of conflicts and inconsistencies.

Work with collections that slip through the official designations of what is and isn't heritage has been carried out by Caitlin DeSilvey (2007a; 2007b) through her doctoral project centred on the Moon-Randolph Homestead in the outskirts of Missoula, Montana. DeSilvey (2007a) describes in detail, the process of sifting through moulding discarded papers, rodent nibbled napkins, overflowing junk drawers and abandoned out-buildings in order to uncover meaning in the homestead's past residents somewhat indiscriminate collecting practices. In a similar vein, Donna Houston's (2013) examination of the Las Vegas Neon Boneyard (a dumping ground for Las Vegas' casino and bar signs that has gained prominence as an urban wasteland and tourist attraction) highlights the unpredictable nature of heritage. As Houston (2013) states, marginalised spaces like the Boneyard exemplify how heritage is often an unexpected

fabrication of the things we choose keep and the things we discard, as well as the things we care for and the things we neglect.

Bailey, Brace, and Harvey (2009) have recounted their own very personal reactions to researching Methodism in Cornwall. Although the research took place in official archive settings, the private memories and experiences expressed in the archive material transcended the archive space itself and became enmeshed with the personal lives of the researchers. These personal connections therefore produced highly personalised methodologies and lenses for viewing the archival material. Lastly, Tim Cresswell's (2012) study of the Maxwell Street Market highlights the different practices of gleaning enacted in and around the peripheries of the market space. Starting with the original market sellers and the eclectic mix of items for sale – many of which were found discarded elsewhere – Cresswell (2012) then considers the actions of the archival 'gleaners' who salvaged remnants of the historic market and continued to do so even after the market place was rejected from the National Register of Historic Places (Cresswell and Hoskins 2008). Through comparing the practices of the Maxwell Street Historic Preservation Coalition (a quasi-official heritage group who have collected physical remnants of buildings demolished during the renovation of the market's location) with that of Steve Balkin (a member of the coalition as well as independent market enthusiast) Cresswell (2012) shows the different motivations and practices undertaken to preserve the market which resulted in very different types of collections, and also how places themselves, not just collections, can be considered archival.

### 2.7.1 Between History and Memory

A common feature of the collections and spaces of heritage that are described in this research, and indeed in the literature presented in this chapter, is that they contain both elements of what is traditionally described as history and enactments of living memory. Borrowing from Pierre Nora's (1989) *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire*, these are spaces that exist somewhere between the spheres history and memory, combining elements of both, although memory, as time progresses, is beginning to fade away. Nora's (1989) study of the relationships between memory and history and lieux de mémoire, or sites of memory – where the past and memory become cemented and preserved – has been useful in considering the interplay between past and present, and the way the past is presented in the present. Despite the usefulness of Nora's work however, the argument he presents relies on some problematic distinctions.

Nora portrays memory as “life, borne by living societies founded in its name” (Nora 1989, 8). Bertrand Taithe (1999) has further commented that memories in themselves are not history

“their consciousness certainly is not a master narrative, they will never be couched in written words and will forever ignore the meaning or purpose of footnotes. They exist, however, they are passed around.”

(Taithe 1999, 124)

Taithe also likens memory to a private consciousness of time, where meanings exist in a different realm to that of official histories. Quoting Nora (1989), Taithe (1999) has posited that memory is spatial - it focuses on sites and places - whilst history is temporal and focuses on the sequence of events. As will be seen, however, in the Clay Country the majority of the histories of china clay are

written from those with personal memories and connections to this landscape and industry. Memory too (despite Taithe's (1999) appeal to memory as private consciousness) has traditionally been portrayed as collective or social (Connerton 1989). Paul Connerton's influential study *How Societies Remember* notes that our experiences of the present, very much rely on our knowledge, and to an extent, our memories of the past. Furthermore, differences in social memory may contribute to insulation of experience between different generations (1989, 1–3).

Nora (1989, 8), on the other hand, posits that history is a reconstruction of the past, or what is 'no longer'. Furthermore, Nora suggests that these reconstructions are always incomplete and problematic. David Lowenthal (1998) suggests that history is an exploration of pasts that have "grown ever more opaque over time" (1998, XV), but he also states that "history is protean. What it is, what people think it should be, and how it is told and heard all depend on perspectives peculiar to particular times and places" (1998, 105). History, Raphael Samuel (2012 [1994]) claims, to the professional historian represents an "esoteric form of knowledge" (2012 [1994], 3) waiting to be discovered in official archives, or in the dating of a painting or wording of a coronation oath, to use Samuel's examples.

Nora's (1989) study makes many divisive but important claims; here I focus on two that are particularly relevant to the research presented in this thesis. Firstly, Nora claims that history and memory are fundamentally opposed to one another. And secondly, as noted by Tilley (2006), Nora stresses that history obliterates 'real' memory, confining memory instead to monuments, memorials, museums, and performances. Memory in these places, Nora claims, is

fetishized and objectified (although I will return shortly to the idea of ‘real’ memory).

Following Nora’s (1989) publication of *Between Memory and History*, Raphael Samuel’s influential *Theatres of Memory, Past and Present in Contemporary Culture* (1994) somewhat challenged the ideas of Nora, and others, by suggesting memory and history were in fact indivisible, and that it was not official history that captured social experience, rather the everyday lived experience of ordinary men and women. Lived history, incorporating social memory, subverted learning and provided new types of historical knowledge that challenged the authority of the professional historian (Gentry 2015, 659).

In discussing the distinction between social memory and historical reconstruction, Connerton states that what the historian most often deals with are “traces”,

“the marks, perceptible to the senses, which some phenomenon, in itself inaccessible, has left behind. Just to apprehend such marks as traces of something, as evidence, is already to have gone beyond the stage of merely making statements about the marks themselves; to count something as evidence is to make a statement about something else, namely, about that for which it is taken as evidence.”

(Connerton 1989, 13)

More recently, more nuanced arguments have been made surrounding places of history and memory that blur the boundaries of history and memory that works such as Nora’s (1989) once suggested. Cresswell and Hoskins (2008) have argued that memory, like place – and indeed heritage – cannot be easily fixed. Instead memory is always evolving and becoming, never completely finished. As discussed above, Caitlin DeSilvey’s (2007b) work concerning the Moon-Randolph homestead found that ongoing material entanglements and

engagements uncovered a different sort of memory-work at play. Instead of Nora's nostalgic form of memory – the type of memory which was, in Nora's framing, the “quintessential repository of collective memory” (1989, 7) – the type of memory uncovered in the homestead was a lived memory which arose from interactions with material in place. As such, these interactions produced a type of memory-work which was open to the ongoing echoes of the past, as it continued to permeate through the present and into the future (DeSilvey 2007b, 900).

Similarly, Karen Till's (2005) examination of memory-work and the rebuilding of post-war Berlin uncovered other such ruptures in the linear narratives of past, present, and future (Till 2005, 95) that serve to question Nora's dichotomy between the 'real' sites and environments of memory (what he calls *les milieux de mémoire*) and the sites where the 'embodiment of memory' and historical continuity is preserved (*les lieux de mémoire*). In discussing the restoration of the crumbling Neoclassical remains of Martin Gropius Bau and the redevelopment of the adjacent vacant and ruined space known locally as 'Gestapo Terrain' (the site of National Socialist administrative power – the headquarters of the Nazi Gestapo, SS and SD), Till describes a form of open-ended place-making carried out by local residents and more official bodies alike. Importantly, Till notes that during the initial debates on how to reuse the Gestapo Terrain no one representation of the past was any less 'real' or 'historical' than any other. Many different groups claimed the site (and continue to do so) as material evidence for their own versions of the past, which led to debates over reuse and representation.

Eventually by 1985, with still no official position regarding the Gestapo Terrain, frustrated citizens groups began to stage protests at the site to draw attention to their individual causes. Groups known as the 'Active Museum' and 'Berlin History Workshop' organised an illegal excavation of the ruins, named 'Let's Dig'. In illegally digging the site activists,

“questioned officials’ use of the landscape as evidence of national history, at the same time that they symbolically dug for traces (*spuren*) from the past. Their goal in this protest action was not to interpret or cite the landscape objectively as a historical object but rather to resituate and recombine texts, signs, things, and locations, and create new meanings, new opportunities for the future. This was a multilinear way of thinking about time, in which past, present, and future were understood as co-constitutive”.

(Till 2005, 95)

Following 'Let's Dig' the eventual use for the Gestapo Terrain took the form of 'the Topography of Terror', which was part-museum, part-memorial, partly a place of perpetrators and partly a place for survivors. The Gestapo Terrain was described as a self-inflicted open wound in and of the city that is neither fixed in time nor completely fluid, always evolving but at the same time a permanent feature of New Berlin. By leaving the site 'open', an uncomfortable critique of experience, memory, and meaning could take place and visitors, presented only with the historical facts, were able to take ownership of how they interpreted the historical information provided (Till 2005).

The strict dichotomy between history and memory, and what is considered 'real' memory, that is presented by Nora (1989) becomes blurred and unsettled in places like the homestead, the Topography of Terror, and, as I will show, places like the CCHS archive. In subsequent chapters I will demonstrate the archive is a place of intense memory (for now at least) but also a place which is dedicated to capturing the history of an industry.

## 2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented an overview of the relevant literature that has informed the research presented in this thesis. In addressing previous studies in geography, heritage studies, sociology, museum studies, and archival studies I have shown the breadth of literature that addresses themes of heritage-making and collecting. Heritage, as this chapter has shown, is a complex and messy assemblage (Macdonald 2009) that incorporates both the processes and practices involved in valuing the past in the present, as well as the material remains of the past as sites where these values become durable. This thesis addresses heritage in both conceptualisations, as a meaning-making process *and* as sites and material things that have been deemed to have value as heritage.

I first tackled some of the contradictory ideas that surround heritage in the literature to frame the ways that heritage has been approached in this research. I explained how heritage has been approached in many ways and it is generally accepted that it is nearly impossible to pin down a catch-all definition of heritage (Harvey 2001); however, I also highlighted that most scholars approach heritage as a process of valuing the past and utilising what is deemed valuable in the present (Harvey 2001; Harrison 2016; Smith 2006). I also explored a paradox of heritage however, in that whilst heritage is often framed as a process, it is also made durable and, in a Western context especially, becomes represented by material things and places (Cresswell and Hoskins 2008). Drawing on Cresswell and Hoskin's (2008) review of memory and place, I showed that heritage can be seen as spatial and closely related to place which in part is what enables heritage to be stabilised and made durable. Heritage however is also temporal, "intrinsically reflective of a relationship with the past"



(Harvey (2001, 378). Until recently heritage studies, a discipline, has approached heritage with an emphasis on the present, but drawing on the work of Rodney Harrison (et al. 2016) and a recent study by Smith and Campbell (2017) I explored how our present interactions with heritage can be seen as ways of envisaging and making futures.

Following this discussion of heritage, the concepts of dissonance, as put forward by Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000) and, the authorised heritage discourse, developed by Smith (2006) were approached. I explored the ways that these two terms have been used and applied but also offered a critique of dissonance, which will be developed in the subsequent chapters. I showed how dissonance and the AHD, which draws on the divisions necessitated by adhering to dissonance as an intrinsic part of heritage, have been useful concepts to address disagreements between different types of heritage and throughout this thesis I will explore how differences and dissonance within heritage-making groups can also be productive for the making of future heritages. To propose possible alternative readings of heritage dissonance, I have drawn on the work of Sharon Macdonald (2009) and Tony Bennett (2007) and Rodney Harrison (et al. 2016) and approached heritage as heterogeneous assemblage. Additionally, I have reviewed the work undertaken by John Law (1994; 2003; 2004) regarding multiplicity drawing particular attention to the performative narratives he terms modes of ordering. I drew attention to Law's argument that heterogeneity is what allows organisations to endure, and that multiple modes of ordering are intrinsic to this process (Law 2003). I showed that modes of ordering, crucially for this research, are not always harmonious; they simultaneously support and undermine each other (Law 2004). Setting these ideas alongside Cresswell and Hoskins (2008)

discussion of place as one of the stabilising feature of heritage, I will utilise Law's modes of ordering to explore how heritage can made durable through not only heterogeneity but also dissonant practices and understandings of value.

Finally, I explored museums and archives in greater depth, as the places where heritage, as material things, and heritage-making are located and often made durable. In this discussion I also addressed work which has taken place in informal collecting spaces, such as the home, and in spaces that fall in-between. In doing so I also address the space in between history and memory, drawing on Pierre Nora's (1989) discussion of *les lieux de mémoire* and the relationships, or lack thereof, between history and memory. In drawing on Nora, I offer a critique of his main argument that history and memory are fundamentally opposed, highlighting work by Caitlin DeSilvey (2007b) and Karen Till (2005) which offer more nuanced readings of the relationships between history and memory.

In the chapter which follows I will begin to take a deeper look at some of the ways heritage has been produced in the Clay Country (and across Cornwall more generally) through the provision of a dedicated china clay museum and the founding of the China Clay History Society.

## Chapter 3: The Historical Archive

“The quality required...was first of all ‘empathy’, seeing things in terms that would have been familiar to the real-life historical actors. History was no longer the biography of great men but rather the record of everyday things.”

(Raphael Samuel *Theatres of Memory*, page 193)

In this chapter I delve deeper into the history of industrial representations in Cornwall and explore some ideas relating to heritage and industrial heritage in relation in the Clay Country. I then go on to give a brief overview of the history of china clay mining, partly to give some context to the tumultuous landscape of mid-Cornwall but also to give a flavour of the types of historical narratives that have been privileged regarding the china clay industry. I will then introduce the Wheal Martyn Museum and the China Clay History Society in greater detail and explain how these two heritage-making bodies became intertwined and their activities so interconnected. In doing so, I also introduce the complex assemblage of heritage-making in the Clay Country.

### 3.1 Collecting Cornwall

“Well Cornish lads are fishermen and Cornish lads are miners too but when the fish and tin are gone what are the Cornish boys to do?”

(Roger Bryant, *Cornish Lads*)

Complementing the discussions in the previous chapter regarding local valuations of a place or landscape, here I will briefly introduce some of the tensions surrounding industrial heritage in Cornwall specifically which have affected the way the past is performed in the Clay Country.

Developed as a concept during the mid-1950s and early 1960s by the Council for British Archaeology (Palmer, Nevell and Sissons 2012; Samuel 2012 [1994], 188), industrial heritage makes up a large portion of Britain's heritage landscape. Industrial heritage is also considered to be some of the most at risk in the country, due to the fact that the British economy no longer relies on traditional industries. This shift has left behind many industrial buildings (bereft of their original purposes) and several landscapes permanently altered across Britain, some of which have now been designated officially as heritage. These landscapes, both those officially designated as heritage and those which are not, often attract local valuations too, both positive and negative (see Wheeler 2014).

Industrial heritage is a key component of the way Cornwall represents itself. For many years a prominent incarnation of Cornish identity was centred around two principal industries, mining and fishing. The emblems of a fisherman and tin miner are depicted on the Cornish Crest which serve to “represent[s] the Duchy's maritime connections and ... a reminder of Cornwall's great mineral wealth and pioneering industrial heritage” (Cornwall Council 2017).



Figure 3.1 (left) Remains of historic Levant tin mine, West Penwith. Photo by Author

Figure 3.2 (right) Head gear at South Crofty tin mine, Pool, Redruth. Photo by Author

Despite the pride attached to the traditional mining industries, tin and copper mining had been in steady decline throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. With the final closure of the South Crofty mine in 1998, located near the prominent mining town of Redruth, the traditional mining areas experienced a collective form of social denial leading to reinvigorated attempts to preserve and protect not only the memory of Cornish mining but also the built environment (Laviolette 2003). Laviolette contests that being Cornish “demands a certain reminiscence for a long gone industrial era” and that in the face of the demise of metalliferous mining, china clay was promoted widely as the last working Cornish industry (Laviolette 2003, 228).

This industrial nostalgia however is only one specific expression of what it means to be Cornish. Alan Kent (2009) has contested that the apparent ‘ugliness’ of the Clay Country and the constant upheaval of the landscape prevented the in-migration, during the war years in particular, that occurred in other (often more coastal) parts of Cornwall. As such, a version of working class Cornish culture, which was transmuted elsewhere, persisted for longer in the Clay Country (Kent 2009, 54).

Kent (2009) further argues that the conceptualisation of the towering waste tips as ‘white alps’ or ‘mountains’ was perpetuated in an attempt to “soften the blow” of the industrialised landscape, and to promote a sense of “wonderment” and “innocence” to the brutal effects of industry. As such, the memory of the bright white heaps of clay waste has taken on a magical quality in some popular consciousnesses. Monica Emerich (2012) for example recounts her experiences visiting the ‘white alps’, describing them as a “spiritual compass point” for those with connections to the china clay industry, and directly

contrasting and comparing the industrial waste tips with the Arthurian legends, standing stones and holy wells.

Bernard Deacon (1997, in Hale 2001) has argued that until the collapse of hard rock mining in the 1860s, the Cornish self-perception was always one of technological advancement and self-sufficiency, however the newly established tourist gaze (cf. Urry 1990) saw Cornwall reimaged as a picturesque, romantic holiday destination. These new narratives, combined with a perceived nostalgia for the traditional mining and fishing industries, mean that representations of Cornwall today can be viewed as somewhat contested, with many different conceptualisations of Cornwall and Cornish (and other) identities coexisting alongside one another (Hale 2001). Furthermore, there is a long-held perception that many people in Cornwall feel separate from the rest of England, although it can be hard to find much concrete evidence that these feelings represent a majority, despite vocal ethno-nationalist claims. This feeling of separation is often bolstered by appeals to a long tradition of political, economic and religious factors that mark out a Cornish difference from the rest of the Southwest peninsula, and indeed the rest of the UK (Hale 2001). Smith (2006) has posited that, in working class or labour heritage, reactions from local communities with links to the industry in question are often more likely to stress family and community over the authorised heritage discourse. Indeed, Ainsley Cocks (2010) points to a survey conducted by English Heritage in 2003 which found particularly strong responses from Cornish residents when asked to agree or disagree with the statement 'heritage can mean my local area as well as historic castles and stately homes', with 92% responding agree or strongly agree.

Parallel to the marketing of Cornwall as a tourist destination, however, Cornwall's industrial heritage has found other ways to occupy popular imaginations, in part spurred on by Winston Graham's internationally successful *Poldark* novel series and the most recent BBC drama of the same name. Since 2006 UNESCO has recognised the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape as a World Heritage Site (WHS) as "a testimony to the contribution Cornwall and West Devon made to the Industrial Revolution in the rest of Britain and to the fundamental influence the area had on the mining world at large" (UNESCO 2018). The designation covers several regions of Cornwall, (although none are in the Clay Country) however it is the area of west Cornwall which still most strongly maintains the classic associations with tin and copper mining (Orange 2012). Although Cornish mining heritage is often celebrated here it is not without obstacles. For example, Hilary Orange's (2012) study of the region's WHS designation found that the listing had minimal impact on local residents, and tentatively concluded that local people feared that overzealous preservation and interference from 'the outside' would strip the sites of their authenticity and integrity.

Similarly, although it is considered somewhat ruinous by some of its inhabitants (WildWorks 2008; Trower 2009), the omission of the Clay Country from the WHS designation has not dissuaded many local groups from deeply valuing the clay mining landscape and its associated features. Despite this there have been relatively few academic studies which address the china clay mining landscape or its disused china clay pits, tips, and built structures. The Clay Country, however, can be compared with similar landscape studies in the geographical and heritage literature. For example, Rebecca Wheeler's (2014) examination of 'mining memories' in Askam-in-Furness, Cumbria, explores memory and

community in a former mining village, and landscape, not traditionally stylised as a 'heritagescape' (2014, 22). Wheeler's study focused on how personal and social memories are sustained through encounters with dilapidated and non-conserved industrial landscape features which often seem out of place in many rural settings (although the Welsh Blaenavon mining region (see Hoskins and Whitehead 2013), and several parts of Cornwall, including the Clay Country, are notable exceptions as rural industrial landscapes).

The publications, many of which have been locally produced, which have focussed on the Clay Country have largely been historical studies of the formation and use of this landscape, and of the china clay industry itself. In the following section I will give an overview of some of the stories these histories have told and have often been privileged by those with an interest in the history of the china clay industry.

### **3.2 A Brief History of China Clay**

Only one comprehensive history has been written covering the whole china clay industry, R.M Barton's (1966) "*The History of the Cornish China Clay Industry*". To this day, it is generally regarded to be the most valuable history of china clay, despite being over 50 years old, written just before the china clay industry reached its peak. One possible reason why the story of china clay has never been comprehensively updated is because the last 50 years of the industry are still very much within living memory; the events of the 1970s and 1980s, for many, do not fit the conventional definition of 'history'. There are many people living in the St Austell area today who could collectively write the last 50 years of the industry without needing to consult a history book, because together many men and women in this area have lived, breathed, and worked china clay



for most of their lives, like their fathers and mothers before them. The account told over these new few sections has been gathered from a variety of sources, including published pamphlets written by local residents and ex-clay workers, industry produced histories, and archival records held by CCHS, as well as a specific history of the industry commissioned by English China Clays in 1969 (Hudson 1969) and Barton's (1966) influential publication. Interspersed are thoughts and reflections from members of the China Clay History Society who have first-hand experiences of this dynamic landscape and the industry which has shaped it.

### 3.2.1 Geological Formation

The white substance extracted from mid-Cornwall's granite pluton goes by many names. What is named china clay in Britain is known the world over by its mineral name, Kaolin, literally translating to "High Hill" or "High Ridge" from the Chinese Kao-Ling (ECC Ltd, 1973, Varcoe 1978; Thurlow 1990). In the lab one might find another name – hydrated aluminium silicate – or a collection of letters

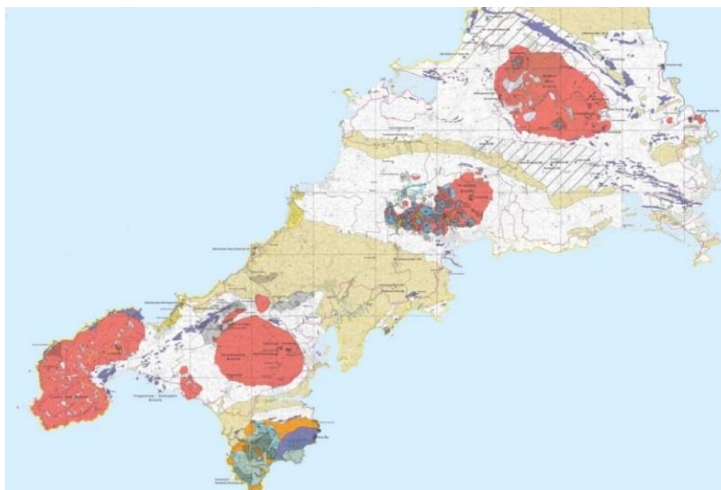


Figure 3.3 Geological map of Cornwall, areas in red denote granite. Map © British Geological Survey Crown Copyright 1997.

and numbers,  $Al_2O_3 \cdot 2SiO_2 \cdot 2H_2O$  (Bristow 2006, 4). To others it is White Gold (Thurlow 1992) and according to Imerys it is 'the essential component in all our lives' (Bowditch 2000). No matter what name it is given, china clay is the

product of millions of years of geological evolution in Devon and Cornwall.

China clay can be found across the world (notably in China, the USA, and Germany) but the deposits along the granite belt of Devon and Cornwall are unique in both quality and quantity. As was remarked by David Cock (1880, 23), “In the counties of Devonshire and Cornwall the Kaolin, or china clay, is very white and more unctuous to the touch than those of continental Europe”. All the granites in the Southwest, excepting of the Isles of Scilly and Lundy, contain some china clay (Bristow 2006) and almost every Southwestern granite moor has produced some quantities of china clay. Today, however, only the area around St Austell and the western edge of Dartmoor at Lee Moor continue to be involved in production (Thurlow 2001).

Granite is primarily composed of three minerals – mica, quartz and feldspar – of which the later, when decomposed, forms china clay (the quartz and mica remain largely unaffected and are often present as sandy impurities in the clay) (Thurlow 2001, 4). Even in its least refined forms, china clay is finer than most talc and is chemically inert, making it a highly versatile and sought-after commodity (Thurlow 2001, 4, ECC Ltd 1973). To date, over 170,000,000 tonnes of china clay have been extracted from Devon and Cornwall representing a market value of around £15 billion, making china clay Britain’s most profitable raw material export after North Sea oil and gas (Bristow 2006, 1; Thurlow 2001, 3). A full geological account of the formation of china clay in Cornwall was published most recently by Colin Bristow (2006).

### **3.2.2 Discovery**

Almost all accounts of the history of china clay in Cornwall begin with the discovery of deposits of china clay and china stone at Tregonning Hill by the Plymouth based chemist and pottery entrepreneur William Cookworthy; a

Quaker born in Kingsbridge on the edge of Dartmoor, Devon (Barton 1966; Hudson 1969; Thurlow 1990, 2001; Varcoe 1978; ECC Ltd 1973). For centuries the raw materials and manufacture of porcelain had been a closely guarded secret of the Chinese potters (who had been producing porcelain since AD 500). Enchanted by the purity of the Chinese hard paste porcelain, there were many entrepreneurs across Europe who spent years (and considerable fortunes) in the pursuit of replicating this exotic and desirable material. It was not until two letters were written in 1712 and 1722 respectively, penned by French Jesuit Père d'Entrecolles, which detailed the materials used for the manufacture of true Chinese porcelain at the Imperial Factory, Nanjing, that the proverbial cat was let out of the bag. Incidentally, the raw materials and minerals needed to produce china clay had been unearthed in Europe not fifteen years earlier in 1710, in Saxony and Bohemia, by the founders of the Meissen Factory. After this discovery, the Meissen Factory owners had intended to establish a monopoly over porcelain wares in Europe, swearing their workers to secrecy and forbidding the export of the clay (Barton 1966). Due to the emigration of clay workers to other German states, as well as to France and Austria, however, the monopoly ultimately proved unsustainable (Thurlow 2007, 3; Hudson 1969, 16).

Meanwhile in Britain, Cookworthy had been building his own knowledge about the process of porcelain production. In 1745, through his Quaker connections, Cookworthy met with an American potter, Andrew Duché, from the state of Georgia who had discovered the coveted materials for porcelain production in Virginia, and he crucially had brought samples to the meeting for Cookworthy to handle and study. Fuelled by this meeting, Cookworthy became even more determined to seek out china clay in England (Barton 1966, 18). One year later,

in 1746, Cookworthy successfully located an outcrop of china clay at Tregonning Hill (Barton 1966; ECC Ltd 1973). On a subsequent visit to Cornwall in 1748 a much greater and more profitable deposit was discovered in the parish of St Stephen in Brannel, near St Austell in mid Cornwall which became the centre of his extraction activities, and later those of the Staffordshire potters (Barton 1966, 19; ECC Ltd, 1973).

### **3.2.3 Growth and Expansion**

In the early years, china clay was primarily used in the manufacture of Chinese porcelain, both by Cookworthy in his factory in Plymouth, and later Bristol (subsequently owned by Richard Champion), and by the Staffordshire potteries of Wedgwood, Milton, and Spode (Barton 1966, ECC Ltd 1973). Initially, like all other discoverers of “the clay”, Cookworthy had wanted to keep his discovery a secret (Varcoe 1978, 8) and applied for a patent for the manufacture of porcelain in 1768, which was granted. Subsequent patents applied for by Cookworthy and Champion, however, attracted the attention of pottery giants Josiah Wedgwood and John Turner who, acting, they claimed, on the welfare of Staffordshire potters, quickly sought to halt the monopoly on the superior Cornish materials (Barton 1966).

The Staffordshire potters’ visits to the West Country during the late 1700s were unsurprisingly met with resistance, although the central contention was not the extraction of the china clay from Cornwall for the potteries of the Midlands. Instead, protests were staged against the superseding of Cornish pewter-ware by Staffordshire pottery at a time when the tin industry was in a great depression. Incidents such as these go some way to explaining why Cornish potteries were so seldom established (Barton 1966, 25-26). Nevertheless, as

was noted by Fortescue Hitchens in 1824, china clay and china stone continued to be supplied to the Midlands and was used as a principal ingredient “in the produce of all the Staffordshire potters” (Hitchens 1824 in Varcoe 1978, 14)

By 1878 there were 120 pits across Cornwall producing between 2,500 tonnes and 6,000 tonnes of clay per year. Between 1860 and 1900 output had nearly quadrupled, partly due to the establishment of scores of small china clay mining companies around the St Austell area, largely run, it seemed, by anyone with access to a shovel and some running water (Hudson 1969, 29; Thurlow 2001, 5). A turning point for the industry in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was the discovery that, as well as supplying the potteries, china clay could benefit both the cloth and paper industries, first as filler and then later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as a coating.

Unlike the processes used in tin and copper mining, clay is extracted from the surface in open cast pits rather than subterranean mines. In the early days of the industry the majority of the extraction was conducted by hand and the raw materials moved by horse and cart or incline railway (Thurlow 2007).

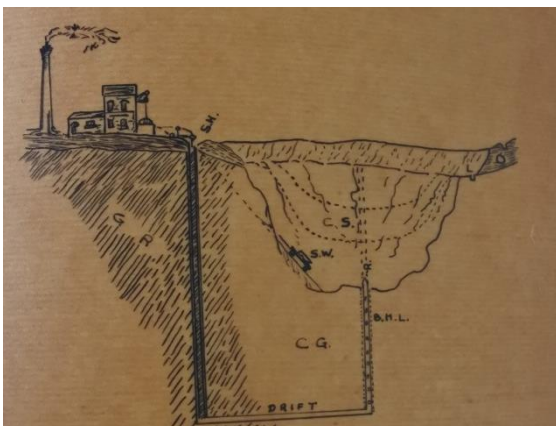


Figure 3.4 Diagram of a Cornish clay pit. Drawing by unknown author. Original image Cock 1880

This method of ‘winning the clay’ (extracting the clay from the ground) remained unchanged for much of the 19<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (Thurlow 2007, 3); Phillip Varcoe states, “for roughly 150 years after discovery we were essentially making mud pies” (Varcoe 1978, 8). Even

today, although the methods have greatly modernised, the five basic principles

have not changed: 1) the removal of overburden (topsoil and vegetation), 2) breaking up the clay face with water, 3) refining the slurry by settling the mixture and separating out sand particles from clay, 4) drying the clay and finally, 5) shipping (Thurlow 2007, 3).



Figure 3.5 (left) Extraction at Littlejohns china clay pit. Photo by Author

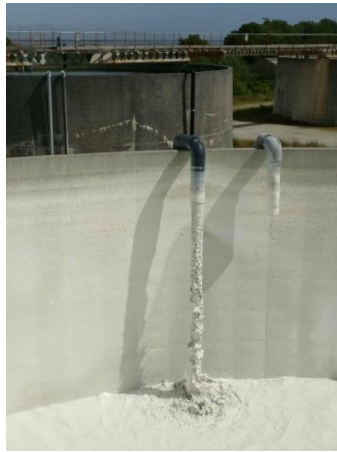


Figure 3.6 (centre) China clay slurry at Imerys' Trebal Refinery. Photo by Author



Figure 3.7 (right) China clay bagged for shipping at Fowey Harbour. Photo by Author

### 3.2.4 Modernisation

The first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century held brought with them some significant struggles for the china clay industry. First, a now infamous strike by the Cornish clay workers in 1913 highlighted decades of growing tensions regarding pit worker's low wages, and second, significant losses of both workforce and capital were incurred during the First World War. Both of these events contributed to large proportions of clay workers leave Cornwall for more profitable employment elsewhere (Hudson 1969, 42), contributing to the already sizeable Cornish diaspora worldwide made up of Cornish tin and copper miners.

The year 1919, however, saw the formation of English China Clays, headquartered in St Austell, made up of the three largest producers, West of

England China Clay Company, Martin Brothers and North Cornwall China Clays: together they represented 50% of the china clay production in Cornwall (Bowditch 2000). Following the formation of ECC significant steps were taken in the 1920s to modernise the industry. The first chemical refining took place in 1923 and the first electric pumps were used in 1927. In 1932 English China Clays merged with Lovering China Clays and H.D Pochin and Co, creating a new trading company known for a time as ECLP with ECC as the major shareholder (over the next 70 years English China Clays would be known variously by several trading names – including English Clays Lovering and Pochin, English China Clays Group and English China Clays International, for continuity I refer to the company here as ECC).

Despite the technological advances, however, the 1930s were both a period of extreme advancement and great disappointment. Workers faced poor conditions, low wages and sporadic working patterns, and between 1929 and 1931 production almost halved in two years, falling from 869, 232 tons to 570,524 tons, roughly the same outputs that had been achieved at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Throughout the 1930s production outputs continued to ebb and flow in a similar pattern (Bowditch 2000; Hudson 1969, 62). Since 1919, however, ECC had been expanding by actively acquiring other independent companies and their associated china clay pits and by 1933 ECC held no less than 14 subsidiary companies, including W.M Varcoe and Sons, The Great Halviggan China Clay Company, The North Goonbarrow China Clay Company and the Carbis China Clay and Brick Company, as well as a separate sales division still operating under the name of English China Clays (CCHS 135/7). Many of these subsidiaries were eventually put into liquidation, although some were retained (CCHS 137/1.34). Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century ECC remained the

principal china clay producer in Cornwall, although other companies, such as the Goonvean and Rostowrack China Clay Company (later Goonvean Ltd), that provided healthy competition.

Two world wars, however, had left a substantial impact on the productivity of the clay mining industry. Although the decrease in productivity between 1935-1945 was not as devastating as that of 1914-1918 (Varcoe 1978, 35) and despite rapid expansion by ECC in the inter-war years, by 1942 80 pits across mid-Cornwall had been shut down due to intervention from the Board of Trade, who cited rationing and the need to concentrate production (Bowditch 2000; Hudson 1969, 78). A Working Party Report by the British Board of Trade published in 1948 shows that of the 100 china clay pits situated in St Austell district only 35 were left in operation following the Second World War and that china clay had become an unattractive prospect for school leavers (British Board of Trade 1948). The report stated that in 1946 the entire workforce of ECC amounted to 3,309 workers, which also included German prisoners of war and around 45 women employed in 'indoor work' (British Board of Trade 1948, 30).

Furthermore, the report also stated that the hereditary nature of some supervisory roles, such as pit captain which was often passed directly from father to son, was becoming increasingly problematic. To combat these new challenges new programmes of scholarships and training were introduced to encourage more local young men to enter employment in the industry (British Board of Trade 1948).

Production increased one more and by the mid-1950s 800 ships a year were exporting Cornish china clay, nationally and abroad. In 1946 the port of Par had been leased to serve the industry and by the 1960s Par was said to be the



busiest port, per square foot, in the UK (Hudson 1969). Additionally, the growth of the industry, incorporating the numerous subsidiary companies meant that the original ECC company headquarters in the centre of St Austell had become cramped and over-crowded and so in 1963 construction began on a new site on the outskirts of the town, overlooking the St Austell Bay. The new building had space for 450 employees and was named John Keay House, in honour of Sir John Keay who retired from his post as Managing Director of ECC in 1960. During his time as Managing Director John Keay had played a pivotal role in ensuring the local family traditions of the many smaller companies had not been abandoned during the period of amalgamation (Hudson 1969).

This is the point when comprehensive historical accounts of the industry conclude. China clay was clearly gaining strength in this period, Hudson notes that in 1965, 8,000 men and women were actively employed in china clay, and ECC earned nearly 11,000,000 in pre-tax profits (Hudson 1969, 159-160).

Barton (1966), however, ends her history of china clay on a somewhat sombre note. She states,

“What is sure is that its days are numbered. Like Cornwall’s other two great extractive industries, tin and copper, that of china clay also will pass entirely into history, the quays of its ports deserted, the ‘great white road’ weed grown and silent, and the wide uplands of Hensbarrow again a desolate land where ‘scarcely a goat can live in the winter’. But even so, the enterprises of many generations will long be recorded in a miniature landscape of sharp green hills and countless lakes, turquoise and white-cliffed, the burrows and pits of times past.”

(Barton 1966, 206)

Barton’s stark words were perhaps pertinent. Today the historical industry, as Barton would have recognised it, is all but vanished from mid-Cornwall. With consolidation and increased mechanisation, many of the once bright white pyramids have indeed been rendered “weed grown and silent”, but the voices of

those who remember the heyday of this dynamic landscape are anything but. As such, the most recent 50 years of this industry have largely been told first-hand, by those who lived and worked in this landscape including some who still continue to do so.

In some cases, these experiences have been published as booklets or short pamphlets, such as Charles Thurlow's (1990; 1992; 2001; 2007) series regarding the modern and historic mining methods. In these booklets Thurlow, himself a retired manager in the china clay industry, explains in great detail the processes by which clay moved from the pits to the ports, and the extent to which a higher demand for china clay drove more complex and advanced methods (Thurlow 2001). In other cases, these experiences and memories are passed on only by word of mouth and by oral history recording.



Figure 3.8 (left) A modern remote-control china clay monitor. Photo © The China Clay History Society



Figure 3.9 (right) China clay workers in an unknown pit. Early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Photo by unknown author.

As discussed above, methodologically china clay extraction changed very little since its first discovery in 1746, but by the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the clay was no longer being washed from the granite through the diversion of natural water courses. Instead it was blasted from the granite using a high-pressure

water cannon (or a 'monitor', so named it has been said, for its resemblance to the monitor lizard) at a pressure of 300psi, externally controlled by a 'hose-man' from a cabin at the centre of the pit (Thurlow 2001,11; I 2 16/11/2016). Today the process is largely automated, but at one point the hose-man was a key player in the extraction of the clay in the pit and basic pit training for apprentices often included a period spent working the hose. As a one-man operation however,

“Being up on the china clay works, it was quite lonely sometimes, you'd be in your little hoser and you wouldn't see anyone for 4 hours and you home at the end of the shift and you've only seen maybe 3 other people”

(I 2 16/11/2016)

There were several other significant changes to the industry during the post-war period. These included the introduction of mechanical classifiers to separate the sand and waste products from the clay, the use of hydrocyclones, which utilised centrifugal forces to separate the fine mica particles and coarse sands, and the introduction of the mechanical dryers which replaced coal fired dryers known as Pan Kilns. The first of these was the 'Buell' dryer, in which clay was loaded from the top and filtered through 130 layers to produce clay at 10% moisture within 45 minutes, rather than the one to five days in a traditional coal dry (Thurlow 2001; 2007). As more uses for china clay were identified in paints, rubbers and plastics used in electrical insulation, demand for increased whiteness and even finer particles of clay grew. To meet demand calcined clay was developed,

“now that's very much similar to a Buell system where the clay comes in over the top and then it comes down and there's paddles that goes around and the clay is burnt, or almost burnt or calcined, to almost 1100 degrees”

(I 4 3/12/2016).

Similarly, to facilitate the increasing use of china clay in high temperature environments, a new clay product named Molochite was developed and processed through a specialist calciner, initially at a facility known locally as Parkendillick – which incidentally was where the very first coal dryers had first been introduced in 1845 (Bowditch 2000). Producing Molochite however brought new challenges,

“the only problem with that [Molochite] is it goes up to the top of the screens and where it comes through, and it falls against the stainless-steel bends, it would cut through [them] in a fortnight. You could have shaved with the bits that come off, when it came through it was that sharp it was better than a knife.”

(I 11 21/02/2018)



Figure 3.10 (left) Double incline railway and tips at Dubbers china clay works. Photo © Rita Barton 1966



Figure 3.11 (right) Blackpool pit with Watch Hill tip to the right. Photo by Author

Another challenge for the industry was that with increased productivity came increased waste. The ratio for waste products to china clay is extraordinarily high, one part china clay for nine parts waste, broken down into rock (four and half parts) sand (three and a half parts) and mica (one part). Dry china clay waste, the bright white rock and quartz sand, was traditionally tipped into

conical waste heaps – the now famous ‘sky tips’ or white Alps – via an incline railway, the number of tips reflecting the large number of individual pits. Waste water containing mica and sand was often drained and dumped into local watercourses, causing the rivers and streams to run white (Thurlow 2007).

Perhaps the most profound recent change in this china clay landscape was the transformation of the waste deposition method, from the conical mountains of waste sand to a ‘benched’ flatter layered design (see figure 3.11). Each layer is roughly 25 meters in height, and the benched tips when completed have a much lower profile than the traditional tips (Thurlow 2001, 21). This change was not initially an aesthetic choice; the modified design followed the Aberfan coal mining disaster. Aberfan was a watershed moment for British mining. In the autumn of 1966, just outside the village of Aberfan, located in the Taff valley in south Wales, a colliery tip (not unlike the clay tips of Cornwall) became dislodged by heavy rain and a subterranean stream, and collapsed. The resulting waste slip raced down the valley as liquid slurry and crashed into the village, submerging houses, roads, and the village primary school, killing 116 children and 28 adults. In the years that followed Aberfan, the Mines and Quarries (Tips) Act 1969 was passed, which built on earlier legislation to improve health and safety. In 1970 the UK had 2 billion tonnes of mining and quarrying waste deposited on its surface, but until 1969 the only regulations in place to protect workers and the public were the Towns and Country Planning Act and some limited mine specific health and safety legislation (Cambridge 2008). The daughter of one pit captain described china clay mining in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century as,

“Very wet, very dangerous both slipping underfoot and things falling down overhead and so on, but I think by the 1950s and 60s sort of I’m

not sure... I'm not sure when all the health and safety legislation started coming in. The other thing that's quite interesting actually, is you know about Aberfan? ...it was 66, the early tips were the classic and conical ones and so on and the later tips had to conform to whole new legislative regulations because of Aberfan and my dad's main job was safety."

(15/27/02/2017)

Conforming to the new legislation saw a remarkable change in the mining topography of mid-Cornwall, with all new tips built in the new benched style rather than tipped via incline railway. The once evocative mountains of the china clay industry were eventually phased out, leaving only a diminished number of surviving examples across the region.

By the 1970s china clay was a 24hr operation: growing demand for china clay had seen the yearly outputs rise by 1,000,000 tonnes per decade since 1955, and in 1988 ECC reached a record annual output of 3,277,000 tonnes (Bowditch 2000; Thurlow 2001). 1985 saw the first new china clay pit, Old Pound, opened since before the Second World War but a nationwide economic downturn left ECC International, as it had since become, in a relatively poor position by the mid to late 1990s. Despite this setback by the time Imerys acquired ECC International in 1999 the china clay industry was valued at £200 million and exporting 3,000,000 tonnes a year to the UK market, 8,000,000 tonnes to the USA and 1,500,000 tonnes to South America (Thurlow 2001).

This section has provided an overview of the key developments related to china clay over the last two centuries. Although this thesis deals with the present heritage of china clay mining rather than a retelling of its history, it is important to highlight the impact the industry has had on the local area and the specific circumstances which have shaped both the industry and in turn the landscape. This section has also shown how personal experiences of china clay

compliment the written histories of china clay, and how these experiences can add rich detail to the historic accounts. As one former miner said,

“Yes we’ve mined it out we’ve changed it but we’ve got to move forward, it did give the St Austell area an awful lot of money and status and what was originally ECLP then ECC International it’s certainly gave them an awful lot of clout in the economic world, our china clay went all over the world, the company expanded in India, South Africa, Australia, Brazil, Americas its gone all over. You know there was a point in time when china clay was so sought after we couldn’t make it and export it fast enough.”

(19 07/02/2018)

### **3.3 Wheal Martyn: Living History**

During the latter years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century heritage experienced an exponential increase in both visitation to and interest in heritage sites. This can be explained largely by the social, political, and economic shifts of the ‘late modernity’, or the ‘postmodern’. These shifts were characterised by the growth of new communicative technologies, increased globalisation, widespread mass migration, flexible means of capital accumulation and distribution, and an increase in the time available for leisure (Harrison 2013, 76). These changes affected almost every aspect of social life, and museums and the nascent heritage industry were no exception. Although it would still be several years until the postmodern concept of the ‘new museology’ (Vergo 1989) would truly take hold, during the dawn of the late modernity there was an increase in interest in everyday experiences of ordinary people from the past. By giving a brief history of ‘living history’ and its relationship with industrial heritage, I will set the context for the following section in which I discuss the institutional history of the Wheal Martyn Museum.

In discussing the prominence of living history exhibitions in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century, Raphael Samuel (2012 [1994]) describes the enactment of hypothetical imaginations, of scenes and scenarios from the past, as a collision of the wonder of the cabinet of curiosities and the showmanship of Walt Disney. Living history, in Samuel's critique, encompasses everything from fabricated historic streets and shopfronts to battlefield re-enactment. Samuel states, therefore, "instead of being temples for the worship of the past, these museums make a fetish of informality" (2012 [1994], 177), recreating the past, restoring and stabilising the historic environment and inviting the public to experience the past up close and first-hand.

Living history also roughly coincided with the emergence of industrial heritage in archaeology in the early 1960s and quickly became associated with industrial sites and display of the working abilities of industrial artefacts. Many of these industrial pieces had been "rescued from the scrapheap and restored to life" (Samuel 2012 [1994], 173) and living history owes much to the eagerness and 'Do it Yourself' approach to heritage-making proposed by dedicated amateurs and hobbyist enthusiasts. In capturing the "disappearing worlds" of the industrial revolution and pre-Second World War 20<sup>th</sup> century (Samuel 2012 [1994], 188), industrial heritage invited the visitor into a reimagined industrial community and "play games with the past", inhabiting past environments in the present, transcending the boundaries of time and space (Samuel 2012 [1994], 196).

Samuel's evaluation of living history in the museum or heritage environment focuses heavily on the element of 'inauthentic' re-enactment and re-animation of the past. Indeed, in its formative years living history, and its 'cavalier' attitude towards the 'sanctity' of history as a scientific discipline, upset the academy with



its attention to the ordinary lives of everyday people. In time the dust thrown up by living history eventually settled, and during the 1970s the social history museum arrived to occupy an academically contested but highly populist space of history-making, fostering a preservation movement which garnered widespread public support (Samuel 2012 [1994], 198). In the midst of this social history boom, the Wheal Martyn Museum was founded in 1975.

Living history today at the Wheal Martyn Museum today takes on a different quality to that which was previously described. In amongst the restored machinery, dioramas and tableaux of the past there are also the remnants of the original clay works. Neither is more real or more authentic than the other however, and together all of these different representations of the past tell the story of china clay. As highlighted in Chapter 2, the divides between authentic and inauthentic heritage, and memory and history are far blurrier than they have perhaps been portrayed. As Samuel states “history has always been a hybrid form of knowledge, syncretizing the past and present, memory and myth, the written record and the spoken word”; I will show in this chapter and in those that will follow, the history of china clay is no different. China clay history has been recorded (somewhat unevenly in places) and draws strength from the written record; but it is also enhanced by memory and the spoken word in the present, by those living today who have an intimate knowledge of the past.

### **3.4 The Museum**

The Wheal Martyn Museum (Charity Number 1001838), in the Clay Country village of Carthew, first opened its doors to the public in 1975. 43 years later it remains the only china clay museum in the UK. The Museum is comprised of a modern building and atrium and constructed around the remains of two

Victorian and Edwardian china clay works named 'Wheal Martyn' and 'Gomm'



Figure 3.12 Exterior of the Wheal Martyn Museum from the car park. Photo © Wheal Martyn Trust

respectively, and includes a fully functioning water wheel, non-operational Mica Dry and Linhay and original outbuildings. Part of the draw and unique selling point of the Museum is the inclusion of these original features, and the story of Victorian and Edwardian china clay mining is at the core of the Museum's narrative. The remnants of the original

clay workings that make up the Museum are also formally listed as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Outside there are several acres of woodland as well as a viewing platform for the active Wheal Martyn china clay pit – a successor of the ruined works that the Museum is housed in – thus bringing the Museum into juxtaposition with the present industry. From the beginning the Museum was designated as a Trust, and the charitable organisation today is known as the Wheal Martyn Trust, which incorporates both the Wheal Martyn Museum and the China Clay History Society as part of the same organisation with interrelated constitutions, aims, and future goals. Over the years the Museum and wider site has been known by many different names; for ease of understanding I refer to the site throughout as the Wheal Martyn Museum.



Figure 3.13 (top) The Wheal Martyn Museum 18ft waterwheel. Photo by Author

Figure 3.14 (bottom) The Wheal Martyn Museum original Victorian clay dry outbuildings. Photo by Author

### 3.4.1 Beginnings

On a grey day in early November 2015 a *Heritage Futures* colleague, Dr Nadia Bartolini, and I drove to the town of Hayle on the St Ives Bay (around 35 miles west of St Austell and a million miles away from china clay) to meet a former manager of the Wheal Martyn Museum at his home. During that meeting he recalled for us the web of serendipitous circumstances in which a museum for the Clay Country was first conceived.

He explained how Cornwall was well placed to benefit from discussions promoting industrial heritage during the early 1970s. As previously discussed, social and industrial heritage had grown in prominence during the 1960s and 1970s, and in part this was due to the work being undertaken by the Council for British Archaeology (CBA). The president of the CBA at that time was Professor Charles Thomas, who was also instrumental in the founding of the Institute of Cornish Studies (ICS) in 1971 in conjunction with Cornwall Council and the University of Exeter (ICS 2017). Concurrent to these developments, due to the advancements in the industry during the inter-and-post war years, the once prolific coal fired Pan Kilns had begun to fall into varying states of disuse and disrepair as they were superseded by more advanced drying technology. The suspicion articulated by the former manager during our meeting was that a combination of the increasing dilapidation of china clay infrastructure, and a president of the CBA with a vested interest in promoting Cornish heritage may have contributed to the decision to open a china clay museum.

There is also some evidence that suggests a loose, but on-going, relationship between ECC and the ICS. For example, there are records of ECC funding a research fellow position in 1973 and it was thought that ECC may have financed projects or small grants for the ICS during its formative years. Through the relationship between ECC and ICS the idea of repurposing derelict china clay buildings for heritage purposes may have gained some traction at the higher levels of ECC management. This final point, however, is conjecture by someone who was present in these initial conversations; repeated investigations into the records of the ICS held in the University of Exeter's Penryn Campus archives turned up no evidence to support or refute these suppositions.

Similarly, the actual events leading up to the first discussion of a dedicated china clay museum remain seemingly undocumented. The first concrete meeting that was recalled during our meeting with the former manager happened in 1971. As a member of Cornwall Archaeology Society with a strong interest in industrial heritage, the former manager explained that he was invited along with several others to a meeting at the ECC headquarters. John Keay House, in St Austell where the concept of a museum was discussed, and it was agreed that somebody (later himself) would take on the task of seeking out suitable locations. After much searching the remains of the old Wheal Martyn china clay works, unearthed from under a sea of rhododendron, was eventually selected as the most suitable and accessible location (once, of course, the vegetation had been removed).

### **3.4.2 An Industry Museum**

A press release published in February 1974 by ECC formally announced the appointment of the Museum's first manager and described the Museum as

“a trust with the support of the whole of the China Clay Industry...Wheal Martyn, 2 miles North of St. Austell, forms the central Museum site where an almost complete clay works dating from the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century remains...The area illustrates the traditional processes used in the refining and drying of clay during the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The series of Mica Drags, various settling tanks and coal-fired kiln – a building almost 250 ft. long – where the final drying took place is typical of the period”

*(ECC Press Release 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 1974: CCHS Collection, Room 1)*

The opening of the St Austell China Clay Museum, as the Wheal Martyn Museum was then known, marked the first time the industry sought to formally tell the history of china clay to its own employees, and to local people living in the china clay landscape. As an added benefit, the Museum also served to

present an easily accessible version of the industry to tourists and visitors to the region. Subsequently, John Keay House became the registered address of the Museum during those first years, due to the ongoing investment and involvement of ECC. The direct involvement of ECC in the early Museum is further evidenced in the early 'Director's Reports' from the Wheal Martyn Museum to trustees and stakeholders, where it was noted – with thanks – that during the first season two drivers from the ECC owned 'Heavy Transport Company' were released to assist with transportation and general maintenance. It was also noted that one of the drivers had made a 'great reserve guide'. By the second season however the Heavy Transport Company drivers had been replaced by three school leavers who took over the manual work on site (*Wheal Martyn Director's Report 1975; 1976 CCHS 41/1*).

There is a widely held belief amongst older locals and some scholars of the Clay Country that ECC (or more often as ECLP) was much more 'community spirited' than the present day Imerys. When these kinds of sentiments are expressed, they often centre on a general sense, or feeling, that the present day 'community spirit' or the 'current industry' (i.e. Imerys) "is not to [their] liking" or not what they once were (QU-82, QU-239). What is meant by the term 'community spirit' is not often qualified in these conversations or in these responses. Drawing on the handful of published sources that engage with local people's responses to the industry, one may come across positive mentions of the wide-scale employment offered by ECC, and references to 'the company' as ECC was often simply called, as "our bread and butter" (see Trower 2009, 28), but these observations alone do not necessarily define what a sense 'community spirit' is. It could be assumed then that 'community spirit' refers to a willingness by 'the company' to invest in its workers, and their families, beyond

their employment. Interviews and questionnaires offer more nuanced responses such as ECC's reputation for training staff from the bottom up (I 5 27/02/2017), generous staff benefits and working facilities (QU-15). Informally, pensioners' teas and trips for children are sometimes mentioned, such as the use of the Pentewan to St Austell railway clay waggons, which were cleaned of clay and coal dust once a year, so the local Sunday school children could enjoy a day on the beach and on the railway (I 7 07/06/2017).

Further to these comments, the role of ECC in the setting up of the Wheal Martyn Museum, and its many financial investments in the Museum's early years, is often used to exemplify the view that the former industry leaders were more invested in the local community and its history, in contrast to the current Imerys. From research into the relationship between ECC and the Museum from the Wheal Martyn Museum records held in the Museum and in the CCHS archive, I somewhat question ECC's involvement in the Museum as evidence of 'community spirit'. Imerys understandably, tends to keep its involvement with the Museum professionally "at arms-length", although they do periodically supply information or services to the Museum (Interview Clay Works! Projects Officer 29/11/2017) and facilitate some visitor activities, such as the 'Pit to Port' guided tours which are offered throughout the summer by the Wheal Martyn Museum. Aside from a brief release of staff from The Heavy Transport Company to help with transport and haulage during the first season (*Wheal Martyn Director's Report 1975 CCHS 41/1*), most of the evidence for ECC's involvement in the Museum is through the provision of loans and other financial support.

Historically, there were multiple financial arrangements between ECC and Wheal Martyn, most notably between 1984 and 1987 when an official covenant was agreed between the two which saw ECC commit to a four-year programme of financial support payments to the Museum (*Wheal Martyn Director's Report 1987* CCHS 41/1). These payments were, however, not without reciprocity, in both 1987 and 1988 payments were made from the Wheal Martyn Museum to ECC to pay off debts owed for temporary financial assistance "some years ago" (*Wheal Martyn Director's Report 1987;1988* CCHS 41/1). Similarly, it was recorded in 1992 that, although an arrangement was made between ECC and the Trustees of Wheal Martyn to clear the Museum's overdraft, the ECC Group withdrew their guarantees which protected Wheal Martyn's financial arrangements with the bank (*Wheal Martyn Director's Report 1992* CCHS 41/1). This change appears to correlate the advent of Wheal Martyn Enterprises, a limited company set up to enable Wheal Martyn, as a charity, to generate its own income.

In our meeting with the former manager it was also implied that the decision on ECC's part to become involved in the creation of a china clay museum was also based on a desire to generate positive PR. At the time of Wheal Martyn's inception ECC were reportedly in the midst of a planning dispute over the development of new china clay works, and any opportunity for the company to be seen as 'giving back' to the community would only help their cause and reputation. From these brief insights into the relationship between ECC and Wheal Martyn in the earlier years of the Museum, it can be seen that, although the ECC regularly supported the Museum financially, these were primarily reciprocal business arrangements that are not necessarily evidence of a charitable 'community spirit' within the company.



### 3.4.3 A Social History Museum

As discussed at the beginning of this section, the founding of the Wheal Martyn Museum came at a pivotal time in the development of the social history and industrial heritage movement in the UK. The advent of social history museums became one of the defining cultural features of the 1970s in terms of heritage and the cultural sector. However, ongoing British industries often remained outside of the remit of industrial heritage, in favour of pre-Second World War industrial remnants that could be restored and displayed. As such the level of involvement of ECC in the original Wheal Martyn Museum was, for the time at least, somewhat anomalous. In the introduction to a five-year plan for the Museum, written in 1983, it is stated that,

“Although the vision of a new [industrial] museum almost always comes from an individual or a group of interested amateurs, it is indisputably true that none of them would have become solid reality if it were not for sizeable support from, in most cases a public body in the shape of the local authority. The only cases where this is not true is where some other authority has taken on the supporting role of the local authority such as the National Trust at Quarry Bank Mill, Dartington at Morwellham, or indeed, English China Clays at Wheal Martyn”

*(A Five Year Plan for Wheal Martyn (Draft), Wheal Martyn Cabinet 6.3 Folder 7)*

In the summer of 1975 the Wheal Martyn Museum opened its doors to the paying public for the first time. For the cost of 25p residents of the Clay Country and tourists alike were given the chance to view the history of the china clay industry. In its opening season 43,000 visitors passed through Wheal Martyn's doors, at a rate of roughly 533 per day. Visitors included current industry employees, interested locals, holiday makers, and school children from both in and out of county, many of whom, it was reported, had combined their visit to the Museum with a tour of ECC's flagship china clay pit, the Blackpool pit,

situated just over a mile away on Trewoon Common (*Wheal Martyn Director's Report 1975 CCHS 41/1*).

The Museum performed well over the first couple of years, with visitor numbers steadily increasing and a number of small donations made to the collections, largely by retired clay workers. Despite the economic and social instability that had afflicted Britain throughout much of the 1970s Wheal Martyn's visitor numbers peaked in 1978 at 60,508, a record which has not since been surpassed. Not one year later, the oil crisis of 1979 saw visitor figures drop by almost ten percent, and as Britain entered into a recession in 1980 visitor numbers continued to fall (*Wheal Martyn Director's Report 1978; 1979; 1980 CCHS 41/1*). The recession and high levels of unemployment saw a fall in tourism across the Southwest and for a number of years in the 1980s Wheal Martyn relied heavily on ECC to support the Museum financially, even as the economy and other Cornish destinations gradually recovered. At the lowest point during these years, visitor numbers dropped to just over 20,000 in 1983 (*Wheal Martyn Director's Report 1983 CCHS 41/1*). The collections had also begun to suffer; it was noted in 1984 that,

“the Museum has major problems looking after and maintaining its collections, security is poor and conditions for display and storage are far from ideal, many exhibits are running wet from condensation.”

(*Wheal Martyn Director's Report 1984 CCHS 41/1*)

By 1986 it was reported that the Museum had not kept adequate records relating to the collections since 1979 and was not actively collecting the industry's past, partly due to a lack of adequate storage and partly due to the rapid rate of expansion and change in the industry. Additionally, research had not

been a priority and objects in the collection were deteriorating rapidly (*Wheal Martyn Responsibilities in the Future* 1986 CCHS 41/4)

Changes followed and by 1990, thanks to additional support obtained from ECC and the development of a suitable curatorial department, the Wheal Martyn Museum had employed a full-time curator, cultivated a stable collections documentation programme and achieved full registration of the Area Museum Council (*Wheal Martyn Director's Report 1990* CCHS 41/1). The large Mica Dry roof, however, was still in desperate need of repair, leading the director to appeal strongly to the trustees to address the financial matters,

“urgently in order that we may continue our work with purpose and confidence. We have achieved so much in recent years and it would be a shame to see us slide backwards as was the case a few years back.”

(*Wheal Martyn Director's Report 1991* CCHS 41/1)

Over the next decade the Wheal Martyn Museum was fortunate to receive funding from English Heritage and the Rural Development Fund to repair the Mica Dry roof, as well as support from ECC to make substantial improvements to the flat rod tunnel, which leads to the viewing platform for modern day Wheal Martyn pit. Developments also included new digital presentations of the audio-visual exhibitions and the building of a large temporary office building and lecture room. Additional support from the Trevithick Society (who for a time were also directly involved in the management of the Museum) funded new exhibitions, and between 2000 and 2002 English Heritage, as it was then known, supported the refurbishment of the historic Mica Drags which are displayed behind the main museum building (*Summary of Developments n.d.* Wheal Martyn Cabinet 6.3).

Despite the renovations, however, the Museum was still struggling. An external report conducted in 2002 identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) for the Wheal Martyn Museum and concluded that although the Museum had a collection of national importance, strong industry links, as well as enthusiastic new management and the expertise of the History Society, the image of the Museum to the general public was suffering. It was perceived that the Museum was only for china clay management, not the everyday visitor, and that china clay was not a universally interesting topic (*Diagnostic Planning Study and Short Feasibility Report 2002 Wheal Martyn Cabinet 6.3*).

By this time in the early 2000s the Wheal Martyn Museum had undergone multiple changes in name and branding over the previous thirty years and has been advised at least once to remove the term museum from its title all together, over fears the term “throws up perceptions of musty, dusty old buildings” with some in favour of positioning the Wheal Martyn site as a ‘destination’ which incorporated a museum, visitor centre and other activities (*Suggested New Names: Wheal Martyn n.d. Cabinet 6.3*). Problems attracting funding and appointing and retaining staff had also taken a toll on the sustainability of the Museum, and a nationwide trend of low visitation to museums had compounded the challenging situation (*Diagnostic Planning Study and Short Feasibility Report 2002 Wheal Martyn Cabinet 6.3*).

### **3.5 The China Clay History Society**

Running concurrently to the Museum’s struggles, a new group was beginning to form responding to wider changes that were taking place across the Clay Country. ECC (as ECC International) during the 1990s had refocussed its

business interests on the original mineral extraction, and in the process shelved its highly profitable housing and quarrying businesses, which resulted in the sale of a high proportion of company land. In 1999, three years after the industry celebrated 250 years of operations in Cornwall, a major shift occurred; English China Clays International was acquired by a French multinational cooperation for £756 million (The Telegraph 2006). The company – Imetal – subsequently changed its name to Imerys after the 1999 takeover and has been a world leader in mineral extraction ever since.



Figure 3.15 CCHS's salvaged collection of historical minute books and ledgers. Photo by Author.

Around the time of the Imerys acquisition, English China Clays had been building a new headquarters for the industry, moving the company offices from John Keay House in St Austell to a new facility at Par Moor.

Subsequently, many of the industry's archival records were in the process of being transferred and there was a feeling among some members of staff and retirees that many important documents were being discarded in the process. The risk of losing historical and potentially important documents for some was too high and, in the midst of the business takeover and headquarters move, a small group of concerned individuals and old china clay colleagues came together to save as many records as they could. Much like those early Museum meetings in 1971 at John Keay House, there were meetings held at the Wheal Martyn Museum that brought together about 25 different individuals, all of whom wanted to save the remnants of the historic china clay industry. Over the next

year the original members of the newly founded China Clay History Society (CCHS) “ransacked” the empty offices of John Keay House and took discarded material from skips. The former company secretary also claimed to have transferred many of the records in their care to the History Society (13/23/11/2016).

CCHS has moved its collection between different locations at least three times since its founding. Initially the collection was given various spaces in John Keay House. They then found themselves inhabiting a larger, albeit highly unsuitable, space near Wheal Rose in Bugle, where they remained for several years.

CCHS now leases storage space from Imerys in a former laboratory facility around a mile and half west of St Austell. The current collection held by the History Society is estimated to be over 1,000,000 pages of documents and 15,000 photographs as well as thousands more maps and technical drawings, many of which came originally from the collection salvaged from John Keay House. Over the years the collection has been augmented by donations from society members, either gifted in person or left to the Society in wills and bequests. The Society now has nearly 250 members, ranging from ex-china clay company employees and Clay Country locals, to historians, archaeologists, and academics.

Since its inception, CCHS has been constitutionally part of the Wheal Martyn Museum and several of the founding members of CCHS were once trustees of the Museum. The constitution of CCHS states that,

“the aims of the Society are to further the objects of St Austell China Clay Museum Ltd [Wheal Martyn Museum] and in particular to –

- a) promote the study of, and research into, the history of the china clay and related industries and organisations;
- b) seek to preserve the heritage of those industries and organisations;

- c) recruit members in furtherance of the Society's aims;
- d) acquire, record and conserve artefacts and documents of relevance."

*(China Clay History Society Constitution 2000)*

Further to these points, the constitution also states that all materials acquired by CCHS are legally the property of the Wheal Martyn Museum. Despite this, the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS have had a complex relationship. For many years CCHS operated, for the most part, autonomously from the Wheal Martyn Museum, and whilst legal ownership of the collections resides with the Museum, the day-to-day care of the objects, and the research they are used for, is usually conducted almost exclusively by the CCHS volunteers in a space which is at present separate from the main museum site.

### **3.6 South West Lakes Trust: 2010 to Present**

A pivotal player in the heritage of the Clay Country, as well as the operations of the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS, is the South West Lakes Trust (SWLT). Since 2010 South West Lakes Trust, a leisure and conservation trust based in the neighbouring county of Devon, has managed the Wheal Martyn Trust, acting as a corporate trustee. Historically SWLT's activities had been largely limited to managing leisure activities on the reservoirs of Devon and Cornwall, but in the late 1990s, SWLT's management decided to take a new strategic direction and seek more opportunities for more cultural or charitable work away from the reservoirs. As such, by 2010 SWLT were in a prime position to take on the new challenge of museum and heritage site management.

SWLT was first approached by a trustee of the Wheal Martyn Museum who, propositioned SWLT to take over the running of the Museum full-time. The Museum's part-time manager during that time was preparing to leave his post to

begin his campaign as the Liberal Democrat MP for St Austell and Newquay during the 2010 General Election. Therefore, an active member of the China Clay History Society was employed to oversee the day-to-day running of the Museum, but the appointment was short term for three months. SWLT saw great potential in the Wheal Martyn Museum to expand their recreation and education offers. SWLT additionally already managed a Scheduled Ancient Monument, Burrator on Dartmoor, and so the buildings at the Wheal Martyn Museum were not outside of their existing remit. After following due diligence, SWLT came on board formally as a corporate trustee in April 2010.

As a corporate trustee SWLT oversees the day-to-day running of the Museum, however the Wheal Martyn Trust is able to continue as a separate charity from SWLT, and neither charity is able to support each other financially (Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Director 08/06/2017). Since 2014 SWLT have had four main priorities for the Wheal Martyn Museum,

- A. **To develop the workforce:** *Brilliant people with the right skills, inspiring others*
- B. **To deliver the charity's objectives:** *A protected and better understood historic and natural environment/ Value-added partnerships*
- C. **To delight our visitors:** *More people having great experiences*
- D. **To plan for and deliver long-term financial sustainability:** *Financial sustainability and resilience*

*(Wheal Martyn Business Plan 2016-2020; Wheal Martyn Trust 2016)*

Under SWLT's leadership, the Wheal Martyn Museum has employed a new part-time curator and a museum manager and visitor numbers have been steadily rising from an all-time low of 14,000 in 2009 to over 20,500 in 2016 (*Wheal Martyn Trust Highlights 2015-2016*). A regular curatorial presence has



vastly improved the condition of the storage facilities at the Wheal Martyn Museum and the Wheal Martyn Trust, including CCHS, has now achieved UK Museum Accreditation Status from the Arts Council. In 2016 an archival sub-committee jointly made up of Wheal Martyn Museum staff and CCHS volunteers was established to further understand the needs of the CCHS collection.

Most recently, the Wheal Martyn Trust secured £1.35 million from local and national funding bodies, including the Heritage Lottery Fund, to carry out much needed repairs and renovations to the (ever troublesome it seems) Mica Dry and Pan Kiln buildings, and to develop and improve the visitor experience at the Wheal Martyn Museum. One final development has been the retirement of the founding chairman of CCHS. After stepping down from this position he struggled to find a replacement from within the Society and so the Director of the Wheal Martyn Museum and employee of South West Lakes Trust, took over as chairman, further closing the gap between the two parts of the Wheal Martyn Trust.

The Wheal Martyn Museum still retains its links with the china clay industry through regular contact with Imerys however today it does not receive any direct funding from the china clay industry. Instead, links to the industry are best expressed by the large number of retired clay workers and industry professionals who volunteer their time and knowledge, either through lending their expertise to the curatorial team or by leading tours, meeting and greeting visitors, and sharing their own experiences of china clay to visitors to the Museum.

### 3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has given an overview of the china clay industry and some of the stories that have been told about it and has shown the types of knowledge which are privileged in this writing of the history of the china clay industry. It has also offered an institutional history of two of the key organisations that seek to capture these stories and share them in the present and retain them for the future. I have shown how the china clay industry, the Wheal Martyn Museum, and CCHS are integral to one another and are intensely interwoven within each other's histories and present operational practices.

I have also highlighted how the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS for many years struggled to maintain suitable storage for their collections but in recent years, thanks to the involvement of South West Lakes Trust, the Wheal Martyn Museum have made significant steps forward in the storage and care of the collections in their care. As such the Wheal Martyn Museum has also committed to guide and support CCHS in improving their own storage and collections practices to secure the future of the collections that CCHS care for on behalf of the Museum. Additionally, the archive sub-committee that was formed between CCHS and the Wheal Martyn Museum in 2016 is aiming to improve storage and documentation at in CCHS archive, with help from the professional staff at the Museum. Improving these practices offers many opportunities but it is a process that also balances the challenges of encouraging best practice and museum management in an unsuitable and outlying space.

As the Museum and CCHS evolved they have moved away from a direct reliance on the industry. Today there are still strong relationships between Imerys and the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS, but the relationships operate

in a more informal and advisory capacity. Although the links between the active industry and the main heritage-making organisations in the Clay Country are less obvious today than they perhaps were in the past, they are still very much present. The CCHS archive and the Wheal Martyn Museum are the key spaces of heritage-making where the stories of china clay, the industry, people, and landscape play out and are exhibited. The work carried out by retired clay workers, as volunteers and researchers, means that the heritage-making that takes place at present is still deeply rooted in personal memories and experiences. Alongside these practices, heritage and museum professionals at the Wheal Martyn Museum work to ensure that the Clay Country's heritage is properly documented, safeguarded, and sustainably managed.

Attending to these different practices, and asking questions around them, forms the core of the research presented in this thesis. All of these practices performed in the Wheal Martyn Museum and by members of CCHS aim to capture and preserve the stories of china clay for the future. Sometimes as I will also show, these practices also reveal differences. I will also explore, however, that although dissonance may be inherent in heritage, heterogeneity is also an integral and productive part of the heritage assemblage.

Unlike Barton (1966) I do not want to conclude this chapter with an attempt to wrap up the history of the industry into a neat but mournful future projection of the industry. So instead of officially concluding this chapter on the 'historical archive' of china clay, I instead offer this summary as an interlude. In the next chapter I will return to the CCHS archive, to document my own arrival in the archive space as a participant observer in the practices of heritage-making. Many of the stories I have told in this chapter are the histories which have been

frozen in time through archival documents, constitutions, and publications. But history is always a hybrid knowledge, made of more than just the written record and encompasses memory, myth, and spoken words (Samuel 2012 [1994], 443). There are hundreds, if not thousands, of personal histories of china clay that exist across the Clay Country, some of which I have had the privilege to learn and will share in the chapters that remain.

## Chapter 4: The Performed Archive

“It’s hard to know what exactly to write today, I actually feel very useless not really having something to do. I’ve been genuinely surprised at how much ‘fuss’ has been made about my leaving today, I’m very grateful to everyone. These past 18 months have been a journey of learning and understanding but also one of making friendships and really becoming part of the China Clay History Society. I hope that I’ve managed to add something to this archive as well as receive from it. I never thought that I would be in this position, when I started I knew no one and nothing about china clay and I still don’t really, in comparison – you could spend a lifetime and not know it all, and in reality, it’s what so many of the people here have done. This experience has been just as much about getting to know people as much as it has been about getting to know an industry.

(Fieldwork Diary 11/04/18)

As the previously chapters have shown, this thesis has benefited from a vast number of literatures, drawing on key work undertaken in geography, museum studies, heritage studies, and archaeology, as well local historical sources.

Here, in the last of the three introductory chapters I will discuss the methods I used to assemble stories of collecting and caring for the past in the Clay Country. I also include a brief overview of the role that both professional and amateur practices play in the context of collecting and heritage-making as a foundation for the three empirical chapters that follow.

### 4.1 “Touchy Feely Look-See” Methodologies

The majority of the research that informs this thesis was conducted using what Mike Crang (2003) once described as a “touchy feely look-see” approach to methodology; qualitative, open, fluid methods. There are multiple benefits to such a methodological positioning. Qualitative methods allow for reflexivity in the research, time to think and rethink, and often provide opportunities for the subjects of the research to speak for themselves, verbally or otherwise.

As Crang (2003) observes, however, many of these so-called ‘touch-feely’ methods actually do very little touching or feeling. The mainstay of qualitative methodologies has tended to be semi-structured interviewing and passive observation, constituting an over-reliance on verbal methods that produces ‘very wordy worlds’ (Crang 2003, 501). As such, although this research does utilise the traditional methodologies of questionnaires and interviewing, I have tried to balance these verbal methods with a more intimate and personal examination of collecting and caring practices, and spatial materialities, through participant observation which requires a generous amount of touching and feeling, as well as looking and seeing. These methods combined provide brief detailed snapshots of many specific moments, feeding into a wider constructivist epistemology which embraces multiplicity and the capacity of individual actors to produce knowledge and understanding of their individual worlds. In order to say something about these worlds, and all their messy intricacies, they need to be experienced and engaged with.

The study of different heritage-making ‘practices’ has been a key theoretical and methodological focus of this thesis, ranging from professional archival practice and museum practice to personal practices of collecting, as well as my own practice as a researcher in the archive. To clarify, what I describe as practice in this research is a functional understanding of the term that describes the actions of individuals and groups, rather than broader sociological understandings of practice, such as Bourdieu’s (1977) *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Practice, in this research, can be seen to have an “inclusive scope that encompasses project management, research, collecting, programming and more” (Alberti et al. 2017, 325). Throughout this chapter I will first consider my own practices by discussing the key methodologies used in this research, as

well as providing a brief snapshot of some of the professional and amateur practices that I have observed during my time in the CCHS archive and at the Wheal Martyn Museum.

## **4.2 Qualitative Questionnaires**

In the first several months of conducting this research I developed a somewhat unhelpful preoccupation with the need to collect 'data'. In hindsight, I see how this was inevitable as a new(ish) researcher in a predominantly science-facing academic setting, the University of Exeter's Environment and Sustainability Institute; I was not yet confident enough to fully embrace the 'touchy feely' methodologies that I knew this research required. The more I began to feel overwhelmed by the enormity of the project and my own anxieties, the more I fell back on the idea of collecting 'hard data'. This led me to the practice of distributing questionnaires as way of gathering background information on which to base further stages in the research process.

Questionnaires are a ubiquitous research method used in a variety of social science studies and, for many, questionnaires are "an integral part of the scientific method" (Cloke et al. 2004, 131). Although questionnaires typically contain a mixture of quantitative and qualitative questions, they can also be highly effective as a solely qualitative research method, providing the questionnaire is designed appropriately for mixed qualitative methods research (Johnston 2003). Lynda Johnston argues that, for this to be the case, qualitative questionnaires should contain a high proportion of open questions for analysis, often in the way one would analyse interview data, as well as closed, more 'traditional', survey questions (Johnston 2003, 136). With this in mind, I designed my questionnaire with three types of structured questions and one

less structured question type.

| Structured Question Types |   | Unstructured Question Type |   |
|---------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|
| <b>List</b>               | Allows for respondents to select several different answers from a predetermined list. (Job title of volunteering role)  | <b>Verbal/Open</b>         | An open ended non-structured question in which the respondent is able to answer using their own words or phrases. Verbal/Open questions may illicit a single word response, an extended comment or short paragraph. (All other questions) |
| <b>Category</b>           | Response is limited to only one of the categories available. (Demographic questions)  |                            |   |
| <b>Scale</b>              | Respondents mark their answer on a numerical scale, usually one to five, which correlates to a position or preference that is held by the respondent.<br><br>(Pride, Community and Identity scores) |                            |   |

Table 4.1 Types of questions used in questionnaires (adapted from Bell 1987; 59-60, in Cloke et al. 2004, 136)

The purpose of my questionnaire was to collect background information about the members of the China Clay History Society and the staff and volunteers at the Wheal Martyn Museum. I was interested to know more about the individuals that were part of CCHS and the Museum. I want to better understand their ages and working backgrounds, but also their thoughts on the importance of china clay heritage and how, if at all, the History Society or Museum had influenced the way they saw the industry (see Appendix A for full copy of the questionnaire).

As I was surveying members of a manageable and closed group, CCHS and the Wheal Martyn Museum, I did not have to employ a sampling method for my



questionnaire distribution. CCHS has 233 (as of 2017) members and whilst the majority live in the mid-Cornwall region, the Society has national and international members, all of whom receive the History Society's tri-annual newsletter. A postal survey became obvious as the most time-effective method of distribution and collection of responses for the questionnaire. Even though postal questionnaires have a reduced capacity to handle open ended questions than face-to-face or telephone questionnaires, they excel in mitigating the risk of distortion based on the interviewer's presence or biases and are far less time and cost-intensive than other survey methods (de Vaus 1991, 113 in Cloke et al. 2004, 133). As I did not have access to the comprehensive mailing list, CCHS kindly included my surveys and attached pre-stamped return envelopes in their June 2016 newsletter. I provided 250 questionnaires to CCHS to distribute. Newsletter recipients also included many of the managerial and curatorial staff at the Wheal Martyn Museum.

I received responses from 85 individuals which, based on the membership of the Society for 2016/2017, represented a return rate of 36%. Of these 85, eight were returned blank, giving an overall sample size of 33 % of the membership of CCHS. These blank surveys, however, have been counted as responses as the respondents engaged with the study by returning their questionnaires. These questionnaires do not feature in the analysis, however, unless explicitly stated. As participants were not compelled to answer every question, some of the questionnaires were returned incomplete and so adjustments have been made to the 'N' values in some of the analysis (see Appendix B). The questionnaires were successful in providing preliminary information and a solid foundation on which to build a more in-depth qualitative methodology, which I will now discuss. Some key results from questionnaires will be shown in

Chapter 5 and are also used to inform parts of Chapters 6 and 7 (also see Appendix B).

### **4.3 Interviews**

The second method I employed, building on the information gathered from distributing the questionnaires, was to carry out interviews with members of CCHS and Wheal Martyn Museum volunteers and staff (groups in which there is some overlap). Interviews were carried out between October 2016 and February 2018, coinciding with an extended period of participant observation which is discussed in detail later in this chapter.

Interviews are one of the most commonly used qualitative methods (Kitchin and Tate 2000, 213; Mason 2002). Crang (2003) has noted that almost every textbook of qualitative methods includes at least one chapter dedicated to interviews or associated practices, such as focus groups. Interviews are popular as, unlike the questionnaire, they represent “a [more] complex social encounter” designed to capture a much larger and much richer set of data and account for emotional and experiential responses far better than a standard ‘question and answer’ based questionnaire (Kitchin and Tate 2000, 213). Interviews cannot be considered a suitable method for all types of qualitative research however; it is also important that the epistemology of the study is compatible with plurality and multivocality, which is often present in the interview methodology. Mason (2002) therefore suggests that a research project incorporating interviews should be designed to handle the complexities and multiplicities that interviewing can generate and must value peoples’ different “views, understandings, interpretations, experiences, and interactions” (Mason 2002, 63). Furthermore, interviewing methodologies suit researchers who are open to exploring the

ways that research can be constructed (or reconstructed) through the interview process (Mason 2002.) While interviews include participants voices in the research they are also a way of incorporating reflexivity into the research process as the researcher is shown to be an active participant in the in the creation of knowledge Cloke et al. (2004).

Kitchin and Tate (2000, 213), following Patton (1990), have identified 5 different types of interview approaches, which are:

- Structured open-ended
- The interview guide approach
- Informal conversational interviews
- Closed quantitative
- Group discussion

Interview approaches are also often known more simply as in-depth, semi structured and loosely structured/unstructured interviews (Mason 2002, 63).

Each interviewing method has its relative strengths and weaknesses (see Table 4.2).

| <b>Interview Type</b>                      | <b>Strength</b>   | <b>Weakness</b>  |
|--|---|--|
| Structured open ended/structured interview | Simple design<br>Increases comparability<br>Reduces bias<br>Data easiest to analyse               | Little flexibility<br>Disrupts natural flow of conversation<br>May result in an uncomfortable dynamic                    |
| Interview guide/ semi-structured interview | Flexibility in wording and order of questions<br>Allows for logical progression between questions | Reduced comparability<br>More pressure on the interviewer to guide the conversation<br>Possibility for tangents to occur |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Informal conversation/<br>loosely structured/<br>unstructured interviews | Allows for natural conversation<br><br>Freedom for both interviewer and interviewee<br><br>Strongest understanding of the interviewees position.<br><br>The most relevant questions can be asked | Little/no comparability<br><br>Data more difficult to analyse<br><br>Requires a high degree of skill from the interviewer<br><br>Requires high levels of spontaneity |
|--|--|--|

Table 4.2 The strengths and weaknesses of different interviewing methods (after Mason 2002, Chapter 4; Kitchin and Tate 2000, 213-215)

Drawing on the different interviewing methods identified in Mason (2002) and Kitchin and Tate (2000) (see Table 4.2), the method of interviewing undertaken for this thesis was a combination of semi-structured and informal interviews, which Mason (2002) terms “loosely structured” interviewing, although I will simply term it semi-structured. In general, interviews were carried out with participants one-on-one, although there were several interviews conducted in pairs and one in a group of three. The ‘snowball’ method was also used toward the end of the research – whereby participants recommend others for interview (Morgan 2008) – but for most of the research interview participants were identified through my observations and conversations in the CCHS archive and the Wheal Martyn Museum, in order to capture a broad range of participants. In total I interviewed 20 individual participants over 16 different interviews. I recorded the interviews on a portable voice recorder and later transcribed the interviews verbatim into NVivo, a qualitative data analysis programme which I discuss below.

Questions asked depended on the role of the interviewee but generally followed a loose schedule surrounding three themes (see Appendix A). Firstly, I was interested to know about participants’ working life backgrounds and how they

came to be in the role they were in currently, either as staff or volunteers at the Wheal Martyn Museum or members of CCHS (I also carried out one interview with two participants from the village archive in Charlestown, a prominent former china clay shipping port on the coast south of St Austell). Secondly, I asked questions relating to the day-to-day activities carried out by the participants in their roles, whether this was compiling the Society's newsletter, identifying photographs, carrying out conservation practices, or applying for and managing large grants. Lastly, I asked people what their aspirations for the future were, including the ways that they saw the china clay industry changing in the future, and what they thought was important about the objects and collections they were currently caring for. As the interviews were only semi-structured the questioning did not always follow a set pattern and each question was tailored to the individual(s). A loose interview schedule is included for reference in Appendix (A).

My interviewing style throughout resembled what is sometimes referred to as a 'reflexive dyadic' style (Ellis and Berger 2001). This type of interview is conducted more as a conversation between two equals rather than a hierarchical transaction between 'researcher' and 'subject'. Moreover, while this type of interview typically follows the traditional pattern of the interviewer asking questions, the interviewer also may inject personal anecdotes and engage in conversation – not as a research tactic, but in a genuine reciprocal exchange (Ellis and Berger 2001). As Ashmore, Craggs and Neate (2012, 88) have stated, investing in a relationship with participants, in this case collectors and their collections, leads to situations where “conversations, divergences and stories emerge that would otherwise remain hidden and in turn feed back into understandings of archival material”. Ashmore, Craggs and Neate (2012) also

highlight that, although these sorts of interactions with participants are common place during research, it is less common to see these conversations written up as part of published outputs. Talking to and ‘working-with’ (Ashmore, Craggs and Neate 2012) are also key to establishing a participatory relationship with the custodians of the knowledge that researcher is seeking to uncover.

This approach of developing relationships which acknowledge interviewees and collaborators as the principal experts has also been recently described by Samantha Saville (2017) as a ‘Humble Geography’ approach to research. Indeed, at the beginning of any research project, especially those which draw on ethnography or participant observation (on which I will elaborate further below), a degree of ignorance or at least inexperience is useful and to some extent unavoidable, however it is argued by Eric Laurier (2010, 199) that by the end of the research “you should possess a degree of the particular know-how, appropriate conduct and common knowledge of the place and/or people you have chosen to study”.

#### **4.3.1 Coding Practices**

I managed and coded all the questionnaire and interview data I collected as part of this research in the qualitative data analysis software NVivo. I chose to use NVivo over the more creative and traditional practice of highlighting transcripts and arranging excerpts manually, largely due to the project management capabilities of the programme. This ensured that during analysis I did not become overwhelmed by the profusion of paperwork that multiple hours of interviewing and 85 questionnaires would have produced, although using analysis software did remove some of the more tangible and personal interactions that would have come with manual coding.

My coding strategy emerged from the analysis of interview transcriptions and questionnaire responses. As the questionnaires were returned before the main body of interviews took place, the questionnaires were coded first, which set up the strategy for analysing the interviews when they began to join my questionnaires in NVivo around a month later. I settled on two main sets of coding nodes; one set that captured individuals' motivations and one for general themes that became apparent during the analysis. Motivations identified (in decreasing order of prevalence) were: Historical interest, Relationship to working life, Local area, Salvage, Friendships, Expertise, Leisure, Support, Debt (to the community/industry), Voluntarism, and Companionship. Themes comprised a more wide-reaching set of nodes, eventually totalling 37 (including 'child nodes' incorporated under larger parent nodes). Of these nodes the most prominent were (in descending order): Impact of Industry, Heritage, Family, Knowledge, Cornish Culture, Success, Risk, Loss, Future, and Value. Many of these identified themes shape the discussions in subsequent chapters.

Alongside these two main sets of nodes I identified and added other nodes which didn't necessarily 'fit in' to my neat coding schedule. By the end of the coding process, alongside my two main coding sets, I had a node which captured 'emotive language' (i.e. sections that I knew I would likely want to highlight later that conveyed stronger emotions than the average response), and a section of nodes which corresponded to the various institutions that were linked to the china clay industry and governance in Cornwall. Nodes which related to satellite industries, such as shipping and railways, which inevitably appeared in the discussions on china clay were also added. The last two nodes to be added to my already unwieldy coding strategy were ones which designated instances or examples of Practices of Passion and Practices of

Purpose as I began to focus in on these two distinct ways of working, based on Law's modes of ordering (Law 2004).

There were also a handful of interviews that influenced my thoughts, and are referred to in this thesis, that were not included in the coding process. Three of these were with retired clay workers and another was with a former manager of the Wheal Martyn Museum (whose interview influenced much of the discussion in the previous chapter). These interviews were not included in the coding process as I was not the lead interviewer; instead I was invited to sit in on these interviews either with other members of the *Heritage Futures* team (Nadia Bartolini and Antony Lyons) or with members of CCHS.

#### **4.4 Participatory Methods**

As expressed at the beginning of this chapter, qualitative methods such as interviewing and qualitative questionnaires, although often referred to as 'touchy-feely' methods, do not often allow for much 'touching' or 'feeling' in research (Crang 2003). The methods of interviewing and questionnaire surveying described above were entirely appropriate to inform my initial understandings of individual experiences and motivations for participation in heritage-making practices in the Clay Country, but they also lacked in other ways. Interviewing or surveying alone could have provided verbal reasoning for the ways in which heritage is being made, however these methods would not have captured the full picture of *how* heritage is being made through archival and museum practice. To 'excavate the archive' more fully, I combined my interviews and questionnaires with a range of methods, described broadly as participant observation, to uncover the complex configuration of practices,



motivations and relationships that shape the way heritage is continually being assembled and re-assembled in the Clay Country.

#### **4.4.1 Historical Research as Methodology**

The stated aims of this thesis were not to uncover or re-write the history of the china clay industry, at least not in a conventional sense. Although the history of china clay inevitably wove its way into the research, my engagements with the archive were never intended to take the form of traditional archival research. Instead, my archival encounters were part of my 'touchy-feely' (Crang 2003) methodology, as a way of physically sifting through the material traces of the practices that have formed the CCHS archive and continue to shape how heritage is performed in the Clay Country. The historical information contained within the archival materials therefore was not intended to be the central subject of the research, but instead I was interested in searching for traces of practice and order and building a better understanding of the relationships that might emerge between researcher and research materials. As such, the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS archive performed as dynamic spaces of heritage-making and the places where my research was shaped. As I became more embedded in the CCHS archive however, I began to interact more closely with the historical material. It became apparent, quite quickly, that if I was going to be 'messaging around in the archive', as one volunteer once put it, I could at least be doing something useful for the Society. And so, I began to undertake some historical research of my own.

For this purpose, I found Lorimer's (2003) method of telling 'small stories' a useful way of examining the micro in order to produce a commentary on the macro. In Lorimer's example, the letters, diary and field notebook of 14-year-old

Margret Jack, the academic achievements of undergraduate tutor Robin Murray, and the memories of his widowed wife Catriona, enable a more nuanced discussion at the macro scale of the historical practices of teaching and learning geography. Lorimer's 'small story' focuses on messy and incomplete processes, rather than attempting to frame geographic knowledge as a complete 'end product' (Lorimer 2003, 214). For this thesis, small stories of the archive and collecting practices of CCHS and the Wheal Martyn Museum have contributed to the critique of wider discussion of the way heritage is assembled.

In my archival encounters, the exploration of small stories also focused around a landscape feature of the Clay Country called the Blackpool pit. I saw this as an opportunity to primarily understand how the CCHS collections had been collected and assembled in the archive, but also as a way to deepen my own understanding about the china clay landscape and the industry that shaped it.

“\*\*\*\* suggested I returned to my 'research' and apologised that I didn't 'get any useful information' from the [Blackpool oral history] interviews'. I found this amusing because the 'information' I'm interested in is the [heritage-making] process and [these interviews] were first-hand [experience of that process]. Blackpool is obviously more important to them than the social/heritage side (even before the interview \*\*\*\* was excited about a Blackpool project because the pit was so successful in its time”

(Fieldwork Diary 19/10/16)

The Blackpool pit is a prominent but now disused china clay pit. It began as a series of smaller pits during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century which eventually were combined into three larger pits by the 1930s: the Blackpool pit itself, the Great Halviggan pit and Cornish Kaolin, a pit and company of the same name. ECC, in its period of expansion (as detailed in the previous chapter), had acquired The Great Halviggan China Clay Company and Cornish Kaolin between 1927

and 1932. In 1955, after the death of Frank Parkyn, the company became the sole shareholders in Parkyn and Peter's Blackpool, a major competitor to ECC. ECC grew the Blackpool pit in its size and its clay yield, eventually merging it with the Great Halviggan pit and with Cornish Kaolin, as well as several other periphery pits, to become one of the largest china clay pits in the Clay Country. By the 1960s Blackpool covered 60 acres of the Hensbarrow Downs (Barton 1966) and was ECC's flagship pit, with a viewing platform erected to host visiting high ranking guests: including royalty when the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were welcomed during their visit to Cornwall in 1966. At its peak the Blackpool pit was yielding 10 thousand tonnes of china clay per week (pers. comm. Ivor Bowditch). The Society was interested to know more about the early history of the pit, in particular the relationships between landowners, company owners, and ordinary pit workers. I was given a printed list of documents that the Society believed contained information regarding Blackpool and the other pits in the area and I set to work. Each week I would work in the archive to research Blackpool and, in the process, I came to understand not only the history of the Clay Country but also the processes by which its heritage is being assembled today.

"Back working today on the Great Halviggan items. South Halviggan deeds are all housed inside a metal suitcase that is stamped Carrancarow Clay Co. Ltd. There are a few like this in the archive housing deeds (I think), strange contrast to the cardboard filing boxes everything else is in. Inside the folders are pretty much the same brown paper envelopes, although I think not all the documents date to the late 1800s. Interesting to think that the box itself could be considered an artefact, but instead it's being used to store documents"

(Fieldwork Diary 08/11/16)

I spent 18 months conducting weekly visits to the CCHS archive, carrying out my historical research as method of participant observation. Through first-hand

engagement with the archive and museum collection I came to better understand the spatial relationships between the archive and different collections, and the relationships that objects and archives have with those who care for them. In using these collections for historical research, I was able to examine how the archive 'works' (or, invariably, how it sometimes doesn't) and assess what types of value and heritage are being created through the practices involved in the retention of these objects.

Framing archival encounters as method in their own right are rarer than the traditional use of archives as primary sources, however there are some pertinent examples that this thesis draws on. For example, DeSilvey's (2007a;2007b) work in Montana, based around the sorting and ordering of the contents of an abandoned homestead, documented the relationships between place and memory and the sensitive curation of "waste things" (2007, 878). Likewise, DeLyser's (2015) insights into her own collections of Southern Californian "kitsch" souvenirs relating to the novel *Ramona* showed that collecting souvenirs allowed her more fully to understand "the work [the] souvenirs do in the lives of those who purchase them" (DeLyser 2015, 209). Lastly, Gillian Rose (2000) recounted the effects that she and photographs from the Hawarden photography collection had had on each other; firstly, through encounters in the confines of the Victoria and Albert Museum, and then again in her own study, as a way of exploring relationships between the image and the researcher.

Nicholas Thomas has recently proposed a new conceptualisation of 'the museum as method', which Thomas defines as "the activity of knowing in a museum setting" (2016, 101). First introduced in *Museum Anthropology*

(Thomas 2010) and elaborated in his monograph *The Return of Curiosity* (Thomas 2016), the concept of museum as method centres around three central tenants: 'discovery', 'captioning' and 'juxtaposing'.

In 'discovery' the museum, or collection, allows the researcher or curator to find things that unsettle their models and expectations. It is not necessarily about discovering something new, as much of what is discovered in collections is already known about to someone else. 'Captioning', Thomas explains, should be a reflexive practice that is attentive to the words used to describe different objects. For example, Thomas questions why, in multidisciplinary institutions, figurative representations are captioned as sculptures if they are European but captioned as carvings when then they originate from the Pacific Islands or Africa (Thomas 2016, 106). Indeed, Jude Hill (2006) similarly approached this debate in reference to a collection of artefacts originally acquired by Henry Wellcome as ethnographic specimens of early medicine that were then reimaged as art works at UCLA during the 1970s. Finally, Thomas (2016) posits that instead of grouping or ordering objects museums should instead be 'juxtaposing' objects – not in a confrontational sense but in a way that remains open to the potential for risk and tension to arise and questions to be asked.

My own methodology has been one which sought to use my immersion in the CCHS archive and the Wheal Martyn Museum as part of the process of making knowledge, through archival research and my own involvement in the practices undertaken by both institutions. In some ways my methodology corresponds with Thomas' (2016) 'museum as method'. For me, discovery has been about understanding how the collections of the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS are made, maintained and cared for (which has of course meant discovering things

that others in the Clay Country already know and understand). Even my archival research on the Blackpool china clay pit was often conducted through discussions with people who worked in the pit, and people who grew up or still live in the villages which surround it.

On the rare occasion that I did uncover something unknown to the Society I then had to consider how to caption that information: how to write about it about in what context. For me this took the form of articles for the CCHS newsletter (See Appendix D) and a talks evening with the Society, as well as academic research outputs. I have also been attentive to the words used to describe the two collections, questioning how the traditional definitions and understandings of 'museum' and 'archive' have been applied in different collecting contexts in the Clay County, some of which did not neatly fit with the traditional definitions. The final tenant of Thomas' (2016) method, juxtaposition, is especially poignant for my research in exploring the heritage-making practices of CCHS and the Wheal Martyn Museum. The intention, as Thomas (2016) states, is not to look for confrontations, or 'dissonance', but to highlight the similarities and differences within the institutional, and personal practices. In doing so I was able to think critically about the nature of dissonance in heritage, and question how difference can also be a productive and sustaining part of heritage.

#### **4.4.2 Participant Observation: Dual Citizenship**

In order to observe these similarities and differences I needed to immerse myself into the everyday activities carried out in the CCHS archive which led me to the aforementioned participant observation with the Society. The practice of participant observation is an ethnographic method that involves the researcher immersing themselves into the phenomena or culture they wish to better

understand. The researcher engages by actively participating in the community as well as observing and recording behaviours (Laurier 2010).

It has been suggested some of the “best participant observation is generally done by those who have been involved in and tried to do and/or be a part of the things they are observing” (Laurier 2010, 118), although participation alone does not guarantee academic success. Charting one’s progression from the uninitiated beginner to the (at least somewhat) proficient, usually by means of keeping a field diary or similar, is a key part of executing a successful study. These notes often form the basis of the commentary provided on the chosen phenomenon based on your own experiences and from talking to others (Crang and Cook 2007; Laurier 2010).

The transition from a beginner, or ‘outsider’, to an ‘insider’ takes time and, depending on the phenomenon that is being observed, might take months, years or even decades. In some cases, full acceptance might be near impossible. Laurier (2010) notes that, for some (often rural communities), incomers will always be incomers, no matter how long they reside in the community or participate in its customs and events. This dynamic is evident in the clay villages, although I have also observed the status of ‘incomer’ is not necessarily seen as pejorative. The terms insider and outsider, however, are somewhat provocative and, as Crang (2003) states, sometimes over used in research. For this research specifically, they imply a dichotomy that doesn’t necessarily exist within CCHS, whose active members are predominantly very open and welcoming to all those interested in the history of china clay. A subtler distinction exists instead, between ‘visitors’ and ‘volunteers’. Volunteers are exclusively members of CCHS who participate regularly in the Society’s

heritage-making activities, whilst visitors may be members, or they may not. Visitors might also be ex-industry (or not), enthusiasts about china clay (or not) and researchers (or not). Visitors may be just about anything, but they are not volunteers.

During my initial weekly visits to the CCHS archive I found it difficult to explain what the purpose of my visits was, and in what capacity I was visiting in. Later on, once I had been participating for longer, I became simultaneously a researcher – a visitor – and a volunteer; a dual citizen. In carrying out historical research I was able to integrate into CCHS as a volunteer, just as other members volunteer their time to carry out historical research. However, in carrying out interviews with members of the Society, I found myself again in the position of a visiting researcher. As a visitor I was ignorant, needy, and dependant on the Society for information, but as a volunteer I was not exactly knowledgeable but learning, at least, and much more independent in my actions.

My dual citizenship dilemma can be illustrated by a short interaction which took place during November 2017. I had been going to the archive for over a year by this point, but the standard sign in sheet which consisted of simply writing one's name and the time in and out, had recently been replaced with a new sheet, one which required the signee to state whether they were a volunteer or a visitor in the archive. The new sheet was just one element of the archive that had become more formalised over the previous six months, or so, as the staff at the Wheal Martyn Museum had continued to take a more hands-on approach to the day-to-day running of the CCHS archive. This included more careful monitoring of volunteer hours and keeping a record of outside visitors using the



archive for research. I found this new form put me in the awkward position of having to confront the nature of my relationship to the archive and the work that I was doing. To self-identify either as a volunteer or as a visitor to the archive felt unnatural, and so I had fallen into the habit marking my identity on the line between the two. As Michel de Certeau (1984) would say, I had been consciously subverting the authority of this new form by ticking neither box. One morning as I was minding my own business in the archive, one of the CCHS committee members approached me:

“He says to me: “You’re supposed to tick that you’re a visitor!” He takes my wrist and raps it like I’m a badly-behaved child (luckily I know him fairly well by this point and know to take this act as affectionate rather than anything untoward), I reply, “Well I did, but I’ve been ‘visiting’ one day a week now for the past year”, “Oh well... you’re a volunteer then!” he says leaving the room.” So, what am I? Hard to decide, does it matter? Maybe...”

(Fieldwork Diary 15/11/18)

On the one hand I knew that marking myself as visitor would be beneficial, boosting the archives’ visitor numbers, perhaps even counting towards a grant application in the future, but on the other hand as I spent more time in the

|                 |     |       |       |
|-----------------|-----|-------|-------|
| K BONNEY        | ✓   | 09:00 |       |
| IVOR BONDREY    | ✓   | 09:00 |       |
| ARTHUR NORMAN   | ✓   | 09:00 |       |
| Robyn Kerworthy | ✓ ✓ | 09:45 | 11:30 |
| GEOFF BENNETT   |     | 09:50 |       |
| DRIAN PERAP     |     | 10:00 | 11:00 |
| Richard P. ...  | ✓   | 10:15 |       |
|                 |     |       |       |

Figure 4.1 The CCHS sign in sheet. My name anonymously marked as a volunteer (left column) overriding my own tick in between volunteer and visitor (right column). Photo by Author.

archive I had begun to self-identify as a volunteer. I gave talks and attended Christmas dinners; I sent cards and even offered to cat sit once. These didn’t feel like the actions

of a visitor; they implied more than that. I never did completely resolve the quandary, preferring to mark myself as both visitor and volunteer, marking out a place for myself as a dual citizen. By my last week the decision was taken from my hands completely. I returned to sign out of the archive on my last day to find an anonymously placed tick next to my name in the volunteer box, overriding my own inhibitions in the archive and fully identifying me as a volunteer.

Over the 18-month period of participant observation I had slowly achieved 'the knowledge' that took me from the position of beginner to a competent intermediate,

“\*\*\*\* told me to talk to \*\*\*\* about Christmas Park... [began] a short project with \*\*\*\* – showing and telling, print outs from Lanhydrock Atlas, land ownership and detective work on maps, true enthusiasm! Starting my own projects and giving back to CCHS is very fulfilling! Visitor and volunteer dichotomy at work again!”

(Fieldwork Diary 21/03/18)

During one of my later archive sessions with CCHS I was heartily congratulated for referring to a certain clay village by its proper name of, 'St Stephen' unlike, as I was told, many others (even within the Society) who mistakenly say 'St Stephens': the omission of the extra 's' was important. Similarly, I remember feeling a swelling sense of pride when I could finally correctly identify an individual mine from an aerial photograph. To achieve full expert status, however, would have taken years, and without a solid grounding of actual employment in the china clay industry, this status would be practically inconceivable. The time spent dwelling in the CCHS archive, paying close attention to the expertise that surrounded me, meant that I had begun to absorb some of the cultural knowledge needed to progress from visitor to volunteer.

#### 4.4.3 Becoming the Enthusiast

As can be seen from the discussions above, recording my time in and around the CCHS archive and the Wheal Martyn Museum led to much of this discussion taking on an autoethnographic quality. Autoethnography primarily serves to situate a researcher, providing opportunities to critique oneself in a social context as well as a way to tell intimate stories based on personal experiences and insights (Cook and Crang 2007; Holman Jones 2005; Spry 2001). Stacy Holman Jones, sums up autoethnography as,

“Setting a scene, telling a story, weaving intricate connections among life and art, experience and theory, evocation and explanation...and then letting go, hoping for readers who will bring the same careful attention to your words in the context of their own lives”

(Holman Jones 2005, 765)

Autoethnographies capture the ‘tangled and awkward relationships between researchers, their audiences and research participants’ (Crang and Cook, 2007, 166). Unsurprisingly, autoethnography is not without its critics. Pile and Thrift (1995) have commented that a potential consequence of autoethnographic writing is the confusion of the subject and the object of research.

Autoethnographies, they argue, in an attempt to be reflexive may lead to the writer’s own subjectivity becoming the object of research, drawing attention away from the phenomenon they are purportedly studying (Pile and Thrift 1995, 16). In order to mitigate for this possible pitfall, the main purpose of my autoethnography has not been simply to insert my subjectivity into the research in order to reflect on my position in the archive, rather, I my time in the archive reflected how, or indeed if, such a specialist collection could be utilised and understood by a non-specialist,

“Re: the Penderill Church histories - there’s a fever in the mystery, to get to caught up on something so trivial but its exiting wanting to find the missing piece, trying to understand why. Conflicts between [my] own ignorance and the possibility that the archive is wrong/ contradictory”

(Fieldwork Diary 16/11/16)

I captured these thoughts and reflections alongside my historical research in my fieldwork diaries. Mirroring my dual identity as a researcher/visitor and volunteer in the CCHS archive my fieldwork diaries reflected my dual purpose in the archive. In some ways my diaries, through the historical research they contained (often lists of documents consulted and attempts at piecing together the history of the china clay companies involved in china clay extraction from the Blackpool pit), highlighted the breadth of historical knowledge I had accumulated during the 18 months of participant observation. I eventually compiled all the historical research I had carried out for the Society into a large spreadsheet which was later provided to CCHS to enhance their understanding of their collection (see Appendix D (2)); from the research I also produced an article for the tri-annual newsletter (see Appendix D (1)). Alongside these historical notes however, I recorded the goings-on around me as I worked in the archive, as well as my thoughts and feelings about the nature of my archival research against other themes which had emerged from my interviews and from the existing academic literature. Some of these notes complimented the historical research I was undertaking, and my own journey from visitor to volunteer,

“Mike swapped out my OS map for an earlier image of Great Halviggan (as Old Halviggan) for the newsletter article. This for some reason has frustrated me, as I know that using an image from the ‘wrong’ pit and the ‘wrong’ date will likely undermine me with certain members of the group – this is frustrating as I feel I cannot afford to make mistakes as I am trying to ‘prove myself’ as credible within the Society – I fear this will make me seem incompetent or ignorant (I would rather no image than

the 'wrong' image) – I guess will find out when it is published. This cannot be undone as the newsletter has already been sent to the printer when I was notified. Rationally a visual image makes little difference, but I feel strongly about getting this right...Utoh! becoming the enthusiast! I have often joked about this with/about the Society i.e. "the angle of repose is wrong!" etc... but I feel this too! Not out of wanting to do the industry right, but the Society – and wanting to seem less of an outsider and prove that I do know the subject. Very strange – HELP!" (...googling for 'Old Halviggan china clay pit' brings up my own [Heritage Futures] newsletter article which is not helpful to me!")

(Fieldwork Diary 30/01/18)

Others my growing understanding regarding the nature of the archive,

\*\*\*\*'s visit: [they tell me] "Preserving history, turning out the houses of people who are no longer around, [often produces] heaps of photographs. The children are reluctant to throw things away but don't know who [to give them to] so they come to CCHS. [It's a] typical occurrence [people] just show up with photographs."

(Fieldwork Diary 23/11/16)

And still others which noted significant events that happened during the period of my research,

\*\*\*\*'s death was announced today via email from \*\*\*\* [noted 08.11 that he was now seriously ill], I'm touched really to be included in this. I reply – "Dear \*\*\*\*, Thank you for passing on this sad news, he was truly a wonderful man. Although we only knew him for a short while Caitlin, Nadia, Antony and I would like to pass on our condolences and say we are thinking of you all and \*\*\*\*'s family"

(Fieldwork Diary 12/11/16)

My diaries were not, however, conventionally 'coded' alongside my interview and questionnaire data, as discussed previously in this chapter. This was partly a drawback of utilising a computer-based programme such as NVivo, as coding the physical documents was neither practical nor compatible, but also due to the autoethnographic nature of many of my diary entries which did not easily correspond to the coding structure of my interviews and questionnaires.

As my historical research required me to search through the archive boxes I often spent long periods alone in the 'Yellow Room'. It did not take long for me to settle into the rhythm of archive work at CCHS which, despite the collaborative nature of informal heritage-making in this space, volunteers with specific projects tended to work in small groups or alone. As such, I had ample time to reflect on my own practices and interactions with the archival material; I had less time, however, to continually observe the practices of other volunteers. The insights I gleaned from informal conversations over coffee and from shorter periods of observation, either when others joined me in the Yellow Room or when I had cause to work for a morning in one of the adjoining rooms, often fed into the questions I asked participants in interviews; all but one of the individuals I observed working in the archive consented to being interviewed about their practices and working life history. This in turn meant that as my interview data was coded in NVivo, my field observations were also indirectly fed into the overall coding scheme. In other cases, my field notes directly inform the discussions in this thesis, and where this happened I have quoted directly from, or paraphrased my entries, from my field diaries to support the discussion.

My position as a former heritage professional, academic and someone with no prior knowledge of the Clay Country became a useful lens through which to study how the archive of the china clay history is constructed, and the role that insider knowledges play in the longevity of this specialist collection. As I will show in the following chapters, through using ethnographic methods and I am able to tell rich stories about the formation of, and continual process of reformation in, the archive. Additionally, in engaging in an autoethnography in the same space I am also able to ask questions, and hopefully answer some as well, about the ways this archive might perform in the future when the expert

knowledge needed to fully understand the collections is no longer easily accessible.

#### **4.4.4 Co-Production and Conflict**

As highlighted in Chapter 1 this research could not have taken place without the generous support of the Wheal Martyn Trust, and therefore there is a need to reflect briefly here on the nature of this work as informally co-produced. The Wheal Martyn Trust (incorporating the China Clay History Society and the Wheal Martyn Museum) was an official project partner for the wider *Heritage Futures* project, in which this research sits, and CCHS, in particular, played a key role in the discussions that shaped the original PhD studentship that was offered by the University of Exeter in 2014/2015. Even before my involvement in the project there was an element of collaboration with the Wheal Martyn Trust which existed regarding this research.

That collaborative spirit continued throughout the research. My historical research activities in the CCHS archive as part of the 18 months of participant observation were aided and guided by members of the History Society. The reflections and findings contained in this thesis rest as much on my participation in, and observation of, Society activities as they do on the more formal knowledge gathered through the interviewing and questionnaire processes. I am fully indebted to both CCHS and the Wheal Martyn Museum for their assistance and generous participation. Although this thesis reflects the broadly positive experience of my research process, there were also some inevitable conflicts of interest which emerged from my dual position as a researcher and as a volunteer – and an advocate for – the Wheal Martyn Trust.

For example, I often felt uncomfortable noting certain interactions or observations 'informally' in my fieldwork diaries where I felt my privileged position as a History Society volunteer was conflicting with my position as an external researcher. As discussed above I often chose to make a short note of these observations and then follow them up in a more formal capacity through semi-structured interviews. In some cases, however, conversations regarding the differences in practice between the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS revealed potentially sensitive information and differences of opinion. During my observations and in the follow-up interviews I noted these comments in my diaries and transcriptions, but in the presentation of the thesis I have been careful to remove details which could have been potentially harmful to the reputation of the Museum, or to the relationships between Museum staff and certain volunteers. In some cases, interviewees also asked for certain disclosures not to be 'written up' during the interviews themselves, or for quotations to be amended to clarify their meaning after transcription.

It is important to note that any dissonance between Practices of Passion and Practices of Purpose did not always translate to dissonance between individuals. Nevertheless, the inclusion of instances I had noted where dissonance was evident – such as unorthodox collecting or caring practices or questions that were raised over what constituted expert knowledge, and how that knowledge should be communicated – had to be negotiated with the staff and volunteers of the Wheal Martyn Trust. In some cases, I still chose to include these details (for example the quote included on p.283 in Chapter 7). In other cases, mutually agreed amendments were made to omit some details which proved to be extraneous to the research themes, as well as to explore further how dissonance and difference between Passion and Purpose could be



overcome through the Community of Practice within the Wheal Martyn Trust. A further discussion of these conversations is included on page p.348 of Chapter 8.

#### 4.5 A Method That Didn't Make It

In reflecting on some of these stories of archive formation and knowledge sharing I am reminded that sometimes research hits dead ends, or never gets off the ground in the first place. This is what happened with me and 'the book'. 'The book' – *A Study of the China Clay Industry with special reference to Devon and Cornwall* – was given to me as a gift by my husband's uncle soon after I began my research. A fragile handwritten volume encased in a green binding, it was bought at auction in Bristol, transported to West Sussex, posted to Exeter and finally brought back down to Cornwall by me in early 2016.

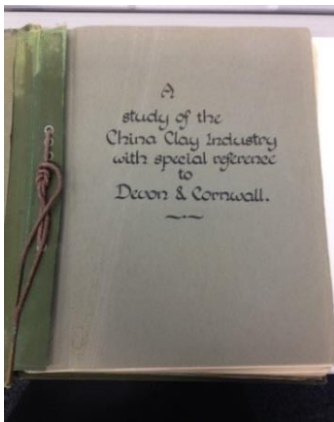


Figure 4.2 (left) 'The book' "A study of the china clay industry with special reference to Devon and Cornwall", by an unknown author. Photo by Author



Figure 4.3 (right) The fragile binding of 'the book'. Photo by Author

After many conversations it seemed 'the book' may date to as early as the 1920s, based on certain maps of Europe that it contained. The book also made use of clippings from other publications, notably David Cock's *A Treatise on China Clay* (1880), and some original photographs. On contacting the auctioneer I learned he purchased 'the book' from an old customer, along with

many other Cornish items and manuscripts. He speculated that ‘the book’ may have come from a sell-off of old dissertations from Durham University in the mid-1990s (although I could not find any record of such a sale), but he could not tell me for sure. The book now resides somewhere with the CCHS archive. I gifted ‘the book’ to the Society and I had hoped to trace the book’s journey through the official archival and acquisitions process; when I asked to see it again some months later, it could not be located. Although ‘the book’ did not allow me to find a formalised way into collecting practices of CCHS, it did shed some light on the accidental and informal ways that objects enter the archive, subverting official procedures and policies. The time I spent in the CCHS archive offered opportunities to embed myself more fully in the heritage-making practices taking place in the Clay Country. Opportunities, such as ‘the book’ sprung up unexpectedly around the research or developed in unintended ways. Another of these was the Blackpool walk, a fruitful, but completely unexpected, line of enquiry that emerged surrounding a walk led around the Blackpool pit during May 2017.

#### **4.6 The Blackpool Walk**

The Blackpool walk was performed in conjunction with my PhD supervisor Professor Caitlin DeSilvey and a Cornwall based contemporary arts and educational charity, the Cornubian Arts and Science Trust, as part of their Groundwork project – combining artistic practices with contemporary cultural life in Cornwall through fieldtrips and workshop events. Caitlin had offered to host one of these events in the Clay Country, focusing on exploring the ‘blank spaces on the map’. This provided the opportunity to enliven the historical archive and share some of the stories that I had been accumulating.

Walking, despite being a seemingly mundane practice, is steeped in deep traditions of philosophy, ethics, recreation and history (See Solnit 2001). As a methodology and as a way of knowing, walking has a strong ethnographic and anthropological pedigree, and as such is commonly used in order to prompt meaningful responses to places through immediate connections to an environment (Evans and Jones 2011; Lee and Ingold 2006; Pink et al. 2010). But walking can also have many other benefits for scholarly enquiry; walking offers corporeal experiences in place which can foster novel and artistic expressions of place-making, belonging, and navigating (see Pink et al. 2010; Wylie 2005). Further, as John Wylie (2005) notes, walking by its nature is multiple; there is not one way of walking, in mode (pacing, strolling, hiking, for example) or in discursive register (protest, pilgrimage, exercise).

The Blackpool walk served as an outlet for much of the historical information I had gathered through participating in the activities of CCHS; The physical pit and the landscape around it became entangled with my ethnographic methods in the archive. In combining the personal experiences of those who had first-hand knowledge of the Blackpool pit and the materials from the archives it was possible to enact the archive, allowing the Blackpool pit itself to become part of the methodology as well as the subject of my archival research.

“The entire area taken up by the Blackpool pit today is smaller than it was during the 1960s and 1970s although much of the south end has actually been “backfilled”. Originally the waste from the pit was tipped to the south side of the pit but that tip has since been removed, the large “hill” watch hill we have walked around is what is left of the waste that has been left by the extraction of clay from the Blackpool pit. The original sand ‘burrow’ used to be very close to the road and many local people complained that on dry days wind would pick up the sand and blow it across into houses and gardens”

(Excerpt from the Blackpool Walk Script 03/05/17)

In a reversal of roles, in this environment and in this company, I was no longer the somewhat ignorant 'visitor' researcher I had been in the archive with members of the History Society. As with becoming a volunteer, in leading the walk I was propelled into a new role, that of a facilitator and tour guide but in this context, I also now had to play the part of 'expert' - a term which I use loosely. I was now responsible for the information that others gleaned about the china clay industry and this environment. In assuming this role, I began to feel strongly about the accuracy of the information I was providing, and fervent in interpreting each individual detail of this pit's past. The earliest drafts of my walk 'script' spilled out of me with historical facts, dates, industry terminology and specifics, entirely inappropriate for my audience of course but too important, I felt, not to include in my narrative. Unwittingly I had transitioned from an interested visitor/volunteer to a passionate enthusiast for china clay history.

#### **4.7 Combining Method with Theory: Writing Ethnographies**

The ethnographic method is not only comprised of work undertaken in the field. The interviews conducted, the participation done, and the observations made are only one half, perhaps less, of the overall process of producing the ethnography. The second and far more challenging part of the process is to write something meaningful about one's experiences, all the while weaving in theoretical perspectives to contextualise the research as a story worth telling (Crang and Cook 2007).

Building on the work of Laurel Richardson, Stacey Holman Jones (2005) proposes six actions and accomplishments which can be applied to ethnographic studies:

- 1) Participation as reciprocity:
- 2) Partiality, reflexivity and citationality as strategy for dialogue (and not 'mastery')
- 3) Dialogue as a space of debate and negotiation
- 4) Personal narrative and storytelling as an obligation to critique
- 5) Evocation and emotion as incitements to action
- 6) Engaged embodiment as a condition for change

(Holman Jones 2005, 773)

These actions and accomplishments, Holman Jones notes, are not static and may change overtime, as they are generated during the writing process rather than prior or outside of it. Furthermore, these actions do not necessarily apply to activities carried out as part of gathering ethnography material. Instead they are in response to processes of writing and making sense of all the messiness; the experiences, stories, practices, hopes, fears, memories, and encounters collected in the field (Holman Jones 2005).

Crang and Cook (2007) have stressed too that, like fieldwork, analysis is a creative process of assembling that often extends into writing. Like Thomas' (2016) practice of captioning in approaching the 'museum as method', ethnographic writing can be seen as a method of communication, but also as a research practice in its own right. As Law (2004) argues methods are implicit in the knowledge created within research. As such I draw on Hayden Lorimer's (2003) method of the 'small story', as discussed previously, to highlight small scale interactions in the archive and museum that speak to the wider academic concerns of the research. I have also employed what Clifford Geertz (1973) termed 'thick description' in order to animate the richness of the collections and the activities performed in the CCHS archive.

#### **4.8 Professional and Amateur Heritage-Making Practices**

One final element of this methodology was that in order to fully understand the ways that heritage-making is approached in the Clay Country I also needed to evaluate the types of activities I was seeing, and participating in. In many ways I had to refocus my gaze, to see improvised amateur activities as valuable heritage-making practices in their own right, rather than as the antithesis of accepted, or correct, professional practices. Part of this refocussing included paying closer attention to the individual motivations that were driving heritage-making practices, rather than the activities themselves. This eventually fed into identifying the two modes of ordering, Passion and Purpose, that I observed in the CCHS archive and the Wheal Martyn Museum.

Collecting, both in professional and amateur capacities, can be an emotionally charged activity, which encompasses far more than just a gathering of things; it is a performance of a specific type of human-object relationships (Macdonald 2011). As such the role that emotion plays is a growing field of enquiry within geographies of museums and heritage, drawing from the work undertaken on emotional geographies. Geoghegan (2013) has sought to highlight how emotion, through the lens of enthusiasm, can be re-characterised as an emotional affiliation that has societal and spatial implications. Her work points to previous studies undertaken which have explored amateur pursuits and passions which include, Crang's (1996) study of re-enactors, DeSilvey's (2003) examination of Scottish allotments owners, and Yarwood and Evans' (2006) paper regarding rare-breed Welsh livestock. Geoghegan's (2013) own study of the Telecommunications Heritage Group looks first to sociology to define enthusiast practices as "a form of organised leisure" (2013, 40), before expanding this definition to include emotional connections to both the object of

interest and the organisation itself, described as a “desire to meet like-minded people and be part of a community” (2013, 42). More recently, DeLyser and Greenstein (2017) have reprised the academic interest in enthusiast communities through an autoethnographic study of motorcycle restoration and close attention to the “emotional labour, material devotion and handicraft skill” (2017, 1) involved in these pursuits. However, Smith and Campbell (2017) have argued that the AHD is sustained by the myth that heritage management is apolitical and as such curation and management are often conceptualised as “politically neutral and technically framed” (Smith and Campbell 2017, 615) meaning that emotional responses to the materials have been frequently downplayed.

The studies noted above, alongside work by Emma Waterton (2014) and her study of more-than-representational and affective encounters with heritage, show how the application of affect in heritage-making highlights a wider trend towards understanding emotional experiences of heritage (also see Crang and Tolia-Kelly 2010). Enthusiasm and a personal connection to heritage, as I will show, have been an important reason why some people choose to become involved in the heritage of china clay. This in essence, underpinned ‘Passion’, as a mode of ordering. I also contend, however, that although emotion is an important element of the way heritage is experienced, these feelings alone should not take prominence in the examination of the individual actions and practices employed by people to shape how heritage is constructed and how it may be encountered by others.

I state this because there are other human-object relationships alongside enthusiasm at play in collecting and curation practices, these relationships in

the Clay Country I would later understand as 'Purpose'. Geoghegan and Hess (2015) have explored the role of the professional and what has been termed 'object-love' (also see MacDonald 2001) describing the intense emotional responses curators sometimes feel for the objects in their care. Object-love in this sense is, what bell hooks (2000, quoted in Geoghegan and Hess 2015, 452) defines as, a "combination of care, commitment, trust, knowledge, responsibility and respect". Professional curators and archivists often learn their profession to a post-graduate level, making them highly skilled individuals, and often heritage professionals undertake additional training to keep up to date with advances in their professions and adhere to high standards of best practice. Object-love, then, differs slightly from sheer enthusiasm, and the connotations of enthusiastic collecting, and is more measured and more nurturing. The 'object-love' experienced by professional museum, archive, and heritage workers is often constrained by professional guidelines, as one curator in Geoghegan and Hess' account stated, "You have to control it in a professional way ... Museum ethical policies are in place" (2015, 458).

In the UK, professional standards (through membership in regulatory bodies), often dictate the way heritage is performed, built, exchanged and experienced – although for the most part private or amateur local collections are spared from these forms of scrutiny and control. Museum professionals, as well as archival and heritage professionals, for the most part ascribe to higher levels of professional standards of behaviour and practice than would be expected from volunteers. These professional standards dictate behaviour and practices and often adhere to recognised schemes (such as the Museums Accreditation Scheme or the Archives Service Accreditation) which set out "nationally-agreed standards, which inspire the confidence of the public and funding and governing



bodies” (ACE 2018), and claim to help “to manage and improve their efficiency and effectiveness through external validation, and by identifying good practice” (National Archives 2018). Oftentimes external organisations, such as funding bodies, also require institutions to adhere to best practice standards in order to access funding or professional training programmes. Difficulties come, however, when the understanding of how official collections should operate within best practice guidelines and formal structures come into contact with unruly collections (and collectors) that resist categorisation and are disinclined to follow the ‘rules’ (see DeSilvey 2007a; 2007b; Lorimer and Philo 2009).

#### **4.8.1 Hybridity of Knowledge and Communities of Practice**

There have been several ways that researchers, in museum contexts, have approached the relationships between amateurs and professionals, as well as the tensions that can sometimes arise in such diverse knowledge-making environments. I will discuss two here briefly, that have fed into my own methodology in the Clay Country and that complement earlier discussions on assemblage and heterogeneity.

The first, explored by Morgan Meyer (2008; 2010), characterises the relationships between heritage professionals and amateur collectors or volunteers as ‘hybrid communities’ (as described by Gibbons et al. 1994).

Hybrid communities are partly influenced by the diffusion of different values and ‘norms’ across different segments of society that when brought together foster new opportunities for communication and the development of common cultures and languages (Gibbons et al. 1994, 37). Within these hybrid communities, different individuals who have, been,

“socialised in different subsystems, disciplines or working environments, but who subsequently learn different styles of thought, modes of behaviour, knowledge and social competence that originally they did not possess”

(Gibbons et al.1994, 37).

Furthermore, Gibbons et al. (1994) highlights that the spaces in which these hybrid communities come together are not always fixed. Instead they can be fluid and temporary spaces of knowledge-making (see Meyer 2008).

Demonstrating the application of these ideas to heritage-making, specifically the museum space, Meyer (2008) has examined the boundaries and partial connections between professional and amateur scientists working at the Luxembourg Museum of Natural History. Meyer identified a difference between professional research scientists at the museum and ‘collaborators’ who work on a voluntary basis and consider their work to be a ‘serious leisure’ pursuit. Meyer (2008) found that whilst the outputs of the professionals and amateurs were almost identical – such as publishing papers, giving talks and presenting posters at conferences – the separate identities are in fact created in relation to distinct temporalities (work and leisure), spatialities (home and museum) and materialities (ownership and loaning), rather than the possession of subject specific knowledge. The result is a blurring of what constitutes fixed identities in the museum and laboratory space.

These ideas relate directly to the Clay Country where many different individuals with different educational and social backgrounds come together to preserve the history of the china clay industry, across different spaces and through different practices of knowledge-making. As I have already discussed, as a researcher I took on a partial identity within the heritage-making spaces of the Wheal Martyn Museum and the CCHS archive, both volunteer and visitor and

both a partial amateur and a partial expert. The duality of my own identity in these spaces has allowed me to further consider other dual and partial identities. In doing so, like Meyer (2008), I was able position myself to show that there are more productive and creative relationships unfolding through heritage-making in the Clay Country, rather than characterising the different types of heritage-making practices as simply dissonant.

A second, and related, way of viewing these hybrid communities has been to draw on Wenger's (1998) concept of Communities of Practice. Communities of Practice are defined as "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015, 1). The three hallmarks of a Community of Practice are the *domain*, the *community* and the *practice*. The *domain* relates to the shared interest that brings the group together, and the implications of commitment to that interest. Second, the *community* refers to the shared experiences of the group and the ways in which a group of individuals help and learn from each other in order to develop their practice. Finally, *practice* is the actions taken by the community to continue to develop the domain:

"A community of practice is not merely a community of interest- people who like certain kinds of movies, for instance. Members of a community of practice are practitioners. They develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems – in short a shared practice"

(Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015, 2)

Inkeri Hakamies (2017) has employed the notion of Communities of Practice to further understand what makes 'museum people', defined as "museum professionals who do 'proper' museum work with museum collections"

(Hakamies 2017, 149). She further differentiates 'museum people' from other employees of the museum, such as guards, based on the fact that work undertaken by 'museum people' in storerooms, offices, and exhibition spaces exists in a separate 'practice-space'. Her study reflects the changing nature of museum work and the expanding professional remit of the curator and concludes that the notion of 'museum people' – who work only with their collections in separate practice-spaces – are now, to a large extent, an imagined community. Hakamies (2017) notes that, despite this, there is still nostalgia for the time when 'real museum people' existed and practiced their profession, and that the idea of 'museum people' contributes highly to the identities of present museum workers.

It is important to note that the definition of a Community of Practice can also be readily applied to volunteer groups, and that Communities of Practice in the culture and heritage sectors very often include volunteers as well as paid staff. It also must be remembered that not all members of a community, amateur or professional, can be defined as participating in a Community of Practice, especially when people are not committed to the same goals (Hakamies 2017). Despite this, highlighting the existence of Communities of Practice can be used as one way to break down the boundaries between professional and amateurs, and paid staff and volunteers in heritage environments (see Hansen and Moussouri 2004; Meyer 2005; 2008) by focusing on the opportunities for co-produced knowledge (Callon 1998 in Meyer 2008).

#### **4.9 Combining Professional Theory with Research Practice.**

Perhaps in light of the ubiquity of these hybridised Communities of Practice that have emerged in the cultural sector, there has been a call within museum

practice, in particular, in recent years to re-examine how practitioners and cultural theorists think about theory and its relation to their professional practices. Nicholas Thomas suggests,

“If it has been taken for granted for several generations that the locus of innovation in disciplines such as anthropology has been “theory,” there is now scope to think differently and to revalue practices that appeared to be, but were actually never, subtheoretical.”

(Thomas 2010, 8)

This research has drawn strength from combining professional and academic literature in relation to heritage, museums and archives. Within an academic, (specifically geographic), context much of the professional theory and practice that influences how archive and museum spaces are kept and ordered has been largely absent (exceptions include, Geoghegan 2010; Geoghegan and Hess 2015; Hetherington 1997; Hill 2006). This body of professional theory however offers many useful insights for the study of museum and archival space when placed in a geographic context. Complimenting and contrasting the research practices undertaken for this thesis with the professional theory that is followed by museum and archival professionals allows for a better understanding of how these spaces are assembled and reassembled over time.

As I have already charted the historical development of museum and archive practice in Chapter 2 and highlighted some of the challenges facing the sector today, I will not discuss museum and archives in detail here. I do however want to highlight one specific element of archival theory which compliments an assemblage approach to collecting and archiving and can be used to explore other practices in museum and archive space: the principal of *respect des fonds*.

*'Respect des fonds'* has guided archival practice over the last two hundred years and remains at the heart of the current profession. It relates to the original order of archival material and the retention of the relationships between the archive materials and the place, person or institution the material came from (Bettington et al. 2008; Cook 1997). Archives, unlike museums, derive most of their meaning through aggregated material relationships; collective information about archival material, and the associations that materials in collections have with one another is paramount (Bettington et al. 2008). In museums, whilst contextual information is deemed important (as additional information and objects may form relationships with other objects they are stored or displayed with), the primary value of an object is often individual. Objects may tell one story in one configuration in the museum but when transferred to another collection, display or gallery objects may take on new meanings and values, as Eilean Hooper-Greenhill notes,

“Decisions made in museums and galleries about how to position material things in the context of others are determined by a number of factors including the existing divisions between objects, the particular curatorial practices at the specific institution, the physical condition of the material object and the interests, enthusiasms, and expertise of the curator in question...the same material object, entering the disciplines of different ensembles of practice would be differently classified”

(Hooper-Greenhill 1992, 6)

This difference between archive and museum collections is often overlooked outside of the archival and museological disciplines, but it has significant implications for the way in which objects are cared for, stored and catalogued professionally. To what extent a collection is deemed a 'museum collection' or 'an archive' may seem arbitrary to the amateur collector, however when professional management is established there are certain practices and

disciplinary differences which have the potential to completely change the way the collection is appraised and ultimately valued. These differences in notions of value are why attention to professional theory is an important element of this research and in considering how different practices in within the CCHS archive and the Wheal Martyn Museum are implicit in the creation of heritage.

#### **4.10 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has highlighted the key methodologies that have been undertaken as part of this research, as well as the theoretical perspectives that have informed the ways I have sought to make sense of the Clay Country and the practices of heritage-making happening within it.

To summarise, my methodology is made up of three distinct qualitative approaches that fall broadly within an ethnographic research approach. Firstly, to gain an overview of the study area and the participants who informed my research, I conducted a broad questionnaire with members of CCHS and volunteers and staff of the Wheal Martyn Museum. The questionnaire gathered large amounts of demographic information about the range of individuals involved in china clay heritage, as well as additional rich qualitative responses regarding shared work histories and engagement with the Museum and the Society.

The second key method was 18 months of sustained participant observation, in which I conducted my own historical research in the archive, between October 2016 and April 2018. This first-hand engagement with the archive allowed for an exploration of the spatial relationships between the Wheal Martyn Museum and the CCHS archive, and the relationships between the collections and those who care for them. Participant observation also led to a sustained involvement with

the Blackpool pit, first through historical research and then through enacting this research by leading walks around the pit and presenting my historical research to CCHS. During this period of participant observation, I also conducted semi structured interviews with 20 individuals made up of volunteers and staff at the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS as well as two participants who manage a small community archive in the china clay port of Charlestown. The information collected from the questionnaires and the interviews were subsequently stored and coded in the qualitative analysis software NVivo. The coding practices that followed helped to identify key themes (including Impact of Industry, Family, Knowledge, Risk, Loss, and Value) that have informed the remaining chapters in this thesis.

I discussed my own hybrid role as both a volunteer and visitor, as a participant observer and researcher in the CCHS archive, and some of the challenges of co-produced research. Complementing my own observations and experiences I discussed differences in professional and amateur practices, and the professional theory that underpins many of these practices. From these observations I introduced how I began to see Practices of Passion and Practices of Purpose as two modes of ordering underpinning the way heritage is assembled in the Clay Country.

Lastly, I discussed ways that hybridity has been explored and embraced within heritage spaces, through Meyers (2008; 2010) studies of partial scientists and blurred boundaries, and Hakamies (2017) use of Communities of Practice to explore the role of 'museum people'. These brief examples highlighted that one of the ways to break down the boundaries between professional and amateurs in heritage environments has been to focus on the opportunities for co-



produced knowledge (Meyer 2008). These additional theoretical understandings of how amateurs and professionals interact feeds into my own observations and experiences. My participant observation, furthermore, complimented the verbal methods of interviews and questionnaires with more intimate and personal examinations of collecting and caring practices and allowed for a touchy-feely (Crang 2003) methodology that actually touched and felt, as well as looked and saw.

# Chapter 5: The Situated Archive

## 5.1 Taskscape

In his 1993 exposition of the temporality of the landscape Tim Ingold argued for the implementation of a 'dwelling perspective' on the landscape, where "landscape is constituted as an enduring record of - and testimony to - the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within it, and in so doing, have left there something of themselves" (Ingold 1993, 152). A dwelling perspective acknowledges the lived experiences, memories, and intuitions of people who inhabit, or dwell in, a landscape over time. For Ingold, the simple act of viewing a landscape is to participate in a shared act of memory. This is not necessarily an act of personal remembrance but instead a present engagement with the landscape as a carrier of practices and experiences from past. The temporality of the landscape, Ingold argues, is not as simple as a mere chronology of passing time. Instead, drawing on Merleau-Ponty (1962), Ingold explores how environment, historicity, and temporality become enmeshed in the processes of relational social lives, a process of dwelling which produces what Ingold terms the 'taskscape' (Ingold 1993, 157). Ingold likens the taskscape to a musical performance. In Ingold's analogy, the taskscape only exists through the practice of its performance. It is not, however, reduced to a formulaic musical score, a prescribed and idealised form of dwelling, which would correlate instead with an overarching notion of 'culture' (Ingold 1993, 161). Landscape and taskscape are, Ingold argues, intertwined: the taskscape is landscape in performance, unseen but constantly interacting (Ingold 1993, 162).

Today in the Clay Country the taskscape, the familiar rhythms of a landscape in performance, is changing; whilst once over 6000 people were directly employed in the industry, employment is gradually declining, although the industry itself remains profitable (Cornwall Council 2012). The mid-Cornwall landscape is transforming in relation to these industrial changes, and with fewer workers and fewer pits remaining operational, heritage is becoming the dominant way many ex-clay workers interact with their former industry. As such, in this chapter I will consider the Clay Country as a place archive (Cresswell 2012). For this purpose, I will approach the collections in the Clay Country in their most expansive sense; as a collective multi-site archive which cuts across multiple scales. This encompasses the material collections that are cared for on a day-to-day basis by CCHS and the Wheal Martyn Museum, as well as the different valuations of the landscape of mid-Cornwall, irrevocably altered by over a century of intensive china clay extraction. I will offer a reading of this place archive as a heterogeneous taskscape (Ingold 1993) in which the china clay industry forms an important element.

This chapter aims to disentangle the different layers of heritage interpretations and value inscriptions which have become embedded in, and layered over, the Clay Country by different actors, both those who have dwelled within the landscape and those who have passed through it as visitors. I also explore themes of community, identity, and pride in conjunction with practices of memory-work and heritage-making. What emerges from these themes is the existence of a distinct Community of Practice (cf. Wenger 1998) which has grown up around china clay scholarship and practices of archiving and collecting. By examining these place-based relationships this chapter shows how heritage-making in the Clay Country cannot be divorced from the

landscape. It also shows the multiple ways that the landscape of the Clay Country has already been engaged with by official heritage-making bodies and residents alike and how, despite dissonances and disagreement, all of these perspectives contribute towards a rich heritage environment. This chapter also provides a spatial context for the practices of heritage-making carried out by CCHS and the Wheal Martyn Museum. I conclude the chapter by examining what the future of the taskscape of china clay may look like as widespread employment in the industry continues to decrease.

In this chapter I draw on the 85 returned questionnaires that were distributed among the members of CCHS between June and September 2016, as well as in-depth interviews with volunteers and staff at CCHS and the Wheal Martyn Museum, and personal reflections from participant observation over 18 months in the Clay Country. For the purposes of analysing the questionnaires, I have classed the postcodes of PL24, 25 and 26 as being 'local' to the Clay Country however it is possible that some residents of TR2 and TR9 would also count themselves as Clay Country locals.

## **5.2 Making Places**

Place and space have been extensively reviewed, interpreted and reinterpreted in the geographic literature (see Creswell 2015; Massey 2005; Tuan 1977) and whilst place and space are not antithetical (indeed both spaces and places can be creative and "constituted through interaction and coexisting heterogeneity" (Massey, 2005, 9)), place is most often characterised as space made meaningful (Cresswell 2015, 6). This conceptualisation of place begins to explain why to some people disused clay pits are not just 'holes in the ground', and huge waste tips are not eyesores. The reading of place also invites

questions about transience, impermanence and to what extent 'landscape scars' can be considered 'cultural tools' (Storm and Olsson 2012).

In Chapter 2 I drew on Cresswell and Hoskins (2008) to highlight the sometimes jarring relationship that exists between fluidity and obduracy in representations of place. On the one hand their study highlights that heritage and memory in place are often supported by the persistence of place (Casey 1987 in Cresswell and Hoskins 2008). Places, in this reading, are therefore implicit in sites of memory. I also highlighted the example of former steel workers in Bavaria (a transitional landscape comparable to the Clay Country) who valued the site of their abandoned and ruined work place as a highly personal site of memory, which many continued to visit often; a crumbling monument to the industry which sustained the region for many years (Meier 2012). As such, through situated and place-specific experiences, heritage and memory are in constant dialogue with everyday life in the present (Orange 2012; Till 2005). The past, present, and future are intermingled, and balancing the needs of all three is a critical part of heritage landscape management (Cocks 2010; Orange 2012). On the other hand, though, place can also be fluid and, as I will show, this is the case in the Clay Country. Places are palimpsests of the past and present and they "are contested, worked and re-worked by people" (Tilley 2006, 7) according to individual needs and circumstances, socially, politically, and economically. Additionally, places, imagined as 'place archives', are the ongoing product of memories and 'counter-memories' composed of things we choose to remember and things which refuse to be forgotten (Cresswell 2012; Houston 2013).

The Clay Country can be viewed through many lenses, and layers of inscription have built up over time, some of which are clearly visible in the present and others which have been obscured over time. In the first part of this chapter, in order to begin unpacking how the heritage of the clay mining region in mid-Cornwall been collected and archived, I will excavate some of these layered inscriptions, revealing multiple, and mutable, valuations of the Clay Country. I then explore how notions of identity, pride, and community come together amongst individuals who give their support to practices that aim to preserve the material remnants of china clay history. In doing so I begin to explore who are the people who care for the collections of the Clay Country? As well as beginning to understand what motivates them to undertake these caring practices, and what makes these collections special to them?

### **5.2.1 Presence and Absence**

The place archive of the Clay Country is made of both presences and absences. China clay, as a modern industry, is still very much present in mid-Cornwall. The historic industry, however, comprising the now defunct English China Clays (ECC) as well as multiple other historic producers, is often seemingly absent. Many of the china clay pits and facilities once owned by these historic producers have been rebranded under the logo of Imerys, the current producers, effectively absenting the former producers from the present landscape. Landscape traces of the activities of the historic industry can be found, however, in the disused or overgrown pits and waste tips, as well as 'dry' buildings (known locally as Linhays), engine houses, and other infrastructural remnants (railway sidings, viaducts etc.). The historic industry can also be found

in the material collections of the Wheal Martyn Museum and the CCHS archive. Many of the volunteers themselves are former china clay workers, with some still active in the modern industry.



Figure 5.1 View of waste tips from the Wheal Martyn Museum. In the foreground a historic tip formed from waste from the nearby Lansalson pit, now covered in willow and rhododendron. In the background are modern landscaped waste tips. Photo by Author



Figure 5.2 (left) Concrete towers of the Blackpool dries rise into the sky over the village of Trewoon. Photo by Author

Figure 5.3 (right) Two disused blue huts on an incline railway track at Carclaze china clay pit, Carluddon. Photo by Author

This place archive is not only made up of china clay, however. There are stories presented, and absented, in this the landscape that were told long before china clay. The prehistoric landscape of this area, for example, despite being largely obscured by china clay extraction, has been immortalised in place and pit names, such as Great Longstone, Lower Ninestones and Hensbarrow (Rhodda 2009). Other traces may also be found on the maps of this landscape. For

example, on the most recent Ordnance Survey map of the Clay Country parish of St Mewan, three curiously positioned tumuli can be seen floating, ghost like, over a waste tip, which itself obscures a natural feature known as Watch Hill. The tumuli have been inaccessibly buried under 200ft of china clay waste for



Figure 5.4 A road to nowhere. The Wheal Martyn pit has replaced the village of Greensplat. Photo © Tony Atkins.

the last forty years, yet their presence is still noted on modern maps. Other histories buried under the china clay tips have not been afforded the same privilege. The village of Halviggan, for example, was clearly visible (in the landscape and on the map)

until the early 1990s but has since been buried under china clay waste, (St Stephen in Brannel Parish Council 1994). A similar fate befell the village of Greensplat, which in the late 1990s was swallowed whole by the Wheal Martyn china clay pit, leaving road signs which point to a village which no longer exists.

### 5.3 Valuing the Landscape

There are many stories, then, that have been told about and through this landscape. Some of these stories have been captured, written down, and have become official 'histories', and others have been long forgotten over time. David Harvey (2008) suggests that the stories communities choose to tell and value as their heritage are intimately connected to identity construction. These stories are made not only by the retention of the past but also how, in the present, they respond to the past through different practices of valuing such as collecting,



artistic interpretations, traditions, and commemorations (Smith and Campbell 2017).

The entanglement of memory and history in place, however, does not automatically mean that a place will become seen as 'heritage'. In order for a place to be designated as heritage, officially or otherwise, the place must also be valued. Fredheim and Khalaf highlight, drawing on de la Torre (2002 in Fredheim and Khalaf 2016), that societies do not conserve what they do not deem as valuable. It has also been shown, however, that heritage value is often contested and is not self-evident, and the language that surrounds heritage valuation, furthermore, is incomplete, frequently incapable of fully capturing these value judgements (Fredheim and Khalaf 2016, 469). It can therefore sometimes be difficult to measure and verbalise community values, although they can often be explored through creative and artistic interventions. In 2008 the Clay Country village of St Dennis hosted WildWorks, an artist led international theatre company, for a period of four months. The outcome of this residency was a community that was engaged with "a process of reflection where the things that are valued about people and place could be expressed" (WildWorks 2008, 1). Although this project had no direct impact on policy in the region it was able to open a space in which people felt comfortable articulating their feelings and hopes for the future and it was hoped that conversations would be on going after conclusion of the project (Penryn Campus Archive Box 3: AC2010-009).

In order to find ways to verbalise heritage value, common languages have been developed to enable 'official' heritage designation to take place. Official heritage designation often terms these valued places as 'assets', and they are assessed

to measure their worth based on predetermined criteria (Cresswell and Hoskins 2008). Gareth Hoskins' (2016) study of value vagaries around California's Malkoff Diggins State Historic Park, shows that ideas about heritage values are often approached either in "formal planning routines and private property law" or by examining "how value is claimed as part local community empowerment strategies" (Hoskins 2016, 303). Hoskins (2016) has argued that at times methods of valuation can be somewhat unpredictable and linked to the political nature of value – as Harvey (2008, 19) tells us heritage itself is always 'interwoven with power dynamics' of society. It should be acknowledged that heritage values can also become attached to difficult, painful and uncomfortable places as well (see Macdonald 2009; Till 2005).

There have been long-standing criticisms, often stemming from critical heritage studies, that heritage preservation should be more attune to mutable meanings and values (see Poullos 2010). In recent years, there has been a renewed call to review the frameworks which purportedly assign value to places or materials of cultural importance, on the basis that these frameworks often cannot adequately deal with change and, as noted above, that inscription measures can often feel somewhat arbitrary (Fredheim and Khalaf 2016; Graham 2002; Hall 1999; Hoskins 2016; Waterton, Smith and Campbell 2006).

One of the most influential heritage-makers today is UNESCO, who produce the World Heritage list against a criterion based on 'outstanding' universal value, which can be either natural or cultural (or both), and into which Cornwall and west Devon's tin and copper mining landscape was accepted in 2006. The region's inclusion was in part due to the immense contribution of its metalliferous mining to worldwide industrial development between 1700 and

1914 and the iconic nature of the engine house as an emblem of this contribution (UNESCO 2018). At a national level in England, The Heritage List, covering all Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks, Gardens and Battlefields, and Protected Wreck Sites is maintained by Historic England and is described as a way of protecting in law the nation's most special places, so they can be enjoyed in the present and for future generations (Historic England 2018a) – a brief search of the list for china clay in Cornwall returns 58 sites in Cornwall (and one in west Devon). Listing is not a straightforward process, however, and currently there are 44 different guides available from Historic England related to the listing and scheduling of buildings, landscapes and ancient monuments (Historic England 2018a).

In order to understand the different layers of value which have been attributed to the Clay Country I will utilise one of Historic England's central frameworks for establishing values, Historic England's '*Conservation Principles*', which aims to group the ways that both heritage professionals and local people attach value to historic places. The *Conservation Principles* have been chosen as they provide a holistic overview of different types of valuation, leaving space for both official heritage designations and more personal and community facing values. The values are:

**Evidential value:** the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.

**Historical value:** the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present - it tends to be illustrative or associative.

**Aesthetic value:** the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

**Communal value:** the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

(*Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* Historic England 2018b)

Over the next two sections I will explore the Clay Country against these four values, untangling the many layers of official and unofficial values in this landscape. In doing so I will show how these valuations are overlapping and are often interlinked.

### **5.3.1 Evidential Value: White Gold**

As discussed in Chapter 2, heritage often has an economic value (eftec 2005; Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge 2000). In heritage management terms, types of heritage that are classed as economic goods are often directly related to a sense of wellbeing in the general population (eftec 2005). Economic in this sense therefore does not always imply a monetary value; however, at its most basic level, the china clay landscape evidences the rise of one of Cornwall's most profitable industries.

In her foreword to Phillip Varcoe's 1978 history of china clay, the once Fowey-based novelist Daphne Du Maurier rails against those who consider the industry to be a 'blight on the countryside'. Instead she characterises the china clay landscape as a living monument to the men who eked out a living among the white peaks (Du Maurier in Varcoe 1978). One of the earliest landscape inscriptions on mid-Cornwall, in relation to china clay, is one of wealth and economic value. China clay brought great wealth to certain individuals in the Clay Country and transformed St Austell, propelling the church town into (for the majority of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) the centre of a global industry. In the foreword of her influential 1966 "*The Cornish China Clay Industry*", R.M Barton describes

the Clay Country as “the land flowing with milk and honey’ (Barton 1966, 12) and indeed, the rivers of the Clay Country did, historically, run milky white. The St Austell ‘white river’ is a key example; polluted by run off from the clay pits. Thousands, if not millions, of tonnes of merchantable clay was lost through leakage, as well as the deliberate dumping of clay waste into the region’s rivers. Despite this, many local families rose to prominence through the clay industry, names which can still be found in and around the towns and villages today; Varcoe, Dyer, Hooper, as well as the more historic names of Stocker and Martyn.

“her great great grandfather was Samuel Dyer who was a clay agent and if you even watched *Stocker’s Copper* they actually sing about ‘like to ride in a car like Sammy Dyer do’ and that’s the Sammy Dyer they’re talking about. He actually got a bit of a bad press [in 1913], because he said he didn’t think the blokes should be there [on strike], they’ve got plenty of money, he was rich enough mind”

(I 11 21/02/2018)

In Chapter 3 we saw that an estimated 170,000,000 tonnes of china clay have been extracted from Devon and Cornwall over the life of the industry representing around £15 billion in market value (Bristow 2006, 1; Thurlow 2001, 3). As the region’s main employer, the china clay industry sustained the local economy for many years (through wages, as well as the subcontracting of auxiliary industries), further increasing the total number of people who found employment through industry. Although direct employment has dipped to around 900 employees, it is estimated that the company annually spends around £28.9 million in Cornwall alone (Varcoe 2016). As was remarked by one clay company director “my role requires me to live and breathe china clay because so much depends on it, jobs, wealth...” (QU-117). Economic values surrounding heritage have been highlighted by Graham, Ashworth and

Tunbridge (2000) as a potential root of dissonance, but economic value here does not necessarily conflict with other strongly held values in the region. Indeed, this is because china clay heritage, in this sense, has not been monetised, or packaged and sold as mass tourism (for the most part). The economic value of china clay is a key part of what makes this heritage valuable to some local residents.

Hoskins and Whitehead (2013), however, remind us that these economically produced places, and the contemporary wealth they bring, almost always have a deferred cost, be it downstream, downwind or “down-time” (2013, 13). The economic value of the landscape, therefore, can clash with other readings of the landscape and the economic value of china clay is off-set for some residents of the Clay Country by the environmental and societal changes that accompanied the industry’s meteoric rise, and its inevitable future decline.

“[he tells me] his concerns about Blackpool breaking loose on the Trewoon side [other have since told me this won’t happen] and would decimate Lanjeth – Hendra [china clay pit] broke loose once and flooded the playing fields [because of] fissures in the rock and built up pressure”

(Fieldwork Diary 11/01/17)

Ken Phillips, a dialect expert hailing from mid-Cornwall, for example won a prize for a piece he wrote on pollution and the Clay Country, but found his

“Mother was very angry: “I don’t know about the Phillippses,” she said, “but we Hawkens would be nowhere without the clay. ’Tis no good to get biggotty while you’ve still got to earn your living”

(Ken Phillips quoted in Trower 2011, 94)

For others the economic gains and environmental concerns were just two parts of the same story,

“After \*\*\*\* Interview: “discussions about the Blackpool Dryer’s being shut down in the 1990s [and] stories about flooding from Blackpool, bad weather and floating Land Rovers by the bridge in Burngullow because of the overflow. [He tells me his] sadness about Blackpool shutting down”

(Fieldwork Diary 20/01/17)

### 5.3.2 Aesthetic Value: Romance and Ruins

From the development of towering waste tips and gigantic pits through extraction, to the more recent reshaping the historic landscape, through profiling of pyramidal tips, forestry, and the recreation of heathland, the modification of china clay landscape was, and still is today, propelled by the china clay industry. The unusual form of the china clay landscape itself is both celebrated and lamented in equal measure. Daphne Du Maurier is often quoted for her views of the china clay landscape, which she describes in a passage of her famous ‘*Vanishing Cornwall*’ as both a ‘strange, almost fantastic beauty’ as well as ‘white, pitted and scarred’ (Du Maurier 1967). R.M Barton (1966, 9) evocatively describes the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century view of the clay tips as “a prospect of distant snows... that serrate the southern horizon”. For many years the dominant tenor of the landscape in the Clay Country was the searing whiteness of fresh clay. More recently, as Imerys have scaled back some of their extractive operations in Cornwall, the unfamiliar lunar landscape of china clay has begun to look terrestrial once more. The formerly pyramidal tips that had long since been ‘benched’, stretched out across the horizon, have grown green with vegetation; in contrast it is often now the flooded pits with their azure and turquoise waters which catch the eye of those venture into the heart of the Clay Country. The flooded pits speak to what Edensor (2005) terms hybridised spaces. In these hybrids, non-human things, often kept at bay or peripheral, move into human made spaces; things become enmeshed and “wrapped around” (Edensor 2005, 319) each other.

Beneath this blue façade however, 150 years of active extraction has been buried and drowned; pumps, pipelines and machinery all lurk decaying below the surface of the pools.



Figure 5.5 Turquoise waters now fill the disused Blackpool china clay pit.  
Photo by Author

Even before the heyday of china clay, the mineral rich landscape of mid-Cornwall had been equated with expressions of the industrial sublime. 18<sup>th</sup> century ‘geotourists’ came from all over Europe to gaze upon the splendour of the Great Carclaze Tin Mine, a substantial open cast tin mine, now largely subsumed by a subsequent clay pit (known as Baal pit, which lies roughly 50 metres from the base of the Carclaze Sky Tip) (Bristow 2015). The activities of these early ‘geotourists’ is perhaps the first incidence of an official valuation of this landscape, not as heritage but as national and international scientific and aesthetic significance.



Unsurprisingly this striking landscape attracted artists as well scientists. In the conference centre of the Wheal Martyn Museum hangs a painting by an unknown artist, depicting a Romantic people-less vista of towering granite cliffs and rolling hills, reminiscent of Albert Bierstadt's lavish depictions of Yosemite Valley and the American west.

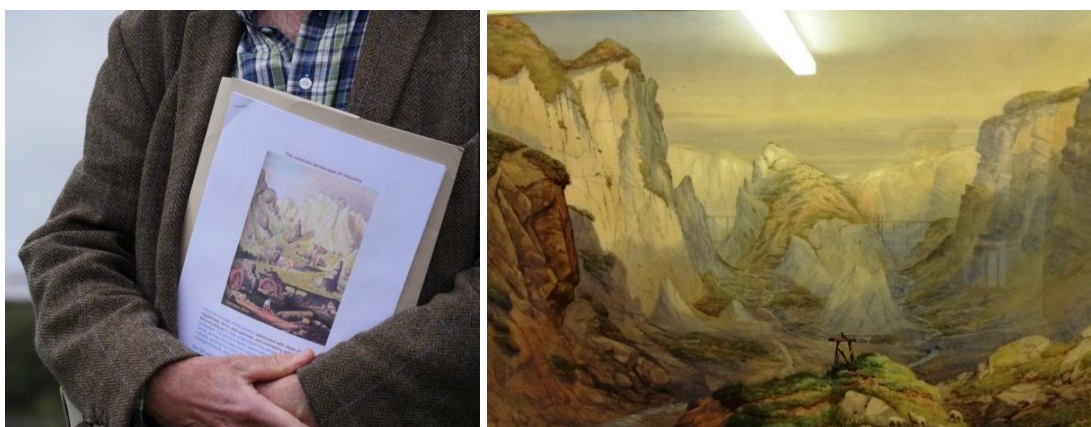


Figure 5.6 (left) The industrial sublime of the Clay Country. Photo © Antony Lyons

Figure 5.7 (right) Painting by unknown artist at the Wheal Martyn Museum. Photo © Antony Lyons

Early artistic depictions of the china clay landscape are somewhat rare but this surviving example of the Romance that was layered over this landscape is striking. Unlike Bierstadt's largely unpeopled 'natural' depictions of landscape, however, many of the early depictions of Carclaze show the busy taskscape of mining, with working waterwheels, wooden leats, and early tin miners labouring in this landscape. Today on what is left of the Great Carclaze Tin Mine a County Geology Site has been set up to protect the historic south face of the former mine (Bristow 2015). The site is also incorporated into a wider Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which covers many of St Austell's clay pits, largely due to the presence of rare Western Rustwort that has colonised in the disused pits. Hoskins and Whitehead (2013, 5) have noted that places of intensive ecological disruption, such as the Clay Country, can be reframed as sites of

“environmental conscience” that temper the celebratory messages of industrial progress. There are instances, however, that disrupt the narratives of environmental depreciation, as when one CCHS member recalled for me, “fixing conveyer belts ... the wind blowing ‘a hoolie’ [and how] the afternoon shifts used to take a flask up to the top and watch the rabbits” (Fieldwork Diary 11/01/17). Industrial legacies can be unexpected, and sometimes, such as in the case of the Western Rustwort, these post-industrial sites can also have surprising, and welcomed, repercussions for biodiversity as the natural environment adapts following change and deindustrialisation (See DeSilvey 2017; DeSilvey and Edensor 2013).

Jesse Harasta (2012) has proposed that there are two narratives that are told over the clay landscape: one of the wonders of technology and the industrial sublime, what he has termed ‘Industrial Triumphantist’, and symbolised in Harasta’s study by the Wheal Martyn Museum, and another which he terms ‘Eco-Restorationist’ that champions the restorative power of nature, capturing a wider imagination of Cornwall as a bucolic refuge. Both of these landscape inscriptions are aesthetic and Romantic in their own way, and indeed somewhat modern creations. The Eco-Restorationist narrative, Harasta argues is championed by the Eden Project, which was built inside a former china clay pit - Boldelva pit. The Eden Project has a strong commitment to post-industrial rejuvenation with the reuse of the site itself ‘demonstrating positive change’, and to ‘show that things can be fixed’, (according to signage dotted around the attraction) by the restorative power of nature. This is a refrain that goes back much further than Eden, to a deeper spirituality in the landscape and a Celtic ‘otherness’ which since the 19<sup>th</sup> century has drawn curious tourists to Cornwall (Emerich 2012; Hale 2001). Phillip Payton (1996) has also highlighted this

nature/industry divide, arguing that the early Celtic revivalists saw little value in the mining landscapes of Cornwall, favouring prehistoric monuments and Celtic crosses to engine houses. Today, however, it is the Cornish engine house and chimney stack which has become the iconic symbol of Cornwall, many of which can be found further west, consolidated on the National Trust's 'Tin Coast' (the West Penwith coastline incorporating the historic Botallack and Levant tin mines) in various states of ruin. Rumbustious (and fictional) characters like Winston Graham's Poldark and Demelza have only added to a Romantic view of the Cornish west.

In contrast, although many of the remnants of the historic china clay industry are still visible in the landscape they are not particularly romanticised by local residents,

“you look through rose tinted spectacles really, its romanticised, how can you romance china clay? I don't know perhaps you can in the ways like “Stocker's Copper” and that respect but I don't know whether there's many Poldark's in china clay?”

(14 03/12/2016)



Figure 5.8 (left) A broken sign hangs from the locked gates at Blackpool pit. Photo by Author.



Figure 5.9 (right) Tyre from a heavy plant vehicle, now filled with water at Littlejohns pit. Photo by Author.

Open cast extraction, by its nature, is a destructive and land intensive practice, therefore many of the historic structures that would have once peppered the Clay Country in the early days of the industry, such as engine and pump houses, have long since been swallowed up by the expanding modern industry. With a few notable exceptions, including the historic china stone works in the Tregargus Valley and the Scheduled Ancient Monument that makes up much of the Wheal Martyn Museum, many of the remaining structures in the Clay Country are modern, made up of corroded metal and crumbling concrete. They include graffiti covered railway sidings, concrete settling tanks, and chain link fences.

These ruins hold a different type of aesthetic, more akin to those sought by urban explorers (Urbex). Urbex is a contemporary practice of exploring forgotten and abandoned spaces in the built environment (Craggs, Geoghegan and Neate 2013; Garret 2010). The artistic expressions which arise from the Urbex movement, in terms of post-industrial exploration are often highly aestheticized and can sometimes be divisive in their portrayals of urban decay and ruination (Strangleman 2013). Arguments against these practices have largely been critical of fetishized depictions of post-industrial ruins that are lacking in historical context. As Tim Strangleman notes, it is not the image itself which is difficult for critics to swallow, instead “what is problematic is the radical disinterest in what these places used to be and the people who once populated them” (Strangleman 2013, 25). Strangleman goes on to argue these artistic interventions could instead be sensitively reframed as a different way of valuing these post-industrial spaces, and that the images produced by Urbex have the potential to open up different interpretations of the past.

### 5.3.3 Historical Value: History and Heritage



Figure 5.10 The Carclaze Sky Tip, also known as The Great Treverbyn Sky Tip with Cornish flag placed by trespassers. Photo © Nadia Bartolini.

As I referenced above, parts of the wider industrial landscape around St Austell have been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), awarded by Natural England (2018), under the collective name of the St Austell Clay pits.

As discussed above, the early

Romance of the Carclaze Tin Mine/Baal pit gave way to a working clay pit and an official scientific valuation, in the form of the County Geological Site status, of a landscape that was in need of protection (in part because the majority of the old tin mine had been subsumed by the later clay pit) (Bristow 2015). More recently, an application for a formal heritage listing for the nearby Carclaze Sky Tip has been unsuccessful. Despite the strong community feeling attached to 'Sky Tip' as a local landmark, it did not meet enough of Historic England's requirements to be conferred with an official designation, although the local value was noted and appreciated in the assessment of the site.

Designation is uneven in the Clay Country. Many of the historic built remnants of early china clay extraction that remain in the region have received some form of protective designation, either through Scheduling or Listing. Although many of these sites were in use for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century their designations mean they are now temporally fixed in the landscape. Even the Wheal Martyn Museum, which has kept the historic china clay works in use as museum

buildings, advertises the core offer of the Museum as the presentation of the Victorian and Edwardian Industry (Interview Clay Works! Project Officer 29/11/2017). The decision to apply for Scheduled Ancient Monument status for the Wheal Martyn Museum was taken, according to one former manager, because there was a fear that during transitional periods in the Museum's management, parts of the site could become neglected. The Wheal Martyn Museum was granted Scheduled Ancient Monument status on the 2nd May 1979 (County Record Number 1066 – updated List Entry Number 1003265).

Although designation often fixes historical remnants in a particular temporality it cannot arrest all changes to their materiality. In the early 2000s the nearby Tregargus Valley was leased by Imerys and Goonvean Ltd (now amalgamated into Imerys) to the Tregargus Trust, a charitable organisation set up to protect the built environment – historic china stone mills – nestled in the valley (Cornwall Council 2011a). Since 1988 the Tregargus Mill complex has been designated a Grade II listed building (List Number 1327465). Much like the clay pits, the industrial ruins of the Tregargus Valley have become hybridised (Edensor 2005). The management of the valley requires attention not only to the physical remains of the industry but also to the natural colonisers of this historic space. Protected and endangered species such as Skylarks and both Greater and Lesser Horseshoe bats, as well as species deemed as invasive and unwanted, Japanese Knotweed and Rhododendron, live among the ruins (Cornwall Council 2011a). The same is true of the Wheal Martyn Museum - which is currently home to roosting Brown Long-eared, Lesser Horseshoe, and Pipistrelle bats, and a sizeable forest of Rhododendron.

#### **5.3.4 Communal Value: 'Clay in my Veins'**

As previously discussed, the modern china clay landscape is somewhat in limbo (DeSilvey and Bartolini forthcoming). As Imerys scales back their china clay extraction in mid-Cornwall, many pits and plants have been left 'resting' and post-operational, but not abandoned and are retained on 'company land'. Over time some of these features have become culturally important landmarks, the Carclaze 'Sky Tip' mentioned above being perhaps the most well-known example. In 2014 a perceived threat to this prominent mound of china clay waste rippled through the local community. It was widely believed by many residents that a proposed Eco-Town (Eco-Bos), (a redevelopment of the landscape and joint proposal between Cornwall Council, Imerys and Orascom Construction Industries), threatened Sky Tip's future survival. This resulted in the emergence of numerous petitions and local news articles (ITV News 2014; Mail Online 2015; St Austell Voice 2014) to 'Save Sky Tip'.

Sky tips, although for all intents and purposes are just giant waste piles, hold a lasting significance for many in the Clay Country. For St Dennis teenagers a rite of passage is to scale the locally christened 'Pointy' and 'Flatty', dual waste tips which loom over the village and important part of St Dennis' community identity and emblazoned on the local primary school uniform. The original ECC logo bore the silhouette of a sky tip and adjacent clay pit. The resulting image, not unlike a reading on an electrocardiogram, may have been an unintentional visual metaphor, but it is fitting; for almost two centuries china clay was the beating heart of the region.



Figure 5.11 (left) Waste tips known as Pointy and Flatty as seen from the village of St Dennis. Photo © Tony Atkins

Figure 5.12 (right) Statue bearing the ECC International logo at the Wheal Martyn Museum. Photo by Author.

As has been highlighted by Orange (2012), and as I will discuss further below, external official evaluations of landscape do not always resonate with local residents. Personal, local, or community values however are often an important part of why people become involved in the protection and preservation of a place. In one interview I conducted with two women involved in the Charlestown village archive, a key motivation for collecting was stated as being ‘the love of Charlestown’ with Charlestown being described as the ‘jewel in the crown [of St Austell]’ (I 1 27/10/2016). Both of these women finance the Charlestown archive from their own pockets. They collect because they care deeply about the place where they live.

China clay was (until recent years), although globally influential, very much an industry local to Cornwall and west Devon, with the majority of staff, including management, hailing from the region. Additionally, a somewhat nepotistic tendency towards management positions being inherited existed until at least the late 1940s, (British Board of Trade 1948), meaning that over time strong family associations with the industry built up. Moreover, employment in the



industry was wide ranging and varied and spread across all levels of society.

Respondents to my questionnaires distributed among CCHS members reported local employment in fields and roles including:

*Chief Geologist; Auditor; Kettle Boy; Taxation Manager; Apprentice; Chief Draughtsman; Chief Engineer; Shipping Agent; Draughtsman: Office Worker; Director; General Manager; Senior Manager; Research; Economics; Transport; Sales; Distribution; Exploration; Lorry Driver; Shift Captain; Captain; Research Physicist; Market Research; Chemist; Water Research; Drainage; Lab Assistant; Environmental Services; Blasting; Production*

Today many people who grew up in the china Clay Country still remember entire villages almost entirely supported by the china clay industry,

“when I got married, 90% of the people, or more, of the men who lived in that village worked in the china clay”

(I 11 21/02/2018)

Naturally, despite the wide spread employment, not all who live in the Clay Country venerate the china clay industry. The extraction of china clay does, to some extent, disembowel the landscape; the pits and tips have (literally) turned mid-Cornwall inside out. An interview referenced by Shelly Trower (2009) with Clay Country resident Joan Vincent revealed a contrasting response to the landscape and associated industry,

“People said you can’t do anything against English China Clays and I said, well you can. You’ve got to stand up and fight...The older generation would never criticise English China Clays...They’ve provided us with jobs and we are quite happy... the middle generations...were beginning to question...The younger generation said, we are not going to tolerate this. We don’t want this mess that we’ve been landed with”

(Joan Vincent quoted in Trower 2009)

Uneasy relationships can also be seen through the writings of Clay Country poet and novelist, Jack Clemo, who had a complex and difficult relationship with

the landscape, partly due to his own perception of himself as a social pariah. Clemo's writing denotes both love and loathing. His poetry and novels often contain strong religious undertones and melancholic sentiments regarding the landscape and the communities who lived there. The first stanza of his poem 'The Flooded Clay Pit' reads,

“These white crags,  
cup waves that rub more greedily,  
now half-way up the chasm;  
you see, doomed foliage hang like rags;  
The whole clay-belly sags.”

(Jack Clemo, The Flooded Clay Pit)

Clema's relationship with the region however went beyond its physical appearance, as for much of his life he was completely blind. For others too, it has been possible to feel a deep affinity to the Clay Country without privileging the physical landscape. This was certainly the case for one questionnaire respondent who emphatically exclaimed, “the heritage of the china clay area is very important - particularly the literary and cultural heritage NOT JUST STUPID CLAY PITS” (QU-214 caps in original).

In this some of the difficult or uneasy relationships represented by different types of values imparted onto this tumultuous landscape can be seen. The Clay Country, as a place archive, contains things that are both 'wanted' and 'unwanted' by different stakeholders in the region. The consolidation of these landscape valuations into a coherent narrative is both an opportunity and challenge and has been met with varying levels of success over the years. The uneven nature of the official designations on this landscape (and the comparisons with other regions of Cornwall) also means that some of these

viewpoints are perhaps given larger platforms to express their views than others. Both the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS champion the role the industry has played in the local area and official heritage designations protect certain features in the landscape. Others, such as the Eden Project, highlight what they see to be the inherent value of the natural environment and strive to remediate the damage done by years of active extraction. There have also been the on-going discussions between Imerys, Cornwall Council and private contractors about how to reuse disused post-operational land, by transforming some of these spaces into 'Eco-Town' developments, providing much needed additional housing for the region. Crucially, all of these different valuations and viewpoints do not play out in isolation from one another; they have become enmeshed, sometimes supporting one another and at other times challenging.

Incorporating all these different viewpoints and relationships to the Clay Country makes for a rich, but messy, heritage assemblage that is characterised by multiple viewpoints and experiences. But do these differences threaten each other, as a traditional dissonance led perspective may suggest, or is something else happening in the Clay Country? Alongside the different heritage-making and value-making practices that are unfolding, this is still very much a dynamic physical landscape undergoing change and transformation in many different ways. This is a landscape which is difficult to fix, and therefore provokes multiple readings and contradictions as it moves forward. Active pits continued to be worked alongside those which are resting, and nature creeps in to reclaim industrial remnants.

It is perhaps because of this ongoing transformation, in the landscape and approaches to managing it, that some (mainly local) people have focused their

efforts on fixing and salvaging other more manageable remnants of the historic china clay industry; tangible records which attest to certain types of landscape values.

“It’s a lunar landscape and we can try and make the most out of it, but, you know, you need people to relate to what was once there. You can look at a map and say that was the road formation that we all drive by, over that edge is a derelict building that once employed 100 people, things like that. People forget very quickly what was in that area.”

(19 07/02/2018)

The discussions that follow sets the scene for the subsequent chapters that will look much closer at the practices undertaken by CCHS and the Wheal Martyn Museum to preserve objects and records relating to the china clay industry and wider landscape. Drawing on questionnaires distributed in the summer of 2016 I explore how identity, pride and community have all influenced individuals to care for and preserve this history of china clay.

#### **5.4 Identity, Pride and Community**

Cornish mining heritage of all types has strong links to community, a sense of identity, and pride. Whilst this has mainly been discussed against a backdrop of Cornish tin and copper mining, (e.g. Cocks 2010; Kennedy and Kingcome 1998; Laviolette and Baird 2011; Orange 2012; Payton 1996) the same observations can be made in relation to the Clay Country and china clay industry. The remainder of this chapter explores further how the existence of communal values around china clay influences the role certain individuals play in heritage-making in the Clay Country. Below I discuss three key facets which exist alongside the activities of the members of CCHS and staff and volunteers at the Wheal Martyn Museum and contribute to the situated nature of the wider china clay archive.

### 5.4.1 Identity

Clay Country identities, naturally, are many and multiple. This research has not sought to capture every identity that presents itself, however there is at least a section of the Clay Country residents who base some of their identity around the clay industry and their connections to this landscape. Identity formation is often a relational and communal practice, often linked to a sense of time, and shared histories that come together to produce a sense of community (Graham and Howard 2008). Hall and du Gay (1996) have posited that to identify one's self is to find a common ground, shared origins, or similarities with another person, group, or ideal. It is important, however, to recognise the fluidity of community values and that heritage can be remade or reframed to suit emerging community identities (Smith 2006). In this respect, an open-ended perspective of heritage can be very useful; values which are held dear today may in twenty years be replaced with different values.

It is tempting to place blame squarely on official heritage designations for the immutable fixing of heritage values, and indeed rigid and often outdated modes of assessing heritage values exacerbate this (Fredheim and Khalaf 2016).

Communities however often subvert official heritage and the authorised heritage discourse (AHD), and express their own interpretations of place and history regardless of intervention by official heritage bodies (Cresswell 2012; Cresswell and Hoskins 2008; Smith 2006, 2007; Waterton 2007). In reality, official designations often mean more to visitors to a landscape than those who dwell within it (Orange 2012). This does not mean people openly reject official heritage designation – designation can be seen as a way of legitimising strongly held local values (Cresswell 2012) – however there is often a disconnect

between official and local values. For example, the UNESCO World Heritage Designation of Cornwall and west Devon's tin and copper mining landscape is a source of great pride for the 'Industrial Triumphant's' (Harasta 2012) of Cornwall; however, there was always immense pride in Cornish mining well before tin and copper was recognised as 'World Heritage'.

In light of these locally held communal values, it is commonplace to hear statements from residents of the Clay Country which place china clay at the heart of a deeper connection to the landscape, incorporating long-standing family connections,

"I'm proud of the heritage of the china clay because my father worked in the china clay industry, my grandfathers – two grandfathers and my great-grandfathers, so I've got china clay going through my blood and the whole"

(I 4 03/12/2016)

There is also an almost corporeal connection being made here too, to family, but also to the industry. As one respondent offered, "my history and life is entwined with the china clay industry" (QU-56), whilst another simply stated, "[I] live and breathe china clay" (QU-117). Living and breathing clay; lives entwined; clay in the blood. It is hard to separate these strong bodily connections from a sense of profound identity and links to not only others in the same community but also the landscape and the clay itself, even if the words are rarely explicitly spoken.

The questionnaire survey I distributed during the summer of 2016 asked respondents to what extent their 'roles' – which included CCHS member, Wheal Martyn volunteer and Wheal Martyn staff member, (although some respondents chose to identify with other roles they associate with china clay) – were a part of

their identity on a scale of one (lowest) to five (highest). The majority of respondents who answered this question answered with a score of 4 or 5 out of 5 (47/71), with 5 being the mode average score (27). Being local to the area (determined as living in postcodes PL24, PL25 or PL26) or being a current or former clay worker also seemed to garner a response of 4 or 5 to this question (see Appendix B), although there are problems with this sort of analysis as the majority of my respondents were both ex-industry and 'local' which may mean that these groups are overrepresented.

For CCHS volunteers in particular, community building based on knowing the identities of others is a key practice that takes place during their weekly meetings at the archive. Community is combined in the archive with the material culture, where collections can act as a tangible stand-in for the more ephemeral concept of identity (Smith 2006, 48). Specifically, there is one practice which is commonplace in the CCHS archive and although it has no official name taking my cues from a phrase which appeared in both my interview transcripts and returned questionnaires, I have termed it as 'telling the tale'. 'Telling the tale' is a discrete form of memory-work prompted by the archival material. This practice usually involves old photographs, but it can be performed around almost any prompt, including maps or physical objects. In the first instance, upon seeing the object or photograph, someone will offer a story or a tale for an audience - usually whoever happens to be around at the time. Every member of the audience then needs to familiarise themselves with the key 'characters' before the story begins, or the tale will have no context. What follows is often a lengthy discussion on the place, pit, or the person at the centre of the tale. If it is a person at the centre, the tale expands to include who their parents or spouses are, and usually where they lived or worked also must be established. Only

once all of the facts of the tale have been established can the story even begin. This type of memory-work is inherently linked to community and identity and is almost impossible for those without the shared memories to fully participate.

““ECC was sociable with organised events, means lots of photographs of social events [and] identifying people in photographs [and the] discussions and memories builds heritage”

(Fieldwork Diary 23/11/16)

I will return again to ‘telling the tale’, in its archival context in the following chapter.

It goes without saying that identities are not one dimensional or indeed even singular (Graham and Howard 2008). All the individuals referred to in this thesis also have multiple facets to their identities and should not be reduced only to their identity as a china clay worker, or museum worker or volunteer. For example, one CCHS member told me how he enjoys motorcycling and goes out with an old work-friend for rides in the local countryside or to bike night in nearby Truro as often as he can. Others have a passion for classic jaguars and are members of the local “Jag’ Club”. The CCHS newsletter editor was, until recently a member of a local brass band, but he gave it up “whilst he [was] still good enough to walk away with pride” (I 6 17/05/2017). Another volunteer, like many in the industry, sang in and competed with the ECC men’s choir, and another was once a competitive company first-aider, representing ECC at contests across the country.

I have highlighted these pursuits to show that being ‘ex-industry’ does not mean that one’s whole identity is in china clay alone. For some, working in the industry gave them the means to pursue other interests and communities. Involvement in brass bands and male voice choirs goes hand in hand with a



wider distinctive mining culture prevalent not just in Cornwall but Wales, northern England, and across northern Europe (Cole 2008; Kennedy and Kingcome 1998; Kift 2013). The volunteer who was once an award winning first aider (a less common pastime to be sure) is proud of his personal achievements and to have competed in the name of ECC at a national level. This was a unique opportunity to showcase the skills of a dynamic and well-equipped work force, as well as to make new friendships. Through this we see that having an identity in china clay or as 'ex-industry' is not just a static moniker. It enmeshes itself with every other aspect of life building up a rich identity of which china clay is just one, albeit a strong and prevailing, part.

#### **5.4.2 Pride**

Secondly, people taking pride in the china clay industry partly why the industrial history of the Clay Country has been recognised and preserved as heritage by interested individuals, even if the landscape itself has been unevenly designated. Another question that was asked as part of the questionnaire survey was whether there was a sense of community attached to individual's roles, and if the respondents felt pride in the collections and archives they support or care for. The returned questionnaires showed pride in the collections as the highest scoring of the three attributes measured by the questionnaires (identity, pride and community), both using the mode average and a mean average (pride returned scores of 5/5 and 4.3/5 respectively). All but 9 respondents (N=72) indicated that their role afforded them a sense of pride and scored the attribute as either 4 or 5 out of 5; no respondents at all rated pride as a score of 1. Even one respondent who claimed not have any role (QU-23)

stated they imagined that, if they did “it would generate a strong...sense of pride”.

It has been shown that a sense of pride can be a key reason why certain people are drawn to some types of heritage preservation (Waterton and Watson 2013). Additionally, local feelings of pride specifically may be a key reason why a place becomes valued as heritage in the first place (Schouten 1995 in Harvey 2010). For some in the Clay Country, the reason to collect and preserve the history of the china clay industry is “so that future generations will know how much the china clay industry meant to mid-Cornwall” (QU-172). Despite this, pride can be a difficult emotion to process through a heritage lens (Smith and Campbell 2017). Pride often has negative connotations, such as arrogance and foolishness; it is important in the context of the Clay Country to also equate pride to emotions of debt and gratitude for the past and the satisfaction of a job well done, or a contribution made to society. Smith and Campbell (2017) have highlighted how pride is often linked to industrial heritage, and it is often not just that proponents of industrial heritage feel pride in the industry they remember, but also that they wish to encourage others to feel pride in it as well. This can be problematic when the industry in question contained elements that would perhaps be unwise to glamorise, but nevertheless this should not be used to undermine individuals’ emotional responses to the past.

Reflections by members of CCHS on time spent working in the pits and plants of the china clay industry are often shared with pride. There are also general reflections shared often on the economic importance of the industry that garner pride, especially due to the location of its head office in the heart of St Austell. ECC was once a FTSE 100 company and, adjusting for inflation, the Cornish

income derived china clay has outperformed both of the counties metalliferous mining industries (Bowditch 2000).

Pride, and a sense of gratification, may also be a reason for the perpetuation of heritage-making practices. The Manager for the Wheal Martyn Museum, has described the sense of pride and delight she feels when visitors come back to the front desk after seeing the Museum and exclaim “Oh my God this is amazing” (Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Manager 20/02/2017) whilst the Museum’s current Project Officer, and Curator both state how they are “constantly amazed” by what the Museum manages to achieve with such a small number of staff. Similarly, at CCHS a pride in the extent of the collection is evident,

“we come over here maybe 18, 20 of us as you know and we’ve all got a particular interest, a lot of [it is] identification of photographs, you think the photographs we’ve got here, I bet there are about 15,000 photographs, at least, 15,000 photographs available for people to look at”

(I 8 27/11/2017)

Perhaps one of the most moving stories of pride in the archive that was told to me was about the acquisition of the collection of the former engineering director of ECC, and a good friend of many members of the Society. He had become ill and suffered a stroke but before he died he had recognised the value of his personal collection and donated it to CCHS to be preserved.

“He actually saw it here, and one of the last things he did before he actually died was to come out here and we wheeled him around and he saw it and you could see the delight on his face, “there goes my material going to be used again”.

(I 3 23/11/2016)

As was seen in Chapter 2, museums, and archives, represent a very particular type of human material relationship; through finding a place for our collections in an official repository we imbue them with a lasting significance (Macdonald 2011, 82).

### **5.4.3 Community**

What we can see building up here is a proud localised community of china clay history strongly linked to place and identity. This community, however, is not exclusive, and a willingness to learn and a genuine interest in china clay history, for the most part, has allowed many, myself included, to become a part of this community.

The china clay history community is very much situated in mid-Cornwall. Although from the questionnaire alone I could not judge how many of my respondents were active members of this society (volunteers/contributors) and how many were passive (newsletter subscribers), just under half of the responses I received were returned by 'local' individuals living in Clay Country postcodes (PL24, PL25 and PL26). Of the remainder, half again of these respondents were 'semi-local' (living within Cornwall and west Devon - see Appendix B), with a final group of 'non-local' respondents giving postcodes from elsewhere in the UK, predominantly from the South of England. From discussing these responses afterwards with the current chairman of CCHS this general breakdown of the geographical spread of membership seems to be an accurate representation of the Society as a whole (see Appendix B).

Whilst it is unlikely that members living away from Cornwall were taking an active role in the development of the Society, not living locally did not appear to preclude members from feeling a strong connection to the Clay Country,

especially those who grew up there or had family links to the industry. One respondent stated,

“I am really only a long distance member of CCHS, but I fully support all they do. I was born in Cornwall and brought up surrounded by mines and china clay works so it’s very much in my blood. I am unable to take part in CCHS activities... I live so far away”

(QU-161)

Another ‘non-local’, although with a history of working in the china clay industry in the 1960s and 1970s, commented that

“I feel strongly that which has been lost through wanton destruction, vandalism and sheer ignorance. Here maybe lies the value of bringing the intrinsic worth of these things to public view, so that unknowingly (maybe) valuable items are not destroyed. It is important to pay credit to the various people who have acquired relics and saved them”

(QU-157)

In both cases there is an admiration for the work that CCHS and the Wheal Martyn Museum carry out, despite neither respondent being able to contribute themselves due to their present distance. Of course, there is a bias in that these respondents are members of a society which is dedicated to promoting the study of china clay history and so would naturally be indebted to more active members of the Society.

Perhaps unsurprisingly a slightly higher number of ‘non-locals’ reported having no personal connections with china clay; for these members the interest in china clay primarily came from an interest in family history or in associated industries such as railways and transportation. The same is true among ‘semi-locals’ although the overwhelming interest among this group of respondents is local history and archaeology. Among ‘local’ respondents however the opposite

is true. All but eight of the 42 'local' respondents claimed a direct connection with the industry, either by virtue of family or through their own working lives.

It is evident that this is a localised history and heritage and personal connections play important roles in this, but this does not mean that 'non-locals' or those with no prior connection to the industry cannot ever become a part of the china clay heritage-making community. For those who have left mid-Cornwall this may be achieved through keeping in touch with the industry or through previous memories and connections to the landscape, as in the case of those passive members who now live away from the industry.

As I mentioned above and discussed in Chapter 4, although I was able to join the china clay history community through engaging with the material collections held in the CCHS archive and at the Wheal Martyn Museum, I often felt like an 'outsider' or as I have termed it, 'visitor', due to my lack of first-hand experience in the industry and not living locally. I am not the only one to have felt this way in relation to clay heritage as was revealed through my questionnaire survey.

Two responses in particular stand out,

"I am not born and bred Cornish; therefore my acceptance hereabouts is naturally limited"

(QU-225)

"I am an incomer. I asked if I could count myself a local after ten years here and they said not a hope me dear."

(QU-121)

In some ways this feeling of being outside is compounded by the way china clay has been written about. Much of the china clay scholarship is written or disseminated either by those who spent long periods of their lives employed in

the industry (e.g. Ivor Bowditch, Colin Bristow, Charles Thurlow, Philip Varcoe) or have spent significant periods of their childhoods or adult lives living in or around the Clay Country (Rita Barton, Jack Clemo, Alan Kent, Daphne Du Maurier and A.L Rowse). Throughout my research into china clay I often questioned my credentials and my upbringing, in coastal Dorset ('ball clay county', incidentally, I was told) – what, I wondered, could I possibly add to this body of knowledge that more experienced members of the Society didn't already know, or hadn't experienced first-hand?

This can be seen to feed into Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge's (2000) notion of heritage dissonance, in particular their appeal to the 'zero-sum' nature of heritage which by belonging to one group of individuals, by nature, cannot belong to another. I have also found however that for local people in the Clay Country with no previous links to the industry, one way that involvement can be achieved is through practice, bridging the gap that is created by describing these differences as dissonance. As I explained in Chapter 4, through practice I eventually overcome my own anxieties. Similarly, the respondents quoted above – who were both quite matter of fact about their 'non-local' status – were revealed to be very active in, and passionate towards, their respective heritage-making practices. Despite feeling like 'incomers' neither had been deterred from committing time and energy into contributing to their local heritage or promoting the benefits of heritage-making practices as something which allows people to contribute. Following the comments above, the same respondents stated:

"I am passionate about historical preservation and truly love my chosen location within the area. 25 years. I hope I have made a difference where locals chose not to be too involved. Incomers may move to carry this project in a different direction, at the moment I am in role of caretaker"

(QU-255)

“The most important feature of all these museums, preservation groups and non-profit-making bodies in general is that they provide a great many people with an environment in which they feel valued and able to contribute.”

(QU-121)

### **5.5 Communities of Practice; Practices of Community**

Different individuals working to preserve the history of the china clay industry, and the landscape, in mid-Cornwall makes for a rich environment where multiple perspectives can be shared. Although this can sometimes result in disagreements, what binds many of these heritage-making practices together is a loose Community of Practice, (Wenger 1998) centred on the collecting, protecting, and researching of china clay history, creating a space in which differences and dissonance can work together. In this framing, dissonance, alongside the insider/outside narratives, can be seen as productive.

A Community of Practice (CoP), to recapitulate, does not just involve communities with similar interests or a shared locale. CoPs are “groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly” (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015, 1). For the CoP of china clay heritage, this includes active members of CCHS who regularly volunteer their time in the CCHS archive and the staff and volunteers at the Wheal Martyn Museum, as well as other members of the local community who work with CCHS and the Wheal Martyn Museum to promote china clay history and heritage through its material culture.

As was shown in the two quotes at the end of the previous section, in the wider community of china clay, (including active and passive members of the China Clay History Society, as well as the local communities of the Clay Country) it



can be difficult for incomers to shake off the perception that they are seen as outsiders. Within the CoP the status of being local or non-local matters less, because the focus is on the history of the industry, not on personal connections to the industry. This doesn't mean that personal connections lose all relevance – indeed they are in many ways crucial to the survival of the CoP based on its current values – but a lack of personal connection does not preclude any individual from joining the CoP and learning from other members.

As I have discussed already, during my first meetings with CCHS in their archive I was very much a visiting researcher, collecting information about the Society and interviewing prominent committee members. It was not until I began to do research in the archive itself, on a historical element – the Blackpool pit – that I began to become accepted into the community at CCHS. This participation alone however was not enough to fully join the CoP of The History Society; I had to also share the same values, to a certain extent (Hakamies 2017). It was not enough to simply research china clay; I had to actually care about china clay as well, which in time I came to do, quite passionately at times to my own surprise.

By the time I had finished my 18-month period of participant observation in the CCHS archive I had led a walk around the Blackpool pit to an outside group and given talks about its history to the Society itself (something I never would have dared to do before), as well as amassed my own sizeable database of information relating to the Blackpool pit. It was only through actively engaging that I was able to fully participate in the CoP.

“[My] talk last Thursday went well, managed to contribute something perhaps, good comments and \*\*\*\* seemed to think there were things that he'd never seen before so that's good. Had a good discussion with \*\*\*\*

who managed Blackpool and [he] told me how they once ‘faked’ an earth work for the HE inspector, as a clay pit/ works had gone through the middle... this was different to Blackpool walk, different audience and expectations, a change in status”

(Fieldwork Diary 21/03/2018)

Additionally, for some regular volunteers, although they have experience of the modern china clay industry, their knowledge or perception of the history has only come from involvement in the Society and the Museum. One volunteer, for example, despite coming from a particularly prominent china clay family, reflected that:

“I think back at the time I thought social history was boring, I’m a scientist basically, but now I think it’s what made this area what it is “

(I 5 27/02/2017)

It is important to highlight however that within the CoP at the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS there are many different sensibilities about what a successful preservation of the history of china clay should look like. The different practices of care sometimes look very different and produce different types of collections, a CoP however they do however share common values. As CCHS is a component part of the Wheal Martyn Museum, the constitutional objectives of CCHS form an important part of the Museum’s overall ambitions to develop their workforce, delight their visitors, and plan for and deliver long-term financial sustainability.

It has been noted that CoPs are one way of minimising the discord between different types of museum practice carried out with differing levels of ‘expertise’ (Høg Hansen and Moussouri 2004; Meyer 2005). Both CCHS members and Wheal Martyn Museum staff should be seen as both amateur and expert – the professional staff at the Wheal Martyn Museum are the experts in terms of

museum standard storage and conservation practice, but the CCHS members are unequivocally the experts in the subject matter of the collections. Both sets of expertise are needed for the Museum and CCHS archive to productively move forward. The following chapters will explore the practices of CCHS and the Wheal Martyn Museum in more detail, and that although the two are in harmony with each other in some aspects of the values underpinning the CoP, in others there are juxtapositions, however as I will show – like the Clay Country itself – multiple understandings are not necessarily dissonant.

### **5.6 Practice Makes Place: Chapter Summary**

The purpose of this chapter was to explore the heritage-based relationships in the Clay Country landscape, as well locating the wider china clay archive in its local context as a situated archive. In doing so I began to answer two key research questions: How has the heritage, both past and present, of the clay mining region in mid-Cornwall been collected and archived? And: Who are the people who care for the collections of the Clay Country and what motivates them to undertake these caring practices - what makes these collections special to them?

Firstly, I reiterated a well-known understanding, that places are meaningful (Creswell 2015). The relationships that are involved in making places often garner powerful emotions and this explains why for some people landscape features, such a china clay waste tip or a water filled pit, are not industrial scars but are instead seen as cultural heritage. Secondly, this chapter has shown that, for many, place and the relationships with place are important parts of forming a shared identity. In turn, this shared identity often contributes to a shared heritage (Graham and Howard 2008). In a place which is physically as

tumultuous as the Clay Country, there are multiple ways in which people, both residents and visitors, relate to the landscape. The inference from the writings of popular advocates for the industry, such as Daphne Du Maurier (1978), is that local people know the true value of this landscape whilst visitors do not appreciate its beauty nor the importance of the industry it represents. This, however, is not always the case. There have been born-and-bred local people who have expressed conflicting feelings about the landscape, (including prominent commentators such as the poet Jack Clemo, as well as people in the towns and villages (see Trower 2009)), just as there are new residents who feel positively and passionately about it.

The dramatic landscape of the Clay Country is in a continual state of transformation; active pits continued to be worked whilst nature is reclaiming pits and tips which have long since become disused. Without the china clay industry there would be no china clay heritage, but as the industry is still active, relationships between the industry's past and present and its associated landscape continue to be in flux, leading to uneven designation and multiple different values attributed to the landscape and the region. I suggest that one of the responses to the fluidity has been for some to pay special attention to the tangible material objects and historic records of the industry that can attest to certain values that have been inscribed on the landscape and can more easily be managed through practices of collecting and preservation. In doing so I begin to explore the roles that strong feelings of identity and pride, combined with a sense of community, plays in the assembling of china clay heritage. Beginning to unpick these more emotional responses to heritage-making starts to show the role of the first mode of ordering I observed in the CCHS archive

and the Wheal Martyn Museum, *Practices of Passion*, which underpins much of the discussion in the following chapter.

This chapter also showed that whilst there are many people who are passive receivers of china clay heritage, and fully support the activities which allow china clay heritage to perpetuate, there is also a distinct Community of Practice (Wenger 1998) that has developed around china clay heritage. The CoP allows locals and non-locals alike to become involved in the preservation of china clay heritage, not through any predefined characteristics such as first-hand experience of the industry (although as we will see in the following chapter this is crucial for the continuation of the CCHS archive in its current form) but through participation in the practices of china clay history and heritage preservation. Although there are differences in individual practices within this CoP, which the following chapters will explore further, overall there is a commitment to a shared belief that china clay history and material culture are worth preserving for the future. These practices are wide and varied and will be explored in the chapters which follow.

Finally, returning now to Ingold's (1993) temporal landscape and the taskscape. As Ingold states, as long as people are engaged in the activities of dwelling, the taskscape can be seen to be continuous. This can further be applied to the activities of those continue to engage with the china clay industry through heritage-making, and even in moving some of the narratives away from china clay extraction and the industry itself, as will be explored further in Chapter 7. Whilst employment in clay mining may be in decline in mid-Cornwall, the activities of dwelling in the landscape of clay mining continue with the activities of collecting and ordering its history to make heritage. In this sense the

taskscape of china clay is ongoing, even if – to use Ingold's (1993, 161)  
metaphor – the rhythm of the music has changed.

## Chapter 6: The Ephemeral Archive

“The power of things inheres in the memories they gather up inside them, and also in the vicissitudes of our imagination, and our memory – of this there is no doubt.”

(Orhan Pamuk *The Museum of Innocence*, page 324)

In the last chapter I approached the collections as situated: The Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS were spatial entities located at the very heart of the Clay Country. I explored how communities and identities shaped by the china clay industry interact with multiple practices of heritage-making and valuing within a place archive (Cresswell 2012) of memory and industry. In this chapter, I will explore the temporality of archival practices, focusing primarily on the collections of CCHS. In addition to continuing to explore how the heritage of mid-Cornwall has been collected and archived, this chapter also examines how ephemeral things can be made durable in moments of change, and addresses what can be saved for the future, and what might be let go. This chapter does not, however, address professional practices or heritage management literature in detail, which will follow in Chapter 7; instead in this chapter I am choosing to focus on enthusiasm and personal connections as motivations for collecting and heritage-making practices. I will examine the effects of moments of loss and transition and, building on discussions in the previous chapter, some of the mutable aspects of community and identity in relation to material culture which has become entangled in this space of heritage. I will also explore these themes in relation to the personal enthusiasms, some of which are transitory and unsustainable, that have shaped the making of this unique archival collection. In doing so I highlight Practices of Passion as a mode of ordering that can be seen in the performance of heritage-making in the Clay Country.

With the decline of employment in the china clay industry, every year there are fewer and fewer local people who have first-hand experiences of china clay, or as one member put it, CCHS “will eventually “run out” of working members” (QU-37). Without these first-hand experiences, it is likely that the CCHS archive will eventually transition into new type of heritage space, where heritage-making practices take on new qualities and motivations – influenced primarily, not by Practices of Passion, but by Practices of Purpose instead. To explore this possible change, I will use Nora’s (1989) discussions of, ‘milieux de mémoire’, ‘real’ environments of memory and ‘lieux de mémoire’ sites of memory. As I will show, however, Nora’s dichotomy alone is not always helpful, or representative of the way heritage-making works in the Clay Country.

### **6.1 Ephemera and the Ephemeral**

“[someone] came across a piece of paper one day that said, ‘on the way out please shut the gate’ and its filed and somebody made a note of it! But ‘please shut the gate!’ Where? When?”

(I 11 21/02/2018)

The term ‘ephemera’ is the plural form of the Greek ‘ephemeron’, meaning ‘around’ (epi) and ‘a day’ (hemera). Ephemera, in the spheres of collecting and archiving, most often refers to the “minor transient documents of everyday life” (Rickards 1988 quoted in Rickards and Twyman 2000). This basic definition however often poorly serves the breadth of material that has come to be deposited as ephemera in museum and archival collections (Rickards and Twyman 2000). Alongside every day ‘minor transient’ documents, such as bus tickets or concert programmes, a researcher of ephemera can find a wide array of written or printed records of the past, some that may actually be of great importance. Like any collection of material, the conundrum that surrounds most



ephemera collections is, in part, how to assign value; such transient items may have considerable value to the one who chooses to preserve them but are readily expendable to everybody else. Additionally, records that may once have been seen as meaningless scraps of paper have the potential to become greatly valuable in the future. In the context of this thesis (following Rickards and Twyman's (2000) descriptions) I have taken ephemera to include potentially valuable material, such as draft copies of letters and legal documents, everyday business correspondence (including letters of notification), receipts for parts or labour, and defunct share certificates, in addition to more mundane items, such as handwritten notes or instructions like the one noted above.

The phrase ephemera also carries with it an association to the ephemeral. Unlike ephemera which is often used in the context of material culture studies, the ephemeral is a more far-reaching concept. In its essence, the ephemeral, like ephemera, relates to that which is fleeting, or short lived; it is, in many ways, the opposite of archival, if we take archival to be the state of keeping in 'perpetuity'.

## **6.2 Salvaged Memories**

The title of this chapter, *The Ephemeral Archive*, playfully alludes to the nature of the archival collections currently cared for by the China Clay History Society with curatorial support from the Wheal Martyn Museum. For all intents and purposes, this is largely a collection of documents that were never intended to survive. Instead, it was salvaged by a group of concerned individuals in the local community. The CCHS archive contains all manner of things – ranging from intricate handwritten minute books and ledgers, calligraphic indentures and 'setts' (leases for the extraction of china clay), to pen and ink scribbles on scrap

paper, defunct share certificates, and inter-office memos – all gleaned from obsolete offices and salvaged from the skip, as described in Chapter 3.

The type of collecting undertaken by the originators of the CCHS archive can broadly be compared with what has become known as salvage or ‘rescue archaeology’. These terms relate to field archaeology carried out on sites under threat of destruction and closely associated with the large increase in the loss of archaeological sites as a result of increased development in the 1960s and 1970s (Darvill 2009). Rescue archaeology is therefore a reactive practice. It is most commonly carried out in cases of building construction, road and rail network development, and mine and quarry exploration but also increasingly in cases where the historic environment is threatened due to natural causes. It is often the case that these instances of salvage or rescue attend almost exclusively to the tangible remains of the built historic environment and archaeological deposits, mediated primarily through policy documents and the practices of cultural heritage management. A side-effect of this focus on built heritage is that often it seems “the transient, ephemeral, and experiential qualities of place are secondary concerns” (Cresswell and Hoskins 2008, 409).

Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks (2001), however, have offered an alternative, phenomenological, interpretation of some archaeological and heritage sites; they advocate for a ‘deep map’ (2001, 158) to encountering such places. In doing so they also propose an alternative way of doing rescue archaeologies that attend to the risk of cultural losses in “places saturated with meaning” (2001, 156). Pearson and Shanks draw on Adorno and Horkheimer to suggest that it is “past hopes” which require redemption not the preservation of the past itself (1979[1941], 148 quoted in Pearson and Shanks 2001, 156).

More recently, Caitlin DeSilvey demonstrated a similar approach by utilising Pearson and Shanks' notion of rescue archaeology to trace "resonant constellations of memory" (2007b, 409) in the discarded and abandoned material remains of a Montana homestead.

The term Salvage itself is of nautical origins, first applied to the rescue of cargo from a burning or sinking ship (Laviolette 2006) but it is often used in a wide variety of contexts to describe the recovery of – often tangible – materials or commodities. It differs from rescue in that salvage implies a methodical process, whilst rescue is often associated with rapid and decisive action. Salvage moreover, has a view to the future; to salvage often means to save material for future use or profit (Merriam-Webster 2018). The founding of the CCHS archive collection in 2000 was a mixture of both rescue and salvage; the physical material itself was rescued, over a reasonably short period of time and with urgency, but what was also salvaged though the rescue was a sense of the immense worth of some of this material to those who chose to save it. Over a period of roughly two years early members of CCHS occupied various rooms in John Keay House, where they "sort of ransacked it from top to bottom" (I 3 23/11/2016). Only after did they begin a process of sorting and lightly appraising the material which had been gathered.

The salvage of wasted or unwanted objects imbues these things with a renewed sense of value. When ephemeral objects are retained in perpetuity a semiotic shift takes place and these objects become re-evaluated as things which are once again meaningful. Michael Thompson's (2017[1979]) Rubbish Theory, as described in Chapter 2, has some application here. The theory is not a perfect analogy for this research and does not capture all of the intricacies of valuing

material culture, but to explain the processes that the original CCHS salvaged collection underwent this is a useful tool to draw upon. At one point every single item in the original CCHS collection, like all ephemera, had a necessary function to perform. This may have been as a record of a meeting, a draft of a document, or a note simply asking for a gate to be shut. Then, at some point, all of these objects ceased to be useful and became peripheral: the subsidiary company went into liquidation, a document was finalised, and the gate was closed (or the note ignored). These peripheral objects, all steadily decreased in perceived value until the decision was made to dispose of them. These objects entering the category of 'rubbish' to be disposed of was the catalyst needed for the founders of CCHS to act, and in doing these objects underwent the transition from rubbish into durable objects of value. Subsequently, these objects were reconfigured in a new coming together of things, people, and industry.

In the words of Walter Benjamin, collecting, (1968, 215 quoted in Parrot 2011) is "the art of living intimately allied with memory". The Imerys takeover of ECC represented a redevelopment of the industry and a new story was being written into the taskscape of china clay. The community which came together to salvage the historical remnants of the 'old industry' were acutely aware that the Imerys takeover represented a moment of change (in the present and for the history of the industry), but also exposed a precariousness in the cultural remembrance of the way things used to be. As Ketelaar (2008, 17) states, the archive is both a place of memory and of mourning. When these objects and records were salvaged from the scrapheap a process of simultaneous valuing and letting go, even if unconsciously, (see DeSilvey 2017) of the old industry began.

Often in rescue archaeology once the historic environment has been surveyed, or in some cases excavated, and the important details noted or removed for permanent retention elsewhere, the transformation of the historic environment is allowed to proceed. Although many acknowledge that the Imerys takeover of ECC was purely a business decision, the destruction of old records, for some, was an unacceptable part of this decision. In order for the present industry to move forward the past industry needed to be surveyed, gathered and, to a certain extent, through this process, let go. As well as the historical knowledge contained within the CCHS archive, part of the value of the salvaged records is that they relate to a company, and an incarnation of the china clay industry, which no longer exists; salvaging these documents remediates the loss of the historic industry, but it also mourns it.

This decisive act of rescue and salvage represents one of the strongest examples of Practices of Passion at work. There was no eventual home for these objects and records in mind, and these archival rescuers had no formal records management training. The overwhelming sense, however, was that these documents were inherently valuable and could not be lost or destroyed, compelled the founding members of CCHS to act.

### **6.3 Modes of Ordering: Practices of Passion**

In previous chapters I have explained how, inspired by Law's (1994; 2003) performative strategies he terms modes of ordering, over the course of my research with CCHS and the Wheal Martyn Museum I began to see two interconnected, although distinctive, practices that were shaping the making and remaking of heritage in the Clay Country. I came to call these two modes of

ordering Practices of Passion and Practices of Purpose, or more simply 'Passion' and 'Purpose'.

There are a number of distinguishing features of Passion and Purpose that I will explore and highlight over this chapter and the next. Purpose encompasses many of the traditional notions of best practice often encountered in museums and archives and will be explored further in Chapter 7. CCHS, through its professional relationships with the Wheal Martyn Museum and other professional heritage-making bodies, is officially managed in line with notions of Purpose. Here, however, I will introduce some of the features of Passion that will reveal themselves over this chapter. Passion, I argue, is guided by strong personal attachments to places and things, and to understand Passion I draw heavily from Hilary Geoghegan's previous work addressing emotional enthusiasm and enthusiast societies (Geoghegan 2013; Craggs, Geoghegan and Neate 2013; 2016). The more I examined heritage-making practices in the Clay Country I came to see that the difference between Passion and Purpose was not necessarily the emotional attachments to collections, but instead it was related to views of, and interactions with, the collections. It is also important to reiterate that Passion and Purpose are ways of performing heritage-making in the Clay Country, and not a reflection of any one individual's actions. As such Practices of Passion and Purpose can be performed by anyone, and often individuals exhibit both Passion and Purpose modes of ordering in their heritage-making activities.

Although all collecting is based on some sort of relationship to loss and risk, Passion, I observed, has a tendency to view collections as things which are more or less 'safe', and will usually appeal to a past risk which has since been

nullified to legitimise actions in the present. As such individuals undertaking Practices of Passion care deeply for collections but do not unduly worry over interacting with them or keeping them in unorthodox spaces, providing the intention is to look after them to the best of their own ability. In a Passion mode of ordering, collections often are intended to be used or enjoyed in the present. Freedom to engage with the objects or heritage they represent is a key part of Passion, and knowledge is often given privilege over material integrity or authenticity.

Passion, however, and as shown already, may also become involved in practices of salvage when an external collection, object or structure is seen to be at risk. Passion is adept at seeing risk outside of its own remit and will act to secure external risks within its own understanding of safety, which may be based more on personal feelings rather than sanctioned or professional methods. Through this desire to see a collection as safe, Passion can be a vocal supporter of practices more commonly associated with Purpose, such as heritage listing and scheduling, although from a Passion perspective these measures are often seen as inalienable ways to secure and protect, sometimes with less thought given to the practical consequences.

#### **6.4 Gains and Losses**

Although the majority of the current CCHS collection stems from the initial salvage/rescue mission, the collection has been augmented in the last fifteen years with donations and bequests from members of the Society and members of the local community and in 2013 CCHS gained a substantial collection of material after the acquisition of Goonvean Ltd by Imerys. This type of Passion-led, ad-hoc collecting – grounded in a fierce respect for the industry – has

resulted in a somewhat unwieldy archive, replete with duplication, reproduced texts and images, and many items devoid of context. In amongst the profusion there are, however, many prized items and photographs, and historical 'gems' that hold lasting significance for the volunteer archivists, as well as for wider scholarship. Many of practices that I have observed in the archive of CCHS often accompany strong personal connections to the china clay industry. They often emerge from a sense of debt or gratitude,

“\*\*\*\* comments he is surprised at how many people don't engage to 'give back to the industry' or to contribute to its memory and history, good work and a good pension [equal] a debt to the industry”

(Fieldwork Diary 07/02/18)

or an unwavering perception that all knowledge about the industry will be as valuable to future generations as it is in the present to some members of CCHS. The profusion in the archive perpetuates due to this perception, and through reluctance to engage in organised appraisal,

“we can't possibly interpret and use all the stuff that we've got here, and my approach is that we take in everything for the benefit of the future...I don't think it's our job to sift everything and throw things out because the range of subjects, the range of interests, that the archive here represents.”

(I 3 26/11/2016)

Cornelius Holtorf (2015) has theorised this position in cultural heritage, that focusses on accumulation and preservation, is one of 'loss aversion'. Additionally, Holtorf has also previously argued for an approach to cultural heritage that focuses more on the work that heritage can do in the present and places less emphasis on the preservation of things for future generations, as there is “little sense in preserving too much that might not be needed in the future” (Holtorf 2007, 130). Although the emphasis in the interview extract



above is primarily commenting on the future, it could be argued that the statement says far more about attitudes towards this material in the present. It is also important to remember certain individual's positions. For example, the first chairman and instigator of the salvage collection is often reluctant to remove items from the archive but without his foresight and enthusiasm for china clay history there would likely be no archive here today. The belief in the future value of the entire historical record signifies an enormous sense of its present value, albeit a type of personal valuing which may not be sustained beyond the present generation.

A feeling of uneasiness with appraising the archive, in the role of its caretaker rather than its original owner, is a theoretical stance within the history of archival theory most commonly attributed to the ideals of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century archivist Sir Hilary Jenkinson, as introduced in Chapter 2. According to Jenkinson, "historical interests take precedence over archival interests in the acquisition of private fonds. Private fonds are acquired and preserved for research or other use by present and future generations" (Fisher 2009, 19). Although Jenkinson's overall position on appraisal is now largely rejected by practicing professional archivists, the question of the archivist's right to appraise is ongoing in archival theory.

Privileging present value, as Holtorf (2007) suggests, over future value, however, is not to suggest that the CCHS archive should not be retained for future generations. Instead, drawing on Holtorf (2007), I advocate for a more nuanced view on how the CCHS archive might be valued, as a place of significant present value and of unknown future value, as I will explore in the following sections. Holtorf (2015) argues, drawing on Daniel Kahneman's

economic theories, that heritage management most often strives for stasis, and that, in general, heritage practitioners prefer to avoid losses over gains of equal value. Furthermore, professional archival practice is perhaps the only form of heritage management that routinely encourages loss (through practices of initial appraisal as well as disposal and reappraisal), in order to strengthen the overall significance of a given collection.

The collections of CCHS, however, have not been subjected to a process of professional appraisal and instead have been imbued with an ostensibly inherent value by many of the present custodians. This situation has created an archive that, although falling short of professional expectations and standards, is richly imbued with personal meanings and connections. The archive covers many personal passions ranging from land management, china clay processing, refining and transport to wider geologies and mineral extraction from all over the world across many different industries. In the last chapter I introduced the practice of ‘telling the tale’ where archive volunteers spontaneously share stories and memories in the relation to photographs and objects from the collection. This type of memory-work, a lively expression of Passion, enriches the CCHS archive and relies first and foremost on individual connections, memories and lived experiences. This is heritage-making at work in the present, and a practice which will not be passed on to future generations, even if the collections themselves are.

#### **6.4.1 Gaining an Archive: The Goonvean Collection**

This chapter contains a series of ‘small stories’ (cf. Lorimer 2003). The first concerns the experiences of one member of CCHS, who currently serves as the Society’s newsletter editor. He was one of the first members of CCHS that I was

introduced to on my first visits to the CCHS archive in 2015. Unlike many of the members of the History Society he is not a former employee of ECC. Instead, following in the footsteps of both his father and grandfather, at the age of 17 he went to work in the laboratories of, what was then, Goonvean and Rostowrack China Clay Company (hereafter referred to as Goonvean), one of ECCs major competitors. Having traced his family history back to 1630 this volunteer is reasonably confident that his family have always been associated with mining in mid-Cornwall, and before china clay his ancestors had strong associations with the local tin mines,

“I know that since the census has started there’s occupations on there, and there’s things like tinner, tin streamer, tin miner and just miner. So there is that sort of aspect about it and I’ve also found some names in the family which connect back to William Cock jnr. who started mining near where I live”

(16 17/05/2017).

Despite the family connections, his decision to take up employment with Goonvean was based on the opportunities afforded to him at the time. He had dropped out of college because his heart wasn’t in the engineering course he had enrolled on and he approached the labour exchange looking for a job – china clay was a natural option for many in the area and “I didn’t like grease and clay was clean dirt”, he told me. At the time Goonvean were advertising for a laboratory assistant, so he applied, although he added “if I was offered a job in ECC’s laboratory I probably would have taken that”. Due to the smaller size of the Goonvean company, as well as his skill and determination, he was able to quickly rise through the ranks and achieve two management positions before the age of 35. He retired from Goonvean in 2006 at the age of 60.

This volunteer has been able to bring considerable expertise to his role within

CCHS where, as well as collating the Society's tri-annual newsletter, he has taken great interest in cataloguing the collection of Goonvean (by then renamed as Goonvean Ltd) material acquired by the History Society in 2013. Due to his working life connections with the company, he was the obvious volunteer to sort and categorise the Goonvean material. He remarked,

"I wanted to do it. I'd done a few ECC ones before, people's collections that had come in and I'd catalogued them but cataloguing them I just catalogued, it didn't mean a lot to me. This one, I worked for that company for 43 years, my father worked for it".

(I 6 17/05/2017)

As in 2000, members of the History Society conducted a rescue/salvage operation for the Goonvean archive, albeit on a much smaller scale. The collection was initially transferred by Imerys to the Drinnick workshops, near the village of Nanpean, before being collected by members of the History Society and brought to the archive,

"It just came in in boxes, and it had just been thrown as if they'd just cleared out the office and they were finding a convenient means of transporting it to the skip, virtually I would think, just chucking it in the boxes"

(I 6 17/05/2017)

The acquisition of Goonvean by Imerys marked a prominent moment in the story of china clay; Goonvean had been one of the last independent china clay companies still in operation in Cornwall and west Devon. Despite the amount of material retrieved from Goonvean (now occupying sixteen boxes at the CCHS archive, separated into various themes), some members of the History Society still keenly feel the absence of certain historical documents, such as the company's minute books. These minute books are rumoured to contain records of historic company decisions as well as a comprehensive overview of other

prominent moments in the company's history, including the sale of the last company horse and its replacement with a tractor. The retirement of company horses may not sound like vitally important records, but for this particular volunteer the company horses have a strong familial resonance. Whilst sorting through the documents he found several references to his own grandfather, who had been employed by the Great Wheal Prosper China Clay Company, which was absorbed into Goonvean and Rostowrack in 1936. Records from that year show his grandfather on contract supplying two horses for the company to haul clay wagons on tracks. As their keeper, the grandfather was recorded to have received the same wage as his two horses, essentially meaning that he took home the equivalent of three persons pay each week, earning him more than the pit captain. This volunteer has supplemented his own knowledge with this new archival information and can relate it to photographs from his own personal collection, including one which shows his grandfather and great uncle driving six horses pulling a steam threshing engine through the streets of a nearby Cornish village. With the outbreak of World War One in 1914, however, the family horses had been requisitioned for the war effort and the family's livelihood was all but lost in the process.



Figure 6.1 Photograph of grandfather and great-uncle driving horses pulling a threshing engine through the village of Bugle c.1912. The lead grey horse ('Peggy') was later requisitioned to the army for service in the First World War. Photo from a personal collection and reproduced with permission.

This story illustrates how Practices of Passion interact with archival enthusiasm. It is a highly personal story and was catalysed through chance encounters. Through the unexpected discovery of a volunteer's own relative in the archive, an already personal connection to this material, the records of his former (and now defunct) employer, added a new layer of meaning to this collection.

This kind of encounter with 'object-love' differs from that which was identified by Hilary Geoghegan and Alison Hess in the storerooms of the London Science Museum, where strong material relationships become enmeshed with professional practice (Geoghegan and Hess 2015). Instead this is a subtler enthusiasm; the thrill or surprise of such a discovery is fleeting, but it feeds into a durable human-material relationship. However, the loss of Goonvean, or ECC, cannot be felt any stronger than by those who had a personal relationship to those companies, just as it is more difficult to feel pride when discovering someone else's grandfather or family members in the archive. The individualised nature of these archival relationships means that they are not readily able to be passed on to the hypothetical future generations who will inherit the collections in the archive; they are limited to the span of a human lifetime, even if the collection itself is enduring.

#### **6.4.2 Losing a Friend**

This chapter began with a quote from Orhan Pamuk's *Museum of Innocence*, a novel and contemporaneous museum dedicated to a fictional relationship, surrounded by themes of loss, death, and love. In the museum – nestled in the heart of Istanbul's Çukurcuma antiques district – and in Pamuk's novel, fiction and real-life collecting are intertwined. The collection, which is part commentary and part art installation, realises a "poetic and documentary representation of

Istanbul culture from 1950 to 2000 through objects of daily use, photographs and motion pictures” (Istanbul ECOC 2010) and includes, photographs of Istanbul during the 1970s and mid-1980s, newspapers and overlooked objects such as bottle caps and cigarette butts. The museum represents real objects in the present that act as a proxy for fictional memories. Here we see the power of things which are imbued with agency through the practice of curation (see Bartolini 2015; Gell 1998; Hetherington 1997).

Collections can provide tangible commemoration in moments of loss or of transition. In exhibiting disparate and found objects from her work on the Montana homestead, DeSilvey observed that the ragtag collection of things “offered a materialisation of moments, small encounters between the materiality of the place and the people who moved around it, looking, touching, finding” (2007a, 895). Similarly to Pamuk’s museum, Leanne Shapton’s (2009) *Important Artifacts and Personal Property from the Collection of Lenore Doolan and Harold Morris, Including Books, Street Fashion, and Jewelry* is a fictitious auction catalogue which charts a fictional relationship between bohemian New York couple Lenore Doolan and Harold Morris. The items from their relationship are displayed to the reader, are assigned a monetary value, and occasionally captioned with ‘personal anecdotes’ from the couple’s failed relationship. The material cultures of the home, in particular, are invested in spaces of emotion, relationship, and experience; they are symbolic of nostalgia for the past, but also reflect present experience and hopes for the future (Blunt and Varley 2004). These fictitious collections of Doolan and Morris, and Pamuk’s museum, epitomise the very real relationships between material culture and memory, and loss. Fiona Parrot (2011, 290) suggests that collecting after loss is “a reaction to the lack of control we ultimately feel” against the arbitrary nature of death.

Drawing on Susan Pearce (1995), she has posited that collecting often provides a framework to help people through periods of instability and transition (Parrot 2011, 294). In these collections, objects and their collectors relate through fleeting moments and intense passions, as well as the sustained layering of memory over extended periods of time.

In a second small story, I will explore gains and losses by focusing on the collection of one of CCHS's founding members who, during my archival research with CCHS, sadly passed away. In accordance with his wishes his extensive personal archive was transferred from his home to the CCHS archive.

“\*\*\*\*’s announcement: \*\*\*\*’s funeral will be held a week on Thursday, 12pm in Truro. [His] archive has been bequeathed to CCHS, [who] will make all efforts to keep the collection together, the word ‘unique’ was used several times. Although his books may stay with the family, \*\*\*\* was happy for the collection to be split up. It needs cataloguing which will be done by CCHS. The Society is indebted to \*\*\*\*, [this is a] collection like no other or anywhere else, and includes a diary of [his] time working at ECC and handwritten interviews with ECC ‘old timers’”

(Fieldwork Diary 16/11/16)



Figure 6.2 (left) Handwritten notes and technical drawings, now in the collections of CCHS. Photo by Author.



Figure 6.3 (right) Index cards, transferred to CCHS. Photo by Author.



He had collected his archive, (which contains the hand-transcribed interviews alongside written accounts and immaculate hand-drawn technical drawings captured in notebooks), over a long period of his employment with ECC. He also had a wonderful turn of phrase and would often refer to his ‘forebears’ who he considered with the utmost respect, he claimed during one conversation that his career was made by ‘standing on the shoulders of giants’.

When he started his collection, he was well aware that many of the ‘old boys’ had rich stories to share of their time in the industry and some could still remember events well into the later 1800s. So, he took it upon himself to collect these stories, mainly through informal interviews, conducted after hours in John Keay House or in the homes of friends and former co-workers, and often added to through chance encounters in hallways. When asked if he considered his collection an archive, he stated he was initially reluctant to term his private works an archive. His mind changed however as he devised an exhaustive card index for his material, catalogued primarily by pit name, and as more local historians and scholars of china clay asked to see his collection. Furthermore, this change of mind highlights the complex interweaving of Practices of Passion with Practices of Purpose – and actions which are, in part, professionally mediated through following ‘best practice’ – explored further in the following chapter.

Over the course of several days in early 2017 members of the CCHS, many of whom were also close friends, transferred his archive from his home box by box in cars to the CCHS archive, a journey of roughly two and a half miles.

“Today is the day when \*\*\*\*’s archive is moving to Tehidy, according to \*\*\*\* (this is why lots of people are not here today), there is heavy traffic in St Austell... \*\*\*\*’s collection is coming in in batches – accompanied by

comments that “they didn’t bring much back!” [it’s] slow progress, carrying on next week”

(Fieldwork Diary 11/01/17)

Rather than being a rescue or salvage operation, this acquisition of materials was a more organic procedure. This meticulously curated archive did not need saving; instead it was an inheritance. In the words of Benjamin,

“Inheritance is the soundest way of acquiring a collection. For a collector’s attitude toward his possessions stems from an owner’s feeling of responsibility towards his property. This it is, in the highest sense, the attitude of an heir, and the most distinguished trait of a collection will always be its transmissibility”

(Benjamin 1968, 66)

Benjamin goes on to caveat this passage by claiming, however, that despite the transmissibility of a collection, “the phenomenon of collecting loses its meaning as it loses its personal owner” (Benjamin 1968, 67). Is this still true, however, of a collection which is transferred to a group of individuals who have similar passions and enthusiasms for the archive material, and a comparable personal connection to the material? Eric Ketelaar (2008, 12) posits that the archive is “never finished” just as history and memory too are never finished. The archive, although it is itself “always in a process of becoming” (Ketelaar 2008, 17) does not have static meanings. As the processes in the archive move forward, meanings change and are remade.

Many in the Society are in awe of this inherited collection, its intricacies and the knowledge it contains. Although the collection becoming part of the CCHS did not soften the loss felt after a friend’s passing, there is a profound gratitude for his bequest. The collection, however, could not continue to be kept in the same manner as it was kept in his home; it needed to become integrated with the

existing collections across the Wheal Martyn Museum and the CCHS archive. This raised questions over the practices currently employed in the CCHS archive, but also, questions around the practices of the archive itself - namely would the collection be split up and distributed among the existing collection or would it be maintained as a separate collection? During one meeting at the Museum I noted the confusion this collection was causing for CCHS and, and the question of how they could ensure that the collection was best cared for,

“[the question was asked] how should it be stored? [Suggested it] shouldn't be touched until a standardised way of working has been implemented across the archive (instead of 'everyone doing their own thing...'). This was agreed... An archive working group has been set up to regulate working in the archive, [they've] had one meeting so far”

(Fieldwork Diary 06/04/17)

Practices of Passion valued the inherited collection for its connections to its former owner and the intense knowledge that accompanies the records and documents. Practices of Purpose, in a similar way, valued the collection's provenance, and therefore carefully considered how to integrate both the original documentation system and the systems in place at CCHS, therefore maintaining the integrity and strength of both collections.

Taken from its original location, the inherited collection underwent a semiotic change. I was fortunate enough to see the collection both in its home location and in the CCHS archive. In the home, and interpreted by its owner, the collection was in a sense unfinished, alive and active. Indeed, in the home materials accumulate and settle within the cadences of domestic life (Ashmore, Craggs and Neate 2012) – “Go into your shed and potter around in there!” one



Figure 6.4 (left) The collection as it was stored in his home office. Photo by Author.



Figure 6.5 (right) Parts of the extensive archive now in the collections of CCHS. Photo by Author.

member quoted his wife, when asked about her response to his extensive personal collection (I 3 23/11/2016).

In the CCHS archive, collections are mediated by a new rhythm. Every Wednesday and Friday morning, when the volunteers meet, the objects and documents are retrieved, examined, sorted, and replaced in a process of cataloguing, recording, and research. The interplay between Passion and Purpose ensures that this inherited collection can be used by other members for new research and evolve and grow as part of the CCHS archive, but the collection will still ultimately retain its provenance and relationship with its previous owner.

“One may inherit a complete collection and it will have a sincere place in one’s own life. But unless it is added to, it remains essentially the collection of the ...person, which in the nature of things has passed into other hands”

(Pearce 1995, 235)

Collections are the product of a personal life but also a tangible marker of passing time (Pearce 1995). Some of the personal collections of members of

CCHS have been amassed over 40 or more years. Often collections that are chosen for permanent retention are characterised as enduring, but that is only the physical materials themselves. The configuration of a collection also includes the collector, and the collector's relationships with the objects, as well as the relationships between objects. When those associations naturally come to an end (see Swanton 2013), space is opened up for new meanings relationships and values to be created in a new heritage assemblage.

“[Volunteer (A)] showed me folders and paper notes to ‘ask my opinion’. They are scribbled notes that [A] found in sorting \*\*\*\*’s collection, but they were written by [A] himself! Should this be preserved? We think probably not, and how they would be preserved is another question entirely...”

(Fieldwork Diary 21/03/2018)

#### **6.4.3 The Loss of an Industry**

Loss and heritage are natural companions, whether this is through the loss of an industry, the loss of a way of life, or the death of an individual. Nora's (1989) explication of 'les lieux de mémoire', although a poignant criticism of historiography and memorialisation (discussed later in this chapter), frames the transition from living memory to memorial as something to be lamented, rather than embraced. The natural progression of 'history' and the necessary creation of new environments of memory often stems from the passing of time and memorialisation of the past.

In Chapter 5 I proposed that the rhythm of the taskscape of china clay is changing. It is difficult, however, to talk about loss in relation to an industry which is still very much active. There is an enduring perception that china clay is in decline, and it is often presented as such in academic literature (for example see Trower 2011). On paper, it is true that china clay is a much smaller industry

than it was during the peak period of the late 1980s. In 1988 ECC produced a record yearly output which has yet to be surpassed - 3,277,000 tonnes of clay. Estimates of the number of personnel employed by ECC during the growth period between 1960 and 1990 vary between 6000 (Cornwall Council 2012; I 11 21/02/2017), 8000 (Hudson 1969) and even up to 13,000 (I 9 07/02/2017). In comparison, in 2016, Imerys produced around 900,000 tonnes of china clay from Cornwall and west Devon per year and employed around 900 personnel. Of the 5000 hectares owned by the company, only around 2000 hectares are currently operational (Varcoe 2016).

From the figures alone, it would appear that china clay is indeed in decline. However, in the words of Phillip Payton “one of the recurring features of Cornish history is for observers to mistake cultural change for cultural extinction” (Payton 1996, 195, also see Laviolette 2003). The modern china clay industry looks and acts very differently to its predecessor; however, decline is perhaps not the right way of framing the transformation of this industry. For some, it is the old ways of china clay have been lost.

“a new exhibition [of photographs] is being put together for Saturday’s Imerys open day at CCHS – it has attracted lots of interest. Overheard comments: “we had it best”, and “all gone now” – a lot of effort has been put into this open day (a recruitment drive maybe?).

(Fieldwork Diary 04/10/17)

This loss is often presented as a loss of “community benefits once available to the area” (QU-239), or a sense that the community of china clay has been irrevocably altered, with some claiming that “the Cornish motto ‘for one and all’ has been lost forever” (QU-82). Echoing the sentiments presented in Chapter 3, in part this has been attributed to a loss of community spirit within the industry, either because of advanced in technologies or because of the current trading

conditions. It is also partially due to a localised perception that past managerial appointments, during the 1990s especially (I 9 07/02/2017), were in the interest in self-promotion of prominent individuals rather than the best interests of the company and the area.

It is common to hear older local people wistfully, and perhaps with a touch of rose-tinted nostalgia, remember ECC for its 'community-spirit' (often before the managerial changes enacted in the early 1990s). As highlighted in Chapter 3, there is a tendency among some groups to frame ECC as the benevolent community centred company, whilst the current producers Imerys are portrayed as more detached and impersonal. A frequent charge levelled against Imerys is the systematic 'fencing off' of the china clay landscape, which includes many resting pits and disused tips. From Imerys' perspective, public safety is at the forefront of these decisions but a growing litigation culture (see Furedi and Bristow 2012) means that more stringent measures are taken to protect Imerys from legal action should the unthinkable happen to a member of the public. The management of the landscape captures many of the tensions between the past and present. No matter how these tensions play out, however, it is clear that there are many personal stories of loss which are related to the industry, and the changes that have happened over the last twenty years, regardless of culpability.

Ever since the collapse of the metalliferous mining industry (which began as early as the 1860s (Deacon 1988 in Hale 2001)) pit and mine closures, redundancies, and a loss of traditional industries have been a common story told across the entirety of Cornwall. This, of course, is not a phenomenon unique only to Cornwall; it is symptomatic of wider departure from the extractive

industries across Europe. After the closure of South Crofty tin mine, the last of its kind in Cornwall in 1998, the communities around Redruth and Camborne in particular were characterised as being in mourning; for their industry, but also for their sense of identity (see Laviolette 2003). Elsewhere in Europe, Lars Meier's (2012) study of industrial loss in Bavaria similarly showed how the site of an abandoned and ruined work place can act as highly personal site of memory; a monument to the industry which sustained the region for many years. Patrick Laviolette has suggested that in the years that followed the closure of South Crofty there was a "form of social denial of tin mining's demise" (2003, 229) and he points to a concerted effort made in the early 2000s to bolster china clay as Cornwall's last extractive industry.

Reflecting on the closure of the Blackpool pit in 2007, ECC's (and later Imerys's) flagship china clay pit, one former clay worker, lamented,

"I even rung up the local radio station and asked to play a record... I said to me mates, I'm going to ask for "Engelbert Humperdinck – Please Release Me", because it was that bad just waiting for, I was day shift on that day so we left about 7 o'clock and then the night shift... just pressed the button and run down the pit and the refiner and that was that."

(I 2 16/11/2016)

One volunteer I spoke to, a respected engineering foreman who started work with ECC (as ECLP) at the age of 14, ended up working as a handyman at a children's home after he was made redundant in the early 1990s. Another reflected that being made redundant from his post was a particularly shocking and traumatic time in his life. These situations, however, don't diminish the respect for the industry felt by these men. As one remarked to me,



“I always think about that first part of my life, because that was perhaps the best working years that we had”

(I 10 14/02/2018)

Experiences of loss have not deterred these former employees from collecting and caring for the remnants of the historic industry. One former clay worker suggested that one of the contributing factors in his interest in joining CCHS was a desire to hold on to china clay. He said,

“I was born and brought up in Nanpean, which is right in the heart of the china clay industry, so china clay is the only thing I’ve ever known really and I just don’t want to let it go”

(I 2 16/11/2016).

Similarly, Roger Fogg (who himself has strong links to the industry) and Adrian Brown’s (2011) *Cornwall's China Clay Country* an evocative and beautifully illustrated account of the china clay area, was written in an attempt to reawaken a fading past. Following the authors’ walks and drives around the region, historic and modern photographs come together, interpreting the landscape for visitors but also reviving the past for local people. Strangleman (2013) draws on the work of Bridget Fowler, to suggest that such “images and other ephemera may therefore be one of the few ways to connect to something so recently lost” (Strangleman 2013, 29) and that creative engagements with de-industrial landscapes might function as a form of “obituary”, as a selective form of memory-making and valuing after death (Fowler 2007, 8 quoted in Strangleman 2013, 29). Strangleman points to instances of laid-off workers collecting the detritus of their former, demolished, work places: bricks and stones taken in return for years of service. The collecting of physical mementos of a building is not that dissimilar to the Passion-led salvage of photographs and surplus documents, as practiced by CCHS during the Imerys takeover of ECC. The

materials gathered provide a personal and tangible link to an otherwise intangible past (Strangleman 2013; Cresswell 2012; Miller 2009).

### **6.5 Between Memory and History Revisited.**

Borrowing from Pierre Nora's (1989) *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire*, these next sections explore the interplay between perpetuity, in the form of history, and the ephemeral, in the form of memory, in the CCHS archive. As shown in Chapter 2 Nora's (1989) extreme dichotomy of history and memory becomes blurred in places like the CCHS archive, this is a place of intense memory (for now at least) but also a place which is dedicated to capturing the history of an industry.

“[there was] a disagreement during the tea break about a photograph of mica dry's/linhays at Wheal Martyn. There are about five or six people all involved in debating this photograph [and] whether the clay could have been dropped into the dry's or not [based on how it is shown in the photographs]. [There are some] arguments claiming that the roof line has been changed, and over the size of a brick to gauge the height.”

(Fieldwork Diary 30/11/16)

Nora's terms have been useful tools to think about the way heritage has been made in the Clay County because, as explored in the previous chapter, memory and history are so entwined in this landscape. As employment in the china clay industry and the taskscape of china clay extraction changes in the Clay Country however it could be argued that the 'real' environment of memory that exists in the Clay Country and in the CCHS archive could give way to a site of memory, that memorialises china clay rather than actively remembers the industry's past first-hand.

The lines between history and memory are further blurred in the Clay Country as the majority of the histories of china clay have been written from those with

personal memories and connections to this landscape and industry. Prominent examples include Phillip Varcoe's (1978) *China Clay: The Early Years*, an early history of the industry told partially through the history of the Varcoe family, and Marshall Arthur's (1995) *The Autobiography of a China Clay Worker*. Similarly, Charles Thurlow's multiple publications on the methods of china clay extraction (1990; 2001; 2007) draw on his own knowledge of china clay as a manager in the industry during the 1990s. Of the few publications which do not draw on these personal relationships, R.M Barton's (1966) "*The Cornish China Clay Industry*", is widely regarded as the most comprehensive history of all the texts written on china clay in the last 50 years. Conversely Kenneth Hudson's (1969) "*The History of English China Clays*", despite the authorship of a professional historian, does not enjoy such a prestigious reputation among some of the more active members of the History Society. Personal memory is not a prerequisite of china clay scholarship, as previous discussions regarding Communities of Practice in the Clay Country have shown, but whilst many local people retain personal relationships to china clay it is unsurprising that a large proportion of the written histories have been conducted by those who know china clay so intimately.

### **6.5.1 Suspect Histories**

"Remembering what I spoke to \*\*\*\* about last week...to be wary of the Penderill-Church 'histories' [he had a] tendency to make things up to fit into the story ...."

(Fieldwork Diary 22/02/17)

A curious wrinkle in the CCHS archive, which warrants a brief discussion here is the collection of one of ECC's own 'in house' historians, a curious figure by the name of John Penderill-Church. Penderill-Church variously describes himself

throughout his small collection (contained in CCHS Box 266), as a historical consultant, lecturer on mining history, technical writer, and company historian. The box largely contains printed paper booklets and typewritten papers on various topics such as "*The China Clay Industry and its Industrial Relations*" (CCHS 266/1/18), "*The Clay Pits of Devon and Cornwall*" (CCHS 266/2/5), or "*A short history of the uses of china clay: from ancient China to the present day*" (CCHS 266/5/1). Penderill-Church was prominent in the industry during the 1970s and 1980s but is one of the most unreliable sources of information available to the china clay researcher. Any use of the information compiled by Penderill-Church is usually accompanied by a warning or proviso from the regular CCHS volunteers, (many of whom knew him professionally), that his 'facts' about the industry should be taken with a 'pinch of salt' and it is said that there are elements of his work which are completely fabricated. This raises more questions than can be answered, but the central question is what is the value of such a history? It shows that first-hand working knowledge of china clay, or even 'real' memory does not always guarantee accurate information or, perhaps more importantly, acceptance and respect in the present. The information contained within Penderill-Church's extensive archive can be a useful foundation, although very little of it would be classed as a primary source and much of the information is inadequately referenced. If nothing else this is an important record of the way the history of ECC was espoused after the publication of Kenneth Hudson's 1969 *The History of English China Clays*. Although there is no indication whether this information was actively encouraged or officially sanctioned by the company, as some of the work was published under ECC's letterhead however there must have been at least some degree of ratification by the company. One can't help wondering, however, if

such a questionable collection of material from 'outside' of the industry would have been afforded the same honour of perpetual preservation and a place in the archive?

### **6.5.2 'Real' Environments of Memory?**

It could be argued that, following Nora's (1989, 13) claim that, "as traditional memory disappears, we feel obliged assiduously to collect remains, testimonies, documents, images, speeches, any visible signs of what has been" does have some relevance for CCHS. Before the takeover of ECC by Imerys there was no need for a China Clay History Society (although the concept of such a society had previously occurred to some of the founding members). The Wheal Martyn Museum told the story of china clay and existed to educate local people and visitors about the importance and scope of the industry, but it had, at that time, often struggled to both collect and present knowledge and experiences of the industry, and to engage local people. It was not however until that the material record of the history of china clay was threatened by the Imerys takeover that the need for a history society became apparent. The salvage of ECC documents by CCHS highlights that Nora's (1989) wider discussion of the replacement of 'real environments of memory' with 'sites of memory' does not always follow in the Clay Country, as 'real memories' were not erased by the takeover ECC or by the salvage of these records. The parameters of the environment of memory just shifted just as ECC had been transferred to the past as part of the takeover.

Additionally, the Imerys takeover may have been a catalyst for the creation of a more formal collection, but personal collecting related to the industry predated the formation of the History Society, in some cases by decades. Many of the

original members of the Society had “squirreled things away” (some continue to do so) out of fear they could be lost, and much of their personal collections have already come to the CCHS archive. It is anticipated that there are at least another six personal archives which are likely to be acquired by the archive. Through these collecting practices history and memory are entangled in the CCHS archive.

For the last fifteen years, CCHS have also been developing a collection of oral history recordings, carried out with former china clay employees to capture their memories of the industry and important details regarding the pits, labs and offices and their management. This practice does not capture the memories themselves per se, instead it creates a record of them that can then be passed on to the future. It has been argued that people’s stories and their voices were at one time more closely bound up with places and localities far more than they are today (Trower 2011), collecting oral history therefore can help to reframe landscape narratives (Riley and Harvey 2007). Trower (2011) posits

“Oral history can be used to gather knowledge of localities, including knowledge that is part of local culture, by accessing people’s first-hand experiences of and bodily involvement with specific physical environments”

(Trower 2011, 3)

For the most part however, the oral histories collected by CCHS are guided by ‘Passion’, as they tend to focus specifically on specialist knowledge and recollections of the industry, as well as the more personal historical trajectories of memory (Strangleman 2001), including the names of former bosses or foremen, and the developments of china clay technology. This activity records the past but, through the records it produces, also seeks to preserve knowledge in the present - before it is too late.

As noted above, what cannot be retained by the archive are the actual memories themselves. This includes the affective spontaneous emotions or sensations which arise with a memory,

“whenever I think about the clay kilns I always smell the clay, the wet clay, its peculiar I haven’t smelt that for years, but it always comes back to you the wet clay on the pan, and the steam coming up”

(I 11 21/02/2018)

Or are prompted by a photograph from the collections,

“There’s a lovely photograph out there of Drinnick we was out there just now talking about it, with my old charge hand \*\*\*\*, and reminiscing, oh, he said we can go back years and years oh, what happened where and when you know”

(I 8 29/11/2017)

Meetings between with old friends and colleagues surrounded by these objects certainly created an environment where these memories were more readily shared. The archive materials themselves however were not actually needed for these reminiscences, although they can act as a prompt or mnemonic. These stories were not confined to the CCHS archive either; they are prompted by the landscape, by the towns and villages themselves, in pubs, schools, workplaces, chapels, and homes. As long as there are those who remember china clay and still live with it, then the current environment of memory at CCHS will endure but the use of these objects, as history, or as something else that is as yet unknown, in the future will not replace the real memories, as Nora (1989) has suggested, as the memories were never fully reconciled to the objects to begin with. It is important to note that the equation of material things with meaning or value is not a universal concept, in many cultures objects are vessels that carry meaning and value rather than the object itself being valuable. Often if the object in question breaks or is unusable another one is simply created to

replace it as value transcends the object itself (Marstine 2006, 17). Practices of Passion in heritage-making, however, to a certain extent, rely on these personal material and place relationships, which in the future may fade or disappear altogether. What follows will be a new environment, of new memories perhaps and of history-making, driven by new not yet emerged modes of ordering or by the Practices of Purpose that rise from a sense of stewardship towards these materials and collections.

## 6.6 Last of a Generation

“My dad, my grandfather, on both sides of the family, was in china clay. It was nearby and handy, it was next door the next village it was so easy to go to work and it was very handy”

(I 8 29/11/2017)

“we are rapidly becoming the older generation so will of course have to rely entirely on archived materials rather than personal knowledge and memories.”

(QU-82)

Family connections often play a large part in the reasons why people first become involved with the china clay industry, but they also are, for some, a key reason for getting in contact with The Wheal Martyn Trust as well. Often the main way members of the public encounter CCHS is through family history enquiries; “A family history visitor is in, a rarity [actually] using the archive – [he gets] lots of attention!” (Fieldwork Diary 04/10/2017).

“There’s even engagements, there’s births, there’s marriages, there’s obituaries in there and everything else in between. and when we were out on the “Days of Clay” I know \*\*\*\* came up and he said “there’s a young lady over here wants to speak to you” – bloody hell – so any how her grandfather worked for china clay but he came from Polgooth and she gave me a little bit of background to it, he was a tin miner but then on the decline of tin, when that packed in, he come over to the china clay, so I said what’s his name? And that, and if you don’t hear nothing from me, I said I can’t turn nothing up, low and behold bingo! There he was, worked at Polgooth, he was a tin miner, see. And this other lady recently



she said she'll write that into her family history because she was doing her family history ... and that's what I like about it up here with the Museum because you're meeting so many nice people"

(I 4 03/12/2016)

Among regular volunteers, family connections also play a large part in their association with the collections. There are, however, also more emotional personal or familial connections as well that are not Passion led and instead align closer with Practices of Purpose. For example, one of the volunteers in both the CCHS archive and the Wheal Martyn Museum volunteers her time as part of a leisure activity she shares with her husband, she comes to learn more about the industry which employed him for much of their marriage, but she claims that she has no personal interest in the industry herself, or really in the collections themselves. Other family relationships are more tangential, for example, one volunteer I spoke to was first introduced to CCHS when his cousin got in contact to say he'd seen a photo of him in the collections (I 7 07/06/2017).

Other family connections are related to the industry itself. One volunteer first came to the Wheal Martyn Museum because he saw an advert appealing for information about a photograph of a local man and "his machine"; the man in question was his father (I 8 29/11/2017). Another volunteer's whole family has been involved in china clay, and although her father never collected anything about the industry save for a few newspaper clippings (although he amassed lots of information about his time in the air force during the war), she has done extensive research into china clay and her father's career (I 5 27/02/2017). As shown in the first small story above, another dedicated a large portion of his time in the CCHS archive to researching the history of the Goonvean China Clay Company, the company he and his father both worked for.

Geographies of relatedness and the family in the last twenty years have tended to move the focus away from the nuclear family (see Harker and Martin 2012), arguing to a certain extent “against inadvertently reinforcing the primacy of blood or naturalizing kinship as the fundamental basis of human relationships” (Nash 2005, 451). Indeed, Donna Harraway has claimed to be “sick to death” (Harraway 1997, 265 in Nash 2005) of models of kinship that privilege the blood ties of family over bonds of friendship, work, and shared experience. In part this is due to queer and feminist geographies of the 1990s which guided the study of the family away from heteronormative framings, similar to the reformulation of class and gender in the 1980s (see Valentine 2008). Family, no matter how it is framed and approached in the academic literature, is still important, whether those bonds are formed between married couples of 40 years, from father to son, from father to daughter, or between civil partners. There is a tendency to equate smaller rural communities, especially working class industrial communities, with an attachment to heteronormative family values. Despite these assumptions, industrial communities are as varied and heterogeneous as any other (See Harrison 1979 in Strangleman 2001). Experiences differ of course, but throughout my research I have encountered female china clay workers and known daughters and wives of clay workers become as passionate about china clay history as their husbands and fathers. I have also encountered deeply gendered comments and assumptions; one elderly male visitor to the CCHS archive towards the end of my research, for example, would habitually ask me about the arrangements for ‘crib’ (tea time).

Family relationships can also have a strong historical resonance. Strangleman’s (2001) study of post-industrial mining communities closely addresses kin and family relationships, and the common sensation of being one of the last of a

generation. As one clay worker recalled a friend once said to him “we weren’t there at the beginning, but we might well witness the end”, before adding “I hope not” (I 4 03/12/2016). Strangleman’s (2001) study of coal miners in Easington, Durham, found that when the mines closed many young men found themselves the last of many successive generations to be employed in the mining industry, and the weight of that realisation of redundancy was a heavy burden to bear (Strangleman 2001).

Due to the geographical spread of coal mining many communities across the whole of the UK have been affected by the decline of the coal industry, with the industry in many areas disappearing completely, whereas china clay in Cornwall and west Devon primarily only affects two geographic areas. As seen earlier, redundancy has been a common theme across the lives of many who volunteer in the CCHS archive and at the Wheal Martyn Museum. Strangleman (2001) noted that among the younger generations made redundant from the coal mines there was a tendency to maintain old friendships from the mines rather than to invest in new relationships with current work colleagues, and among older generations finding a common activity with other redundant miners was a way of ‘saving’ oneself (Strangleman 2001, 261).

In places of deindustrialisation networks of support are an important mechanism for community survival. Like in the coal towns across the country, traditions have built up across the Clay Country of family involvement in the industry and so family ties become important when faced with the loss of not only employment in an industry but a traditional way of life. The networks that have emerged in the Clay Country have an historical tangent (Strangleman 2001) in

that the relationships with the past are as important as those in the present. But they also have a future and somewhat hopeful tangent,

“I want to see it going for other generations. I suppose from my family point of view I’m the last of china clay from at least four generations of china clay workers”

(14 3/12/2016)

Maintaining the CCHS archive and volunteering at the Wheal Martyn Museum is just one type of shared experience which works towards building a hope for the future. It feeds in to what Smith and Campbell (2017) have termed progressive nostalgia, an emotionally complex way of unashamedly valuing the past that is practiced in the present through community building activities. Progressive nostalgia aims to take what is valued from the past, without framing it as perfect, and gift it to the future. It feeds into Practices of Passion in the CCHS archive and the Wheal Martyn Museum as mnemonic exercises, partly in the hope that future generations will carry the same values in to the future,

“we have to do this to preserve our industry and to show the children of today what their previous forefathers, or uncles or even mothers or grandmothers worked in.”

(19 07/02/2017).

Kin-based family dynamics play an important role in the heritage of the Clay Country and the heritage-making practices carried out by the CCHS volunteers. The broader themes of family, that exist outside of the nuclear family, as noted above (Harker and Martin 2012, Nash 2005), also mean that extra-familial relationships also play a large part in why people are drawn to practices of heritage-making. These shared work experiences and friendships can be as important as family bonds.

### 6.6.1 A Relational Archive

Although family connections are a reason that many joined the china clay workforce, there are, or perhaps were, also strong relational networks (Strangleman 2001) across the Clay Country which included families, friends, colleagues, as well as local politics, and an economic climate which meant that china clay was an expected employment option for many young men leaving full-time education. When asked if they had ever thought about doing something other than china clay, many answered that there often wasn't a conscious choice to be made,

“I just didn't think... When I went to school there was no real advice, career advice. They had a careers officer who used to come around; I don't know where he came from, the labour exchange or whatever”

(I 6 17/05/2017)

“You just didn't think about it, it was a place of work where you went and earned your money and that was it. I mean the money side of it was just trivial”

(I 8 29/11/2017)

Relational practices too, such as the practice of 'telling the tale' are a form of memory-work in carried out in the archive. As I described, individuals are always identified in telling the tale, either the person themselves or people who worked at the place the item or photograph relates to. These personal connections and relationships are of paramount importance in the CCHS archive. In all of the interviews I carried out for this research, other members of the china clay community were identified by name during these conversations, most often remembered with respect and gratitude, although there were perhaps one or two gripes as well. Often those I interviewed felt that it was

important that the names of pit captains, directors and colleagues were shared as well as the history of their achievements.

For many this seems to have been an unconscious reflex, and some interviewees were more inclined to recall individuals by name than others. For the most part I came to view this as a Passion-led practice predominantly evidenced by members of the History Society, usually when recalling past employment. As a participant in these interviews I did not realise the significance of this naming during the interview process. It only emerged later when I came to analyse the transcripts and compared these with notes taken during participant observation; One day, after what was to be one my last interviews, I noted in my diary,

“Interviews always seem to have a focus on ‘people’ – names of people who worked with/managers/supervisors etc, [these are] collective experiences, rarely individual. \*\*\*\* [in particular] encouraged a lot of members [to join CCHS], he’s unassuming but actually seems to be a driving force”

(Fieldwork Diary 07/02/2018)

When I returned to my transcripts after the final interview I counted over 100 individual names in total referenced across the 16 interviews.

Making sure others are correctly credited for their involvement or contributions was of high importance. In other cases, the naming of individuals was a key part of remembering perhaps a workplace or an event. Of course, this is not limited to interviews, it is far more natural for volunteers to discuss past managers, friends and colleagues over tea, whilst ‘telling the tale’, or in general conversation. Unfortunately, often conversation about an individual is initiated because that person, or their spouse, is ill or has recently passed away.

Naming individuals, it has been argued, is often a key part of remembering (Hawkins 1993). It is a practice which is inscribed (literally) on many of our monuments and memorials, emphasised most prominently in the outpouring of grief following the catastrophic loss of life during the First World War (Hawkins 1993). Peter Hawkins (1993), introducing his work regarding the NAMES Project and AIDS memory quilt in San Francisco in the late 1980s, remarks that as human beings we are unique in our ability to imagine our own death, and furthermore in our compulsion to remember those who have died by remembering their names. By contrast, removing a name from memory, such as the practice of *damnatio memoriae* (most common among prominent officials in the Roman Empire), can be considered one of the highest forms of punishment or condemnation.

In remembering and repeating names, the historical legacy of the networks of community in the Clay Country becomes more apparent. People from the past are honoured and remembered for the individual roles they played in the lives of others. In some instances, these people become official characters in history. Prominent managers, Sir John Keay or his successor Sir Alan Dalton, for example, feature strongly in many of the official histories and in the archival documents themselves. As shown in Chapter 3 the headquarters of ECC went on to be named after Sir John Keay, as John Keay House (Hudson 1969). In lasting memorial when the building was eventually taken over by Cornwall College, the college theatre, located inside the building, took on the name The Keay Theatre in reference. Figures well known to the industry may be memorialised in written histories, but countless others will only be remembered in oral recordings, or as long as those still living refer to them by name.

The practice of naming individuals from the past interacts with the material culture in the CCHS archives through the formal identification of people in photographs. As one volunteer told me,

“we also did the photographs with all the retirements on and put numbers on and we’ve got all the people who come on a Wednesday, if you didn’t do that, it gives them something to do, they’ll sit there and they’re quite happy to look through photographs and name people.”

(I 11 21/02/2018)

The labelling and ordering of these photographs is perhaps more in line with archival best practice or Purpose-led practices, however it has become entwined with Practices of Passion. Additionally, this activity has become so



Figure 6.6 A volunteer in the CCHS archive identifying individuals in a group photograph from memory. Photo by Author.

popular that regular volunteers have begun to bring in their own photographs from home to share with other archive volunteers. One volunteer produced such a photograph one Wednesday morning during 2018 that had been found in clearing through their house. It was a large rectangular black and white image which showed the entire of one of the local secondary schools, pupils and teachers, dating from the early 1960s. This photograph was passed around other volunteers and visitors for most of the morning. Even as children, people were recognised, and many names were put to faces, many of whom had ended up working in the china clay industry.

“[there was a] School picture brought in – thought that 85% could have gone on to work for ECLP – Poltair School 1962. Names of students remembered by some – all ECLP staff, [and] wives of people they knew. Reproduction photograph given/acquired at a reunion by one of the volunteer’s wives. [He] wanted to show it to me to show not only the



records of the company are kept but also local people, many of whom ended up working at ECLP/ECC. Still interest from those who didn't attend in case they knew people – nice to see the memories and how people are drawn to the old photos, sparks stories and remembers people”

(Fieldwork Diary 8/11/17)

In another incidence, one afternoon towards the end of my visits to the CCHS archives, a photograph was produced which showed a group of men arranged in several rows. The photo showed the ECC male voice choir. One of the individuals in the photograph was well known to the group: a small man stood at the front was instantly recognisable as a long-standing volunteer of CCHS and for the Museum. Upon seeing the photograph – and receiving all of the ribbing for his subsequent loss of hair – this volunteer told us all a ‘tale’ of the choir, group outings and the other men in the photograph.

In some ways in writing these experiences I have tried to resist a simple retelling of these stories and memories. The environment of memory in the Clay Country cannot be fully encapsulated in written words. In many ways it is something which must be performed and practiced in the present; as such the often Passion-led enthusiasms which sustain these specific practices may become unsustainable for future generations.

### **6.7 A Passion-Led Archive: Chapter Summary**

Formalised methods of knowledge-making and the recording of history, such as numbering photos and naming individuals, mirror the informal ways which memory is performed both in and out of the CCHS archive. The archive may be officially governed by practices of Purpose – naming, numbering, stabilising and ordering - but day-to-day it is led by Passion. Passion is enacted through performances of memory, reminiscing with friends, and ‘telling the tale’: “it’s a

gossip shop that's all it is" as one volunteer described the CCHS archive (14/03/2016). Engaging with the archive collection however is also a practical way to engage with feelings of loss and transition through objects and images from the pasts. This chapter has further explored how the heritage of mid-Cornwall has been collected and archived and has also examined how ephemeral things are made durable through processes and practices of valuing, as well as identifying some elements of these practices that cannot be preserved for the future.

This chapter has framed the CCHS archive, and the practices of heritage-making which take place there, as temporal as well spatial, initially arising out of a sudden moment of transition where things that were not intended to be kept were given lasting value as heritage and retained for the future. Drawing on Pearson and Shanks' (2001) call for a rescue archaeology that attends to past hopes, as well as Cresswell and Hoskins' (2008) and DeSilvey's (2007a;2007b) championing of the transient, ephemeral, and experiential, I have shown that salvage can transform previously expendable things into valuable objects. I have also explored the relationship between heritage and loss and described how gains and losses have both been component parts in growing the collection. In the CCHS archive this was seen through the gaining of a collection alongside the painful loss of an individual, or the perceived loss of an industry. I have also shown instances where chance encounters in the archive by volunteers with strong personal connections to the material they are cataloguing have led to the discovery of traces of their own family within the materials that were salvaged from the scrapheaps. Holtorf's (2007) portrayal of loss aversion in terms of cultural heritage management has also been contrasted against a feeling among some archive volunteers that it is 'not their job' in the present to

make decisions about what might be needed in the future. All traces of the past have therefore kept, assumed to be valuable to an unknown future audience.

The intensely personal connections to the material in the collections highlighted in this chapter, either through work, family or the wider Clay Country community, are one argument for why the CCHS archive could be considered a 'Passion-led' archive despite the professional 'Purpose' procedures that officially manage the collection. Although they did not have any formal training in records management, volunteers with personal relationships to the material in the archive have tirelessly cared for these objects, as well as utilised them for their own personal research and enjoyment. Furthermore, the condemnation of the historical materials as waste (see Thompson 2017[1979]) was the catalyst which compelled the founding members of the History Society to act, by gathering and salvaging. There was no systematic appraisal of the material, only a passionate and enthusiastic 'ransacking' which conferred durable value on the archival material in this time of transition. Additionally, the reason the collection is valued by many volunteers is not because they are genuine remnants of the past. For many the knowledge these connections contain outweighs whether they are classed as 'original documents' – a feature of the archive which will be discussed in the following chapter (section 7.3).

This chapter has also highlighted individual passions, such as a past member's extensive home archive, carefully accumulated over many decades and was eventually inherited by CCHS after his death in 2016. In this transfer, as Benjamin (1968) says, the collection lost some of its original meaning, despite the materials themselves remaining intact. The personal collection took on a new meaning in the CCHS archive and also came to represent the former

member himself alongside the knowledge that was contained within it. In joining the archive however, the inherited collection could not stand alone anymore; instead it needed to be integrated into the wider collection and enmeshed with Practices of Purpose, which afforded the collection the potential to take on possible new meanings for the future as it was reconfigured in the archive space. Furthermore, the enmeshing of Passion and Purpose surrounding this collection raised questions about methods of archival practice at CCHS.

In this chapter, I have also explored the interplay between history and memory in the CCHS archive, drawing on and critiquing Nora's (1989) framing of the 'les lieux de mémoire'. Memory and history are entwined within the CCHS archive, and although the volunteers are committed to the scholarship of china clay and preserving its history through written records and photographs, memory is a key part of the Passion-led archive. Remembering, if only for a brief moment, the smell of wet clay, for example, is a recurrent part of the archive experience for those who spent their lives in the clay. Recalling, too, the names of individuals, prompted by a photograph brought in by a friend or a colleague, compounds this environment of memory which is represented by the historical documents kept in the archive. However, this environment of memory is also ephemeral and although prompted by the collections, memory is not fully tied to the objects in the collection. Additionally, memory and personal experiences were also shown as fallible when it comes to producing accurate histories, such as the collections relating to Penderill-Church. The collecting of records does not negate 'real' memories in the Clay Country, and memory was not erased by the takeover ECC or by the salvage of the records in the CCHS collection. The parameters of the environment of memory have just transformed. As the archive

and its caretakers move forward in the future, the parameters will likely shift once again as part of a natural progression of history and heritage-making.

As such, loss and death have been recurring themes throughout this chapter.

Due to the decline in employment in the industry, many volunteers within the archive are now beginning to feel like they are the last generation who will remember china clay 'as it was'. Participating in the archival activities of CCHS therefore can be seen as a form of progressive nostalgia (Smith and Campbell 2017), a way of cherishing and valuing the past but contributing to the future.

For many the ideal would be to see china clay continue for many years, but the future of the industry itself is beyond their control. What can be achieved are collective practices of memory which seek to pass the values held by one generation in the Clay Country to a new generation in the future.

Finally, what keeps the process of heritage-making durable in this place is multiplicity of practice. If Practices of Passion, bound up in relationality and personal memory begin to fade over time other modes of ordering – in this case Practices of Purpose – will step in to stabilise the assemblage to ensure durability for the future (Law 1994; 2003). As the Wheal Martyn Museum already owns this collection legally, there will be no need for the volunteers to give up their ownership of this collection, however the collection will eventually be given over to new carers and opened up to possible new meanings in the future. As part of this process it has been suggested the CCHS archive is moved to the Wheal Martyn Museum site and into a new purpose-built facility – subject to obtaining funding for the project. In the chapter which follows I will explore how professional heritage-making practices, and the Practices of Purpose that have been introduced in this chapter, are carried out alongside

these personal memory-making and heritage-making practices, and formally build a durable Clay Country heritage for the mid-Cornwall region.

## Chapter 7: The Practiced Archive

“The most profound enchantment for the collector is the locking of individual items within a magic circle in which they are fixed as the final thrill, the thrill of acquisition, passes over them. Everything remembered and thought everything conscious, becomes the pedestal, the frame, the base, the lock of his property”

(Walter Benjamin *Illuminations*, page 60)

The last chapter mainly considered the mode of ordering I have termed ‘Passion’; this chapter will largely attend to the mode of ordering I identified as ‘Purpose’. This chapter also engages with the policy literature that informs professional archival, museum, and heritage management. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, the management texts that inform the discussions within this chapter refer to UK professional standards and practices.

Up to this point this thesis has largely focused on the amateur activities of (mainly) local people to preserve historic remnants of the local china clay industry, but these activities are just one part of a wider set of heritage-making practices being performed in the Clay Country. This chapter also addresses one final research question, by examining who has authority and ownership over these different collections in the Clay Country, as well as unpicking some of the relationships that exist between professional and amateur collectors. In Chapter 5 I highlighted some of ways that national heritage management bodies have interacted with the clay region through official listing and scheduling; in this chapter I will discuss the more quotidian professionally-led practices that have built up over time at the Wheal Martyn Museum and in the CCHS archive.

These everyday practices, as in most museums and professionally managed

collections, are informed by collections care legislation and guided by a concern for professionalism in all aspects of the work carried out.

### **7.1 Modes of Ordering: Practices of Purpose**

Following on from the discussions in the previous chapter, I engage here with Practices of Purpose as a mode of ordering that privileges concern for best practice and stewardship over personal feelings and attachments. Purpose is built on professional sensibilities: a measured and strategic way of engaging with material culture that is not necessarily linked to any former engagement with the material itself, or the history and heritage it represents. It is not devoid of feeling or understanding, but the foremost motivation behind Purpose is to achieve set goals and standards for the curation and appraisal of heritage collections. Additionally, in the same way that Practices of Passion view collections as safe from risks, Purpose is more inclined to view the collection as something that is at risk, and Practices of Purpose therefore put measures in place to safeguard the collection accordingly. Through Purpose, collections care comes into being, often through identifying risks to the collection and modifying the surrounding environment to mediate these risks. Sometimes Purpose may also endorse, and implement, unpopular measures in order to safeguard collections or to ensure that standards are universally met.

Practices of Purpose are usually perpetuated through texts and theory, with a tendency to rely on tested and verified notions of professional practice rather than personal intuition. Passion and Purpose, however, are not dichotomous, and the two modes of ordering do not enforce a distinction between volunteer and professional roles. A volunteer can easily act habitually within the realm of Purpose, just as a professional may sometimes stray into the territory of



Passion. As a rule, however, museum staff are required to act, sometimes by law, according to the rules and regulations encompassed within the Purpose mode of ordering in their professional lives.

“[Afterwards [she] told me how] museum’s need to be a business, [and] need people who can lead businesses, but many museum professionals are not working in their ‘passions’, they have enthusiasm for the job but museums are as much a career as a passion, [professionals must] move from one job to another and think about career as much as collections”

(Fieldwork Diary 29/11/17)

Practices of Purpose, furthermore, are usually perpetuated through institutional guidelines and the schemes which promote them, such as museum and archival accreditation programmes. A willingness to engage with the practices that Purpose values (and requires) is often a key part of receiving support through partnerships and funders, such as the Heritage Lottery Fund. Through a Community of Practice, adherents, however, are able to share their knowledge and insights in order to ensure the care of the collection and influence others to follow suit.

## **7.2 A Tale of Two Digitisation Projects**

Before I move on to critically examine professional heritage practices in the Clay Country, I want to start by juxtaposing two short extracts that describe the involvement of two different individuals in film digitisation projects within the Wheal Martyn Trust. This ‘small story’ (Lorimer 2003) highlights how Passion and Purpose interact when it comes to using and preserving the collections, shining a light on how two different modes of ordering can culminate in two different types of practice.

The first extract is from a volunteer for the Wheal Martyn Museum and the China Clay History Society. He is the last in a long line of china clay workers and is still employed by the industry. As a result, he cannot spend as much time volunteering as he would like.

### **Project Number 1:**

“been 5 perhaps 6 years ago I was approached by [the former chairman], and asked if I would understudy \*\*\*\* who looked after the film archive, I said well yes I would, because I'd been along to one or two of \*\*\*\*'s, or the China Clay History Society's, annual film shows and loved the old films of it and I thought oh yea this is great ...but anyway so I took over from [him] and the dreaded thought of having 16mm film in front of an audience of 50 or 60 people and I'd experienced it with [him], or whilst [he] been playing films, of the film breaking, then you've got the embarrassment and my goodness me. So anyway I decided then, to have a look at the archive what material we had in the archive and a lot of it, there is well over 200 films, if not more, some in 16 mm format, some in Super 8 but majority of them were in VHS format so anyhow with another colleague \*\*\*\*... we started volunteering here around the same time really, he was fortunate to have a combi television set so just put the VHS tape in and ...get the DVD out”

(I 4 03/12/2016)

In these words, we see relationships, personal passions, and a desire to protect the collection, and to an extent the reputation of CCHS, by digitising and making copies of important films. The motivation wasn't necessarily to save the films for the future, it was to make sure the films could still be viewed and shared with others who would enjoy them and find something of interest in them.

The next extract in this small story comes from an interview conducted with a member of staff who was employed part-time over three years by the Wheal Martyn Museum to review, rationalise, and digitise the Museum's film collection. He first started as a volunteer, between other jobs, but it was soon realised that he had the skills needed to take on the digitisation project and so he was made

an offer of employment. Although not native to the Clay Country he has lived in mid-Cornwall for a number of years

### **Project Number 2:**

“We’re digitising quite a few probably all together about 80 items that were on film a lot of them are duplicates so we’ve had to sort that out, but we’re getting there slowly but also with limited budgets and what not - we’re trying to do everything we deem really important first and then we’ll see what’s left over at the end... It’s the same collection. [They] started it sort of just from a History Society, enthusiast point of view. [They’re] using similar equipment – I’ve literally just got in my bag another table, VHS machine and some cables that connect to my laptop. The only thing is, the way [they] approached it, and its fair enough, is just a simple capture and grab whereas I’m really trying to take as much detail from the tapes as I can so I’m using uncompressed files they’re much bigger they’re supposed to be better for future proofing if you like, and also capturing audio separately that sort of thing”

(Interview Wheal Martyn Digitisation Officer 23/08/2017)

In this project, an employee had undertaken official methods to ‘futureproof’ the collection, by capturing audio separately from video. He is ensuring that even if the video footage becomes compromised some of the information will be available for future audiences. This type of digitisation, carried out by the Wheal Martyn Museum, privileges the future over the present (later we will see that one of the main methods used is freezing film to preserve it for prolonged periods of time).

What can be seen from these two interview excerpts is that the same type of practice – digitisation – using the same type of equipment, can be conducted with two different motivations, and actualise in two different eventual outcomes. Neither of these two digitising projects are being done by museum professionals, and both have other jobs that they carry out alongside their activities for the Museum. In a way, these two practices could be seen to be producing duplication in the heritage materials relating to china clay across the

Clay Country, although only the second project (that adheres to the sanctioned methods and theory) materials that are intended to be included in the 'official' accessioned museum collection. The former project remains a personal endeavour, with an emotional resonance and practical use for the History Society; the value of these digital materials centres on a present usefulness instead of being future heritage.

In the context of wider scholarship, Thomas (2016) has suggested that knowledge about a collection – not just the practical understanding of the needs of the collection but also knowledge about its how it is valued and its significance – make the collection easier to care for. In this sense “research, interpretation, exhibition and identification may all be important alongside security and levels of light and humidity” (Thomas 2016, 65). A lot of what has been converted to a digital format in the first project has since been redone in the second project, and in doing so the practice ensures the collection meets the standards of best practice. Alongside the professional practices in the second project, however, the input of those volunteers involved in the first project been useful for knowing how important the collection is; knowledge about the collection is seen to be just as valuable for heritage-making as effective conservation.

For bystanders within CCHS, it is acknowledged that the work that has been done in the second, official, project has been hugely beneficial for the collections. However, there are also some who have raised questions about to what extent the work undertaken, initially by volunteers, will be valued and if their (Passionate) efforts might become eclipsed by more professional (Purposeful) procedures taking place. These are difficult questions that serve as

a reminder that even though multiplicity in practice and modes of ordering can work to stabilise organisations, and result in mutual benefits, there are sometimes instances where they can also be resistance as well – even whilst working as a Community of Practice, which can help minimise these disagreements when they arise (Meyer 2008).

In the section that follows I will explore notions of power and knowledge and examine the ways that they have played out in caring for the collections at the CCHS archive and the Wheal Martyn Museum. I also will discuss the interwoven relationship between the two collections at the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS.

### **7.3 Power and Knowledge**

There was not an explicit imbalance of power evident between Passion and Purpose, although occasionally there were differences of opinion about which knowledges are most valuable, and the appropriate means of preserving and sharing those knowledges.

Further, it can be difficult, especially in cases such as the Wheal Martyn Trust, where so many different types of knowledge come to the fore, to differentiate between professional and amateur practices, and to ascertain what constitutes expertise in this context. As described in Chapter 5, on the one hand, there are multiple types of industry experts, and on the other there are museum professionals, who have expertise in collections care, museum management and tourism, with very little overlap between the two.

Knowledge, as Foucault (1991[1975]) reminds us, is both powerful and political, and in spaces of knowledge-making and sharing, such as museums and archives, knowledge often requires negotiation and mediation (see Macdonald

1998). It is also important to recognise that the collections themselves also produce knowledge as well as disseminate it (Preziosi 1998; also see Law 2004), a point I will return to shortly. Different practices of knowledge-sharing and knowledge-making often managed to coexist within the Wheal Martyn Museum and the CCHS archive. As in any organisation, however, frictions may arise from time to time in the otherwise convivial working environment. From my observations over 18 months participating in the CCHS archive, differences in opinion, it seemed, were more likely to revolve around what is valuable and should be kept, as noted in Chapter 6, and knowledge-sharing issues, rather than everyday operational issues.

“\*\*\*\* commented to me about the [collection of] blown-up photographs, and .... [some people] not wanting them, [he] was very adamant that they are great public engagement tools. A comment was made that [some people] don't see them as valuable”

(Fieldwork Diary 18/04/17)

“this is what is what \*\*\*\* is always on to \*\*\*\* about...I sympathise with both of them cause I see the things that \*\*\*\* would like to throw away what could be useful but, history in the future, but also I don't see... you know, we've even got a book in there I think that's got nothing in the pages but tis got a heading on it – [R: yea yea, I've found that] – it's just taking up room and I can't honestly see the point of that, but \*\*\*\* is such a nice fellow”

(I 11 21/02/2018)

Knowledge-sharing in this context also refers to practices such deciding who should deal with certain enquiries, curating new exhibitions, or conversations about the need for accurate recording of collections documentation.

The specific way in which practices are enacted is often informed by the ontological positions held by different actors within heritage assemblages.

Different world views, training and work experience contributed to how people

come to understand the importance of particular type of heritage-practice. As such, it was often through these different practices of making and sharing knowledge, noted above, that Passion and Purpose met and became interlinked. For the Passion mode of ordering, the collection was significant due to the knowledge about the past that it contains. Therefore, the freedom to interact closely with the collections (in whichever way seems necessary to further the aims of CCHS) was one of the elements that was cherished about the collection. In valuing the knowledge that the collection represents, many members of CCHS were content to lend and borrow, make multiple copies and collect duplicated material; the emphasis on retaining knowledge was stronger than the emphasis on the original document. As was remarked in one of the first interviews I carried out with members of CCHS,

“\*\*\*\*: I doubt if we put too much emphasis on the original actually were concerned with the information

\*\*\*\*: It’s nice to have the original but it’s imperative to have the information”

(I 3 23/11/2016)

On the other hand, those who were guided by Purpose, although they were sympathetic to the personal associations, were concerned with ways of ordering the space. This ordering was representative of a sort of power, as noted in Chapter 2 (Cresswell 2012). For some heritage professionals this can be seen as a controversial statement to make (although it is not meant to be confrontational) as many cultural spaces have tried to distance themselves from traditional notions of power (Mason, Robinson and Coffield 2018) because of their complicated associations with hierarchy and status (Hall 1999). Here,

however, I am thinking about a different sort of power, a less overt force that is enacted through Practices of Purpose. Power in this sense involves regulating which individuals and organisations have the knowledge and authority to enact lasting change to collections, and ultimately this is a way of mediating and controlling the interactions between materials and their surroundings. Examples of this sort of power at the Wheal Martyn Museum and in the CCHS archive were observed when staff and volunteers made decisions about what should be collected and discarded, who has access to the collections, how they should be stored, and how they should be used.

For example, during my fieldwork I observed an interesting discussion regarding some unsorted and unaccessioned items in the Yellow Room. An old colleague had come in to discuss these because,

“some [of the items] were given to the Society by him and [he was] convinced of its value. After he left however, \*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\* had a similar discussion about [disposal] – and \*\*\*\* agreed. \*\*\*\* asked if the university would want any of it (NO!) so it was agreed it would be ‘dumped’ [sic]. Discussion followed about how if they knew anything about it, it might be different, but it’s all obsolete.”

(Fieldwork Diary 25/05/17)

Disposal too is a type of spatial ordering, and one which is heavily regulated by professional practice. As the Wheal Martyn Museum’s Curator explains, in sorting through the Museum’s unaccessioned backlog,

“we still want to find the right homes for things...It depends entirely on what it is , but ... we will try and advertise the things might be of interest in the Museums Journal things like that you know, there’s a page on the Museums Association website, you know what I mean... but other things will just be in such poor condition...but we will try and find homes for as many things as possible”

(Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Curator 20/02/2017).



Through these practices, and the interplay between Passion and Purpose, the power dynamics of heritage practice come to light. As Bennett et al. (2017) have discussed, processes of collecting, ordering, and governing do not play out in a linear fashion. Instead, they loop around and over each other, and are sometimes difficult to disentangle. These processes, however, are the mainstay of the ways in which museums, and other related institutions, create and maintain understandings of shared heritage.

The Wheal Martyn Trust employs a professional curator to care for the collections of both the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS, as one interconnected collection. However, there is a general feeling that the archive needs its own professional archivist, at least for a time, to assess the significance of the collection. The question of the possibility of a professional archivist for the collections is a poignant one to consider alongside questions of power and knowledge in the archive. The person appointed would conceivably be in a position to both enact and bestow great power over and on the collections and would come with highly specialised knowledge and training. Ideally, for many members of the History Society, the eventual person, if appointed, would be an archival professional with a good working knowledge of china clay. So far it would seem such a person simply does not exist.

“this problem has been with everybody for five stroke six years since 2010 and we’re still no nearer a solution if by some magic waving of a wand we can identify somebody who has got the background experience and has got the skills and qualifications to be a professional archivist of it, then three cheers for that”

(13 23/11/2016)

More recently help has arrived in the form of the archivist for the Universities of Exeter and Falmouth, based at the joint campus in Penryn. Having offered her

help in a voluntary capacity, she also has some background knowledge about the china clay. She was born in and has lived most of her life in the Clay Country and so understands the region and its concerns – something an archivist from outside the region would have to learn upon appointment. The universities' archivist is undoubtedly qualified to advise the CCHS archive subcommittee on future plans; however, she cannot offer full-time support to the archive.

Professional knowledge and formal assessment by another heritage professional is often a prerequisite for the designation or creation of new spaces of heritage. Recently, the realisation of long hoped for plans to build a purpose-built archive facility for the CCHS collection at the Wheal Martyn Museum was deemed, at present, to be too ambitious. During conversations with the Heritage Lottery Fund, it became clear that the Wheal Martyn Museum would need to have a professional archival appraisal conducted before seeking support for a new archive space. As the Wheal Martyn Museum Director once stressed, in order to meet the requirements of the relevant funding bodies to support their plans they need a professional archivist to,

“assess and provide a better understanding of the significance, current state, needs and opportunities of the archive which would provide recommendations on appropriate future solutions. This can then be used to support applications to potential funders including the Heritage Lottery Fund’

(Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Director 08/06/2017)

Both the staff and volunteers at the Wheal Martyn Museum can attest to the importance of their archive materials. Official forms of heritage-making, however, often require, and privilege, a different type of knowledge that can be justified and measured through universal matrices and formal assessment.

From the perspective of professional staff at the Wheal Martyn Museum, there are also concerns that the creation of a purpose-built archive facility at the Wheal Martyn Museum to house the CCHS collection may be seen as the 'magic wand' for securing the future of the collection and its preservation. The move would require a reassembling of the archive and reconfiguration of its current mode of operating. Whilst many of the members of CCHS are supportive of these changes in theory, when difficult decisions need to be made about the future of the collections there is a concern some of this support could waiver. This does not imply that CCHS members are not aware of the ramifications of the changes that would come with the formation of a professionally managed archive space, only that it is often impossible to predict one's own reactions to imagined future scenarios, especially when personal enthusiasms and individual memories and heritages are attached to the collections.

What can be seen, then, is that these heritage spaces are inherently political. They are made up of different understandings of both what constitutes expertise and responsibility for the collections. It is well known that politics of display have cultural, social, and political consequences (Macdonald 1998) however, the concealed spaces of museum, or archive, storage are not passive storehouses but instead active sites as well, where social power, social politics, and memory are played out, made, and remade (Cook and Schwartz 2002). In this space the role of the curator or archivist comes into question just as much as it does in the public exhibition. Furthermore, part of assessing the notion of power enveloped in the collection is through the consideration of access, which I will now address.

### 7.3.1 Power and Access

There is a fine line between public and private access in museum and archival collections. Most public archive collections are accessible for visitors to study at their leisure, however, physical access to the collections is mediated through the provision of a reading room and an archival assistant. Museums similarly choose carefully what items are displayed for public consumption in exhibitions and what objects are kept safely in storage. The archivist or curator as gatekeeper is a well-documented theme in the literature of cultural studies, and like any stereotype, there is an element of truth to the characterisation, even though common practice has largely moved away from gatekeeping to facilitation (Theimer 2011). Curators and archivists hover in reading and study rooms, to assist the researcher but also to protect objects and records from untrained hands and wandering eyes. Unfettered access to collections in storage is, in many cases across the UK, restricted to the select few who have achieved the necessary levels of training, namely curators, archivists, supervised volunteers, and, occasionally, privileged researchers.

One of the key roles of archivists and curators is to act as a mediator between the objects in the collection and any forces that might cause the objects harm. To demonstrate, I turn again to Gillian Rose's (2000) account of her experiences in the photography archives of the Victoria and Albert Museum. In describing the rules and regulations of the Print Room and the materialisation of the researcher, Rose remarks,

“what a body they gave me: potentially mucky and clumsy, with sweaty fingers and leaking pens, with wet coats and poor eyesight, hungry and thirsty and dangerously threatening the photographs with all these dirty needs. The photographs are constructed as at risk from this grotesque body.”

Whilst the origin of the word curator stems from *curare*, which, as shown in Chapter 2, means literally to ‘take care’ (Mason, Robinson and Coffield 2018), the original archivists – *archons* – were guardians with the necessary power to interpret and impose the law (Derrida 1996). Heritage spaces are not necessarily egalitarian, nor neutral as Rose’s (2000) study acknowledges, there are hierarchies that exist among collections care professionals, volunteers and visitors. Professionals and volunteers have access to materials that visitors do not, and professionals often have the final judgement on how objects are stored, cared for and interpreted.

These spaces of heritage-making are also unequal due to the privileging of some objects, and some stories over others (Joy 2014). Objects that have been selected for display, for example, are privileged over objects kept in storage. Conversely however, objects which are displayed have other rights taken away from them; the right to be handled, discovered, and reinterpreted (Joy 2014). These lines become blurred when storage itself is put on display.

Open storage exhibits can be traced back to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century (Thiemeyer 2017), although one of the most prominent recent examples is the 1976 redevelopment of the Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia, often credited as the first permanent open storage exhibit (Institute of Museum Ethics 2009). Initially, these open exhibitions were born out of a reaction to perceptions about the controlled space of ethnographic museums in the 1960s and 1970s; by opening up museum storage the museum was seen to be sharing some of its power and authority with the communities represented within the exhibitions (Thiemeyer 2017). In more recent years, open storage has

become a new way to engage with visitors. The museum often is required to provide an experience as well as education, to be engaging (Black 2005) and responsive to a 21<sup>st</sup> century audience (Lang, Reeve and Woollard 2007). With less than 10% of collections typically on display (Pers 2002), public exhibitions are frequently supplemented with behind the scenes tours.

Open storage exhibits are also seen to offer a more immersive experience, which allows access to raw and unmediated objects supposedly free from the politics of display (Pers 2002; Thiemeyer 2017, 144). In reality, however, objects displayed in storage, although encountered in a greater density than traditional displays, are still selected for display with the relevant curatorial and conservation guidelines adhered to, and store rooms which are opened up for visitors are often arranged in a way which privileges viewing the objects over maximising storage space (Pers 2002).



Figure 7.1 (left) Double portal windows in the door to the storage room at the Wheal Martyn Museum lets visitors see items kept in storage. Photo by Author.

Figure 7.2 (right) The view when the light is turned on in the store room. Photo by Author

At the Wheal Martyn Museum one of the storage units itself has become a permanent part of the galleries, and an exhibition in its own right. Visitors are able to interact with the storage unit by pressing a button on the wall which illuminates the stored objects. Visitors peer through two small porthole windows at rows of resting objects stacked on metal shelving. But why was this store room chosen? The objects which are displayed/in storage are not, in themselves, particularly thrilling; the store mainly consists of wooden objects and tools used in the china clay industry.

One might be forgiven for assuming that this clean and professional storage room had always appeared this way, and visitors were now being afforded a sneak peek into the well-ordered behind the scenes museum store. A plaque on the outside of the store, however, explains that this store has undergone extensive renovation. The storeroom had been in use for some time, but when the present curator began her role in the Museum she found that the store had been overlooked for many years. The roof was in desperate need of repair and the shelving was in poor condition; the lighting was also unsuitable for the conservation of the collections. A grant of five thousand pounds from the Tanner Trust during 2012 and 2013 enabled the Museum to empty the storeroom and complete a full renovation,

“we basically hired a shipping container and with volunteers emptied all the collections items from the store and then did a building project in there to put a new roof, a new ceiling in and decorate it and new lighting and shelving and stuff then brought everything back”

(Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Curator 20/02/2017)

The renovations also allowed the consolidation of six existing stores across the Museum into just three, so new objects were brought in from other spaces to fill the renovated store. During the redevelopments of the space it was realised

that the addition of porthole windows would allow visitors to peer into the storeroom and gain a peek behind the scenes; these objects would now always have to be on their best behaviour.

Until relatively recently it was still a commonplace practice for information about the location of non-public parts of cultural institutions, such as offsite storage, to be confidential due to security concerns (Thomas 2016). Whilst the Wheal Martyn Museum is publicly accessible, the location of the CCHS archive is typically only given to those who have arranged to visit. Visitors may drop by unannounced – “this week is the first time ever I’ve seen someone just ‘pop-in’ – very rarely happens! Invited in and shown around regardless!” (Fieldwork Diary 22/02/17) – but it is unlikely anyone would stumble across the CCHS archive without first knowing where to look. As I recounted right at the beginning of this thesis, my first visit to the CCHS archive involved meeting a committee member in the car park of a local pub and being escorted in convoy to the archive location. It was exciting and felt almost secretive, although in reality it was probably arranged this way to stop us out-of-towners from becoming thoroughly lost in the wilds of the Clay Country, or accidentally trespassing on private property.

Like other places designated as offsite storage, security and insurance is cited as one of the reasons that the CCHS archive location is not habitually advertised, but it also is linked to the fact that the archive is held in a former laboratory facility-cum-social club owned and maintained by Imerys, and on-site provision could not handle large numbers of visitors. Despite the relative confidentiality, however, the archive volunteers pride themselves on the fact that the collection is open to anyone who has an interest in china clay history



and heritage. In fact, one of the fears for the future harboured by present committee members is the possibility that, in formalising the archive and moving its location permanently to the Wheal Martyn Museum, as has been proposed as a possible future for the collections, the current types of unorthodox access to the collection, and crucially the knowledge about the collections, might be reduced.

“I would hate to see the day when you would go to the Museum and you would be told that you couldn't have access and you'd have to wait for someone to come in to see you. Truly here on a Wednesday and Friday everyone who's interested in the industry knows there will be someone on hand to help, advise, answer questions”

(I 3 23/11/2016)

The core concern, as evidenced in the quote above, is not that formalisation of the archive will reduce access to the materials themselves, but that it will reduce access to the knowledge of the History Society. Presently on a Wednesday morning around twenty individuals frequent the CCHS archive (slightly less on a Friday morning) meaning that whichever element of china clay history interests a visitor it is likely that there will be someone available with expertise in that aspect of the industry. If the collection was moved to the Wheal Martyn Museum it is possible that the collection would actually be more accessible, as at the Museum as there is the potential the archive could be open on more than two mornings a week, but access to all the specialist knowledge of the History Society cannot always be guaranteed.

Despite their reservations, many of the current volunteers are impatient for the archive to be moved to Wheal Martyn Museum and there is generally strong support for enhancement and a professionalization of the current facilities among the wider History Society. Among those members who received and

returned questionnaires, just over half (44/77) of the respondents expressed a wish for the current facilities to be expanded with improved access to the collections, with 21 mentioning the Wheal Martyn Museum specifically. Only 14 respondents expressed a wish for things to stay the same as they are at present. Moving the collections to the Museum also represents volunteer managers requiring closer relationships with their volunteers, especially those who only volunteer in the CCHS archive and at present cannot be “foster[ed] completely because they’re afar” (Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Director 08/06/2017).

In Chapter 5, I explored the idea of china clay heritage-making as a Community of Practice (CoP). I showed that working in a CoP has the ability to supersede notions of insider and outsider when members strive towards a common goal. I also suggested that the CoP can help mitigate divisions between different expressions of museum practice by professional curators, amateur volunteers and outside parties (Høg Hansen and Moussouri 2004; Meyer 2005), something which both the volunteers and staff at Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS are committed to doing. Working within a CoP, however, can also highlight these tensions when questions of power, knowledge and access are addressed.

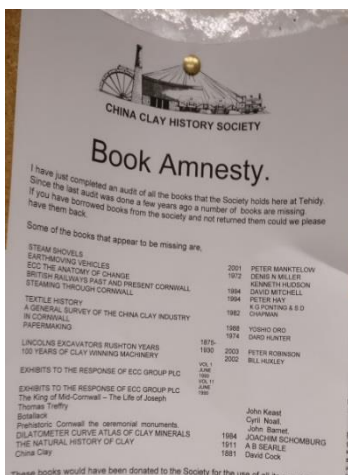


Figure 7.3 (left) A notice left at CCHS to request the return of borrowed books. Photo by Author



Figure 7.4 (right) A sign permanently displayed at CCHS to regulate borrowing from the archive collections. Photo by Author

To highlight a pertinent example: Much of the research that is carried out by the History Society cannot be completed by spending only two mornings a week in the archive and so, at present, it is possible for members of the History Society to remove some non-accessioned objects from the archive for personal study, providing they are properly signed out and returned. Although not all volunteers are supportive of these practices, in this way the archive also acts like a lending library. Furthermore, this practice is seen as a way of allowing those who cannot regularly participate during the week to still play an active role in the Society. Historically, this practice of borrowing from the archive was once far less regulated however. One volunteer recounted to me a past practice – one which would certainly not be allowed today – that demonstrates how home working at times became bound up in personal enthusiasms for their archival work,

“I even got to the stage when I was taking it home. Honesty...I got so involved with it because I loved it so much and I thought this is great and taking it up into the bedroom and had it all spread all over the bed!”

(I 4 03/12/2017)

Allowing the objects to leave the CCHS archive space was a practice that was linked to trust and allowing members to take material home was a way of demonstrating trust and cooperation within the Society. Although it is a widespread museum and archival policy that collections are not removed from the building, for some members of CCHS, who became used to high levels of access to the collections, the enforcement of these routine museum and archival policies is taken to imply that the trust has broken down. This is a rare instance where we can see Passion and Purpose in direct conflict with each other. Although Passion might value these loaning practices, such a liberal

attitude towards objects that have been accessioned into the collection is strongly discouraged by Purpose. Additionally, it is not just Museum staff members that have voiced objections to collections leaving the archive space. In most instances, compromises between Passion and Purpose can be reached. However, in this case Purpose must be insistent that adherence to its ordering principles (Law 2003, 5) is in the collection's long-term best interests and so as not to threaten the Museum's Accreditation status. In discussing the problem of duplication, and this practice of borrowing, in the CCHS archive a partial compromise was suggested by one volunteer that,

“we need a collection and an archive...somebody needs to take control though. [Maybe] a library system? To allow things to be taken away without affecting the professionalism of the archive”

(Fieldwork Diary 21/02/18)

Increased digitisation has also been suggested; these suggestions only partially appeases Passion's desire to freely interact with the collection, however.

An emerging issue for many museums and archives is how to facilitate digital access to their collections. Developments in the postmodern museum sector from what became known in the 1990s as the 'new museology' (Vergo 1989) have emerged from the capabilities offered by Web 2.0 (i.e. user generated content and social media) applications, which were introduced to the museum space by early adopters around 2006 (Simon 2006). The associated changes in museum practice in light of these developments has been styled as Museum 2.0, and for archives this development manifested somewhere between 2008 and 2011 as Archives 2.0 (Theimer 2011). These two major developments in social theory and technology saw an opening up of both sectors. Museums and archives are now expected to be reflexive institutions that encourage

multivocality, transparency and facilitation (Black 2005; Theimer 2011). Whilst this broadening and opening up of collections is a positive step towards an inclusive cultural sector, for some local archives this can also be a problematic hurdle to navigate in order to receive funding or help from professional bodies. For example, the local archive held in Charlestown struggles with the notion that for their archive to move forward they must digitise and open their collection up to those outside of the village community:

“their personal information should remain in Charlestown, for the Charlestown people and history and not necessarily going on to the computers and worldwide. So it’s that situation at the moment, you know, what does one do?”

(I 1 27/10/2016)

Collections, as we have seen, are not passive, and in their management, there are multiple intertwined power relationships and implications for the types of knowledge that are produced within them. One question which is related to these power relationships is the status of the CCHS archive itself as an archival collection. In the following section I will examine the status of the archive against professional understandings and debates around collections, drawing on the literature presented in Chapter 2. I will also discuss the role that storage space plays in these characterisations of museum and archive as, at present, there has been a conscious decision taken to care for the CCHS archive as an extension of museum collection in storage rather than as an archive or a record depository.

#### **7.4 The Status of the CCHS Archive**

As shown in Chapter 3, both the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS have interwoven and shared institutional histories. However, the Museum and the CCHS archive have sometimes been perceived as separate (or even

competing) institutions by those who are unfamiliar with the structure of governance. Since the founding of CCHS during 2000 the Wheal Martyn Museum has undergone many changes, which have affected how the collections and the Museum are managed. Conversely, CCHS operations have largely remained unchanged for many years, although the archive has moved locations several times. In 2015, when the founding society chairman retired from his post, he was succeeded by the Museum's Director, bringing the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS closer together in terms of their leadership. For many years, although constitutionally part of the Wheal Martyn Museum, the CCHS archive mainly functioned as a community led archive with an institutional affiliation. Today, the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS have a much closer working relationship. Practices of Purpose and Practices of Passion have become more closely entwined in the archive space and it has been agreed by the CCHS archive sub-committee that the CCHS archive would work towards becoming a 'community archive' and work in line with Wheal Martyn Museum's Museum Accreditation Standards. Purpose can be identified as the leading mode of ordering in this closer working relationship, as it is acknowledged there are certain practices that need to be prioritised in order to protect the Museum's (and by extension CCHS's) future interests.

For many years there was an ongoing debate within archival studies which questioned whether community-led archives, like the CCHS archive, should be categorised as archives at all (Flinn 2011). For some professional practitioner's, community archives are "as not properly archival in their creation, [as they are] ephemeral, and without any lasting value" (Maher 1998 quoted in Flinn 2007). Despite purist critics, in general 'community archive' has become a widely accepted term describing a whole host of community-based memory-work

activities, including oral history projects, community history projects and local history groups more generally (Flinn 2007).

Flinn (2007) also argues that community archive activities are characterised by grassroots projects in which the community remains autonomous, regardless of the involvement of other professional heritage bodies. Despite this, archival practice, at both the professional and amateur levels, is always political (Flinn 2011). In the case of CCHS the archive originated as a communal archiving project. In Chapter 5 I discussed the importance of community to the activities of CCHS, although it remains to be seen whether working towards a 'community archive' will include the autonomy in practice that Flinn (2007) suggests. In previous chapters I have shown how CCHS's broader affiliation with Wheal Martyn Museum, and by extension South West Lakes Trust, means that, in order to explore how heritage is made in this institutional context, this research needed to critically examine the relationships embedded in Clay Country heritage-making.

To further address how Practices of Purpose can order an archive I draw together the literature addressed previously in this thesis to think more closely about the ways that knowledge is made and perpetuated within different organisations. As stated by Inkeri Hakamies (2017, 142) "practice makes museum people"; practices and methods are performed as part of a wider culture of what has been theorised as 'best practice' and professionally acknowledged norms. Cook and Schwartz have suggested that the practice of many archivists is based on a "rituali[s]ed implementation of [applied] theory" (2002, 173), something which could be said of most cultural practitioners, whether in an archive, museum or other heritage space. Law recounts Latour

and Woolgar's (1986, in Law 2004) observations of endocrinologists working within the Salk Institute, stating that they made up a "tribe of scientists" (Latour and Woolgar 1986, 17 quoted in Law 2004, 19). These scientists had practices and beliefs, that, when combined, contributed to the making of scientific knowledge and it is much the same with other types of professional 'tribes'. Geoghegan and Hess (2015) highlight how institutional knowledge-making translates into collecting and museum-making. They recount how the museum staff in the storerooms of the London Science Museum were demarcated from other bodies by their white coats and gloves, as well as their internalized attitudes and beliefs about the correct treatment of museum objects. What makes a museum, or an archive – professional or amateur – 'Purpose-led' is first and foremost the adherence to accepted theory and practice (Cook and Schwartz 2002). It is not socially constructed ideas about what a museum or archive is, or what it does, that highlights Purpose as a mode of ordering, it is the practices carried out and the texts that are adhered to, and created, within these institutions. Cook and Schwartz (2002) have suggested furthermore, that this adherence to accepted practices is almost ritualised in its performance, rarely critiqued by most practitioners.

The system is also somewhat self-perpetuating. Institutions that follow approved guidelines such as 'Spectrum' standards in museums, which have governed the base standard in practice since 2011, can apply to be recognised for their achievements through Arts Council England's UK Museums Accreditation Scheme. Museum Accreditation aims to promote best practice and raise standards across the sector. In return for participation in the scheme, accredited museums benefit from mentor support, additional funding streams and increased partnership with other qualifying institutions; at present there are



roughly 1700 accredited museums in the UK (ACE 2018). Archives themselves are regulated by another professional scheme, which is coordinated by The National Archives, named the Archives Accreditation Scheme, which provides the same benefits and services for places which have been deemed as approved places of deposit, which includes most public archives but excludes most privately held collections (The National Archives 2018). Understanding of best practice is often, however, somewhat fluid, and as much as these schemes exist to formalise certain ways of doing things, and certain ways of interacting with material culture collections, there is usually some 'wiggle room'. Often museums and archives do not have to prove that they are perfect institutions, only that they are committed to striving towards best practice and taking the necessary measures to protect and care for their collections.

It has been suggested (Geoghegan and Hess 2015) that attitudes of care towards objects in a professional setting are symptomatic of a type of 'object-love' felt by those who are employed to care for these objects. However, feelings of object-love sometimes sit awkwardly alongside accepted methods of collections care,

“You must always wear gloves, you mustn't use the objects, never pick anything up by its handle. They're all there for a reason and actually we're kind of a bit too good to do that. Wasted opportunity.”

(Geoghegan and Hess 2015, 460)

Object-love may be a powerful emotion although it is also implied there is a certain amount of rule following at play as well. Curators, additionally, may have strong feelings for some objects in their collection, but are indifferent to others although they extend the same care to both equally.

“I’ve got a little soft spot for Jack Clemo’s cottage, the model of his cottage, because I guess I was involved in the rescuing, if we can call it that, from the chapel at Trethosa when that closed down in 2013...we’ve got some fantastic archives and the films are amazing. And a lot of rusty metal - which I don’t have such a soft spot for funnily enough!”

(Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Curator 20/02/2017)

Similarly, it can be seen that a love for an industry and a commitment to its heritage doesn’t always translate into a love of all of the processes that preserve its material culture. In the last chapter we saw one volunteer explain his interest in records regarding the company horses, on account of his grandfather, but he also admitted to hating conserving horse brasses,

“I will never volunteer to do anything like that again. I have not got the patience to sit down with cotton buds and a little pot of stuff and just do this for 4 hours a day...it was just mind numbing. I volunteered for a course on refurbishment and thought I’d done the course, so I thought I’d better do this and I stuck with it and did the harness... yea I really hated it”

(I 6 17/05/2017)

This discussion speaks to an observation that collections care is a multifaceted set of responsibilities (Thomas 2016). Although love and care are by no means synonymous, collections care cannot be led by Purpose alone; Passion is also enmeshed in these practices, through object-love or through a family or personal connection to the material; and sometimes these emotions are expressed in contradictory or messy ways. Although it is sometimes responsible for unpopular decisions, such as limiting casual interactions with the objects, Purpose often works alongside Passion in the CCHS archive, and the Wheal Martyn Museum. It does not diminish the emotional connections felt by volunteers and curators for certain objects in the collection, and in fact, it often sustains the practices of collections care when Passion is not simply enough: As one volunteer explained, “when all this was grabbed there was no thought

given to what was useful or needed, no formal accessioning process”

(Fieldwork Diary 21/02/18). Purpose also serves to connect the practices undertaken in individual organisations into wider heritage-making frameworks and theoretical understandings of the wider ways heritage is collectively assembled.

#### **7.4.1 Dynamic Spaces of Storage**

Like most museums (Pers 2002), the staff at the Wheal Martyn Museum estimate that only about ten percent of the total collection is currently on display; the rest is held in storage. This is largely down to the extensive photography and film collections held by the Museum on site. Similarly, due to the integration of CCHS as a component part of the Wheal Martyn Trust, the archive itself is also part of the Museum’s storage. Members of the CCHS committee have estimated that the collection housed at the main Wheal Martyn Museum site is also only around ten percent again of the overall china clay collection (the other 90% is in storage at CCHS).

A crucial factor is that the collections stored at the Wheal Martyn Museum are mainly objects, of various shapes and sizes, whilst the collections of CCHS are documents and photographs. These two different types of material culture have very different storage and conservation needs. As an accredited museum, the Wheal Martyn Museum is required to adhere to a professionally recognised standard of collections care and management. As a component part of the Wheal Martyn Museum, the CCHS archive is also governed under Museum Accreditation Standards, rather than archive accreditation (although CCHS intend to receive accreditation as part of a Cornwall specific archives scheme - discussed below). Conversations with the Wheal Martyn Museum’s Curator and

Director regarding the nature of the CCHS archive have shown that, although a collection of records gleaned from the archive and offices of ECC, the CCHS collection is, at present, managed as part of the Museum collection, rather than as an independent archive collection.

A pertinent and comparative case study to highlight on this point is that of the Panama Canal Museum collection, which was transferred to the University of Florida as to be cared for as an archival collection (Nemmers et al. 2018). The project was messy and challenging and involved re-cataloguing a diverse collection, which had been approached in the museum setting at object level, to conform to an archival system in the University, where the professionals preferred to deal with aggregate categories of records. The collection also required a new collections policy to fit within its new archival surroundings (Nemmers et al. 2018). The merger was necessary, however, to save the Panama Canal Museum collection after the museum closed, as well as to retain links with the local community, who had strong personal and emotional ties to the materials in the museum collection. In total the transfer took several years to complete. Nemmers et al. (2018) admit institutionally the project still faces severe challenges in integrating the museum collection into the archive space, as well as allowing the community the same levels of access, and mitigating the loss felt in the community after the closure of the museum. Nemmers et al. (2018) remain optimistic, however, that the intangible benefits of the move and the securing the collection outweigh the challenges faced.

Although the CCHS archive is primarily a collection of company records and individual's collections, the materials in the archive are not managed as an archive collection as they perhaps would be in a private company, Public

Record Office, or other approved place of deposit (National Archives 2018). Instead it is, at present, an archive managed as a museum collection that contains archival material. Although, as shown in Chapter 2, there is a degree of flexibility in the exact definition of an archive, the archive sub-committee of CCHS have made a conscious decision to adhere to Museum Accreditation Standards, rather than National Archival standards, which does imply a perception of difference in practice. Again, the boundaries are blurry, however, as CCHS does also operate within a professional archival context as member of the Cornish Archives Network (CAN), and when the time comes will likely be one of the first groups to apply for CAN's Quality Mark for Community Archives. CCHS have been a member of this group since 2006 and have benefitted from access and guidance from a professional archival practitioner.

In light of these blurry boundaries, I eventually came to understand the CCHS archive as a hybridised space – that was both museum and archival. Indeed, to a Passion mode of ordering, and to an extent in the context of scholarship outside of the archival profession, what type of collection CCHS cares for seems somewhat an arbitrary point. To Purpose, however, the professional management of this collection this represents an important distinction; professional definitions affect what types of guidelines and standards are put in place to govern these collections, and which professionals may be employed to care for them in the future. However, in whichever form this collection might take, Purpose can still be seen to be stabilising the collection and seeking to align its future practice to recognisable and manageable professional standards. Through this time of change, and possible instability, aligning the CCHS archive to a professional framework of best practice, represents Purpose taking a firmer

and more proactive approach to ensure this Passion-led archive still has a sustainable future.

As a hybridised museum/archive space the CCHS archive is also a dynamic space of storage. Categorising the CCHS archive as storage may sound somewhat derogatory, but as previously stated storage is not the unpeopled void that exists in the mind of the general visitor, nor is it a deposit of objects that have not been deemed important enough to be displayed. With developments in open storage, online cataloguing, and a generally more open approach to collections storage spaces, stores “are becoming surprisingly busy, places of movement and animation” (Thomas 2016, 67). For example, Geoghegan and Hess’ (2015) depiction of the storerooms of the Science Museum, Blyth House, show,

“Day-to-day life at Blythe House includes: curators cataloguing and researching objects; exhibition and event developers selecting objects to display; object movers packing, unpacking and transporting objects; conservators preparing objects for display or loan, as well as monitoring conditions inside the store; by prior appointment, members of the public researching objects they are interested in; and security guards ensuring the objects and site remain safe and secure”

(Geoghegan and Hess 2015, 447)

Storage also equally implies both certain and unknown futures. These objects are both fixed in storage, safe and secure as Geoghegan and Hess (2015) suggest, but also constantly in waiting too. This description suits the CCHS archive well as, like the landscape, it represents, it is a space which is both fixed and in limbo; a space caught in-between.

## **7.5 Discovery and Disorder**

For the majority of the time I spent in the CCHS archives I was guided by three printed sheets of paper taken from their Microsoft Word cataloguing system.

These sheets were my map, my guide through the archive. They were intended to help me find the items I needed for my research, but I often couldn't shake the feeling that they also served to regulate me as well. With the unprecedented level of access available in the CCHS archive, without these directions to the relevant boxes I might have been at liberty to peruse any box in the archive that took my fancy. Every now and again when I dared to stray from my predetermined list of documents to satisfy my own curiosity in the archive, it felt rebellious and clandestine.

“The Wheal Martyn Box had intrigued me for a while, but I had never got it down, feeling the need to focus on the Blackpool material, however today I finally gave in and opened it. The box is very heavy – adds to the feeling that I shouldn't be looking at things I haven't been assigned – which is stupid really but at the same time it feels 'sneaky' as if I'm only using Blackpool as a way to get at the rest of the collection. Inside were a few old guidebooks and various reports to the trustees dating from 1975 to around 1990s, would suspect more recent ones are kept at Wheal Martyn proper or SWLT. 1975 – the first year – are particularly interesting especially the foreword and visitor's comments”

(Fieldwork Diary 22/02/17)

The thrill of exploration was tempered with the guilt of breaking unspoken rules. I have no doubt if I was caught peeking in the boxes that were not meant for me very little would have actually happened, perhaps a mock chastising (although I had become used to these in any case). In a conventional archive setting of course I would never have been allowed unsupervised access to the records. I perhaps was not alone, however, in dutifully adhering to the parameters of my own work in the archive. One day whilst I was working alone in the Yellow Room, the chairman of CCHS at the time came in to give a tour to two other volunteers “who said that although they work here every week they actually haven't seen the majority of the archive or what it holds – only the maps [which

they work with], which I thought was an interesting concept.” (Fieldwork Diary 22/03/16).

The highs and lows of the experience of the researcher in the archive have been well documented. They range from the archival thrill and ‘the pay dirt’ moment, as described by Burton (2005, 8) to Steedman’s (2001) abstraction of Derrida’s ‘archive fever’ (1996) which sees the researcher rendered sick by the anxieties of archival research, and feverish attempts to work through all the material provided. The fever, however, is not only a phenomenon for researchers; professional staff are just as vulnerable to the effects of archival collections. For the archivist or the curator, the thrill of discovery is always a present possibility, as is often the overwhelming nature of the enormity of their task. Archival discovery, furthermore, is not always a positive experience; to manage a collection is to come to terms with the possibility that problematic objects might be lurking below the surface, in a dark box in a forgotten corner, which threaten to upset the entire collection at any given moment (Thomas 2010). With the case of Ozzy the Owl in the Stoke City Museum and Art Gallery, described in Chapter 2, his presence in the collection disrupted the space of the gallery by his mere existence (Hetherington 1997). For many heritage professionals, adherence to collections care standards and manuals can help to mitigate these risks, as can up to date and comprehensive documentation and knowledge about one’s collections. Engaging with academic theory too may help to make sense of disruption in the collection.

There is merit however, argues Nicholas Thomas (2010), in encountering museum, and archival, space only loosely guided by academic theories. This approach, Thomas argues, allows the researcher to be more open to



inconsistencies or nuances in the collection and to see the potential value in all things, or what he calls ‘happening upon’. This description of allowing the method to lead (2010, 102) is not unlike what I experienced during my period of participant observation in the CCHS archives. Thomas suggests ‘happening upon’ enchants us to ask, ‘what more is there?’ and previously understood things can be disrupted by all manner of “visions, situations, stories, intentions and identifications” (Thomas 2010, 103). In this sense, encountering messiness and un-curated features of collections makes discovery more probable, although it should be noted discovery is also possible in very neat collection as well. Below I explore further the effects of profusion and duplication in the CCHS archive.

### 7.5.1 Profusion and Duplication

One of the most striking elements visitors to the CCHS archive tend to remark upon is the sheer amount of material contained within it. Rolls of maps stacked precariously on top and one another, the row and rows of box files (all individually labelled) that line high shelves, piles of leaflets and catalogues neatly adorning metal racks and in each room filing cabinets full to bursting.



Figure 7.5 (left) Rolls of maps stacked on shelves in the CCHS archive. Photo by Author.



Figure 7.6 (right) Folders containing details of different minerals in the collections at CCHS. Photo by Author.

“Box files: Geology SW/General; minerals and mining UK; Misc. documents “W. Germany and Austria” (dates it!); Spain; Italy; USA; Press Cuttings; Chalk; Economic Geology; Waste Disposal 1970s; Talc; Celestine; Mica; Bentonite; Institution of Mining and Metallurgy; Applied Earth Sciences; Unsorted; “Ex-Plastic Bags on Floor – Unsorted” (!!).

This is assuming what’s in the boxes is what’s labelled!

Also:

- Accounts 1968-1997 ECC (multiple copies 15-20 each)
- 10x boxes of 500 envelopes (IMERYS)
- All aerial photograph runs
- ECC reviews and Christmas specials
- IMERYS annual reports

(Fieldwork Diary 10/01/18)

Due to the nature of uneven collecting and photocopying over the last fifteen years, the archive has become a hive of duplication. Although the Wheal Martyn Museum has a robust collecting strategy, adherence to which is instinctive to Purpose, the satellite nature of CCHS, and the more flexible nature of Passion, means this has been difficult to consistently enforce and often means duplication also slips in unnoticed. Some members of the archive actively choose to keep “twenty copies of everything” (I 11 21/02/2018) as there is a strongly held feeling that they may become useful again in the future. A practical concern is also that when bequests enter the archive it is not always possible to filter out all the duplicates without compromising the donated collection as a whole. Additionally, while amassing personal collections, multiple people have been able to collect the same information. In many cases this was made possible by ECC themselves: “there was a sympathy within the company so if you really were interested in something you might not take the original, but you’d take a photocopy” (I 3 23/11/2016). When collections contain handwritten notes or annotations, for instance, alongside photocopies of documents already accessioned into the collection, it can complicate things for Purpose regarding

its stance on duplication; Passion however will easily embrace these problematic items.

In the past, duplication has often not been methodically dealt with in the CCHS archive: most often duplicates have been removed from the archive stores and left on a desk, only to be put back again later - or exist in limbo. A little questioning revealed that the prevailing practice has been that duplicates, even those in poor condition, are most often recorded as being duplicated and then returned to “the vast store rooms for future dealings” (I 9 07/02/2018). However, for many volunteers (and users) the archive contains, as has been described previously, many duplicated copies of items, and some that appear to hold little interest to anyone. As one of the volunteers pointed out to me, “there’s quite a few bits and pieces like that...that’s duplicated that doesn’t mean anything and nobody’s ever going to look” (I 11 21/02/2018). This is, of course, not a situation which is unique to the CCHS archive; profusion is a significant issue for many collectors and collections, and is approached in a variety of ways by heritage professionals, as well as for many individuals in their own homes (see Fredheim, Macdonald and Morgan 2018).

Appraising and rationalising collections requires a revaluation of the significance of material whose value had previously been established, and sometimes requires material to be disposed of, or let go, as part of the process. As Bergson once questioned,

““But how can the past, which by hypothesis, has ceased to be, preserve itself? Have we not here a real contradiction? - We reply that the question is just whether the past has ceased to exist or whether it has simply ceased to be useful”

(Bergson 2004 (1896), 193)

The question remains then, how do heritage professionals approach and measure significance? In evaluating and teasing out the relationship between assignment of value and the management of profusion, Sharon Macdonald and Jennie Morgan (2018) highlight the importance of the Burra Charter (1979), and its subsequent revisions, which have succeeded in cementing cultural significance as one of the main discourses in heritage management. The Burra Charter is most often seen as a watershed moment for the recognition of heritage values that extend beyond the physical conservation of the built environment. Macdonald and Morgan highlight, quoting Bronwyn Hanna (2015) and Suzie West (2010) that the change of discourse represented by the Burra Charter shifted heritage values from significance – the language perpetuated by the earlier Venice Charter (1964) – of the material culture itself to the significance of the values that are attributed to material culture. Through the subsequent revisions made to the Burra Charter different ideas about how to assess significance began to circulate. As such, by the 1990s debates around significance of material values had spread to museum collections as well (Macdonald and Morgan 2018, 20). Also following the revisions to the Burra Charter, a number of guidelines began to be published to attempt to instruct heritage professionals about how to assess significance in their collections, often revolving around understanding three themes – the object itself, its history and context, and its value for communities – although, as Macdonald and Morgan (2018) point out, this is rarely as simple and straightforward as professional texts will have the curator or archivist believe.

The production of guidelines and matrices to assign significance leads to a false impression that objects can be valued impartially and systematically, thereby reducing the agency of the individual tasked with making these decisions

(Macdonald and Morgan 2018, 22). Among individual curators and archivists, the question about what to keep for the future is deeply engrained within their own personal practices. Often it is the case that the “fragility of things is permeated by the sense of future oriented responsibility” (Vidal and Dias 2016, 3); there is a concern among many in these professions over whether their successors, as much as future audiences, will appreciate their efforts in trying to leave behind a well-managed and significant collection (see Macdonald and Morgan 2018). Personal legacies are embedded in the collections as much as material legacies. The Wheal Martyn Museum Curator remarked about the collection: “we might not see the relevance now but it’s all about keeping options open for people who come after us” (Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Curator 20/02/2017).

For some present members of CCHS, the knowledge that after they have passed away the people that will care for their personal collections are close friends that share the same passions and values is a comfort. Others, however, have expressed concerns about the ability of the present archive to properly store and “curate” their ‘valuable and...irreplaceable’ personal collections (QU-104). In the previous chapter I explored the relationship between personal and material legacies through one past member’s personal collection. The hope is in the CCHS archive, the items in this bequeathed collection will be able to be stored together, perhaps in a room separate to the main collection (although there are no guarantees). There are still questions, however, about how to tackle the duplication that the donation contains. It will take years to accurately assess the collection due to the size and scope of it, giving CCHS a little bit of breathing space to come up with a solution to these problems. From a Purpose perspective that follows professional archival practice, the items in this

collection retain their relationships to one another and their collector, and so there is a valid reason why this collection should not be dispersed. In addition, his handwritten notes that annotate the pages of his personal archive only support the position that his archive should remain together in the future. However, many of these documents are also duplicates of records already held by CCHS. A question perhaps this thesis cannot answer is how can Passion and Purpose work together here to decide how much duplication to permit in order to retain the integrity of a personal collection, and where is the line drawn?

This question is difficult to fully answer because both Passion and Purpose have complicated relationships with loss, albeit in different ways. In the previous chapter I introduced Holtorf's (2015; 2007) application of 'loss aversion' in cultural heritage to demonstrate the unease that some members of CCHS feel in appraising the current archive. Here, I use Holtorf's analysis to show that it is not just Passion as a mode of ordering that is averse to loss in the future; Purpose also has an uneasy relationship with loss. This is because Purpose arises from a type of conservational stewardship and because,

“following the conservation paradigm and its associated conservation ethics, the heritage sector has the duty to conserve the most valuable parts of the existing cultural heritage because it is seen as an inherently valuable asset that is non-renewable”

(Holtorf 2015, 407)

As such, demonstrated by the view expressed by the Wheal Martyn Museum Curator, as well as similar views held by many other heritage professionals, loss aversion most often manifests itself in a hesitance to make permanent, irreversible decisions in the present that may affect others' ability to care for or interpret the collections in the future. Nobody wants to be remembered as the

person who somehow compromised the collection, and so there is a general habit of deferring these decisions to future generations as well. Indecision should not be confused with apathy, however, as it is impossible to second guess the future and know what will be considered important socially, culturally and historically. Macdonald and Morgan (2018) have suggested then, that instead of being too critical of collections professionals for their hesitation instead we should be calling for more associated collections documentation and guidance texts to be preserved as well alongside the materials and collections. In doing so future generations will be better equipped to understand the complex decisions that were made.

### **7.5.2 Futureproofing the Archive**

One of the final tasks I completed at the CCHS archive was to assist the Wheel Martyn Museum Curator in developing a disaster management plan for the CCHS archive. Disaster management plans are a common text produced by collections managers as part of evidencing good organisational health, and as part of the emergency plan which is requirement under Accreditation Requirement 1.9 (ACE 2014). The plans lay out the approved procedures to be followed to prevent or respond to a serious threat to the collection such as a fire, water, vandalism or theft (ACE 2014, 30). Disaster management plans are also a curious form of valuing the collections and in their very nature they acknowledge that collections and the institutions and people that care for them (and promise them to future generations) are fallible and vulnerable.

The level to which a collection or heritage object is at risk is usually correlated to a number of interrelated factors. At the largest scale, theft and vandalism are interlinked with terrorism and iconoclasm - much of the scholarship which

developed around risk, and subsequently risk management (see Beck 2002; Warton 2011), including in the field of heritage studies (Holtorf 2006), was directly influenced by the events and aftermath of 9/11 and other contemporary atrocities in the Middle East. Natural processes too, such as chemical deterioration and weathering (DeSilvey 2017; 2012a; Perry 2011), threaten the integrity of both built heritage and the museum or archive environment. The CCHS archive has many weather-related risks, high humidity and a leaky roof being just two of them. Decay then becomes a risk factor (DeSilvey and Edensor 2013; Edensor 2005) which may be exacerbated by poor storage or display conditions; the Wheal Martyn Museum freely admits many of its old storage cases and galleries for many years were not fit for purpose.

The focus of this particular disaster plan written for the CCHS archive centred on three key factors: a collections audit, the location of smoke detectors, and the number of external windows and doors (see Appendix C). As part of the plan it was intended that 'star objects' would also be identified so that in the case of evacuation or other drastic action, if it was safe to do so, these items could potentially be saved. Unsurprisingly, in trying to ascertain which objects should be considered these 'star objects' many members of CCHS were unable to choose just one or two objects which might be deemed more valuable than others. For some, a very matter of fact approach was adopted, asserting that in the case of an emergency human safety takes precedence over material collections, and so the whole archive should be left behind. For others, whole rooms were deemed important enough to be worth saving in the event of an evacuation of the building.



This serves to again highlight the earlier point that storage can be as political as display and is an environment where certain objects can still be valued and privileged over others. In any collection, even one already comprised of salvaged materials, some objects may be deemed as worthier of saving than others. As shown earlier in this chapter, academic discussion is finely tuned to discuss the politics of display and the narratives told by exhibitions or problematic modes of collection in the past. Often, however, it is the production of management texts behind the scenes which speaks most loudly about how objects are valued.

Most collections are managed in relationship to risk; the rarest items are frequently defined by it. Often these risks are not related to human actants at all. Alongside the sweaty fingers of the visiting researcher (Rose 2000), rot, corrosion and non-human threats (DeSilvey 2007a) such as mould and insects like woodworm and silverfish can easily compromise a collection— although it is often seen as the professional's job to mitigate and protect against these risks. To this end museum and archival storerooms are fitted with temperature controls, dehumidifiers, silica gel, pest traps, and a whole host of data loggers, to manage the delicate environmental balance. Much of what is held in museum collections exists in a state of 'arrested decay' (see DeLyser 2001) which describes a 'light touch' conservation technique taken to allow buildings (or in this case objects) to permanently exist in a ruined state. In arrested decay conservation is undertaken, but only to stabilise, not to renovate or restore.

As seen in Chapter 3, for many years the Wheal Martyn Museum was considered to be at significant risk, partially because the Museum lacked a full-time curator and the funds to appoint one. Due to the effects of a struggling

economic climate, visitor numbers were also consistently falling. As conditions deteriorated the visitor perception of the Museum also suffered, meaning that the total amount of income available to the Museum to maintain and improve facilities also declined. As a consequence, by 2010, when South West Lakes Trust came on board as a corporate trustee, the physical structure of parts of the Museum (much of which were part of the Scheduled Ancient Monument) were in significant need of repair. Scheduling primarily protects the site from destruction but does not “relieve the owner or tenant responsibility for maintenance” (*Ancient Monuments Acts 1913-1953* CCHS 41).

Conservation methods however, are always based on the knowledge which is available at the time. For example, during the 1980s it was generally assumed that by 2000 nearly all nitrate films would have decomposed, and that early film captured on this highly volatile material would be lost forever (Science and Media Museum 2011). Since then, advances in understanding and the development of deep freezing and copying techniques have meant that “archivists have effectively bought themselves further time to deal with the problem” (Science and Media Museum 2011). The Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS archive collections do not contain any nitrate film, although the risk from decomposing film was so great that when the Museum appointed their new curator she acted “pretty pronto” (Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Curator 20/02/2017) to get a conservator to come and reassure them that the film material did not pose a serious health and safety risk to staff and volunteers, or the rest of the collection. Returning briefly here to the opening small story, part of the practice now undertaken to conserve the Wheal Martyn Museum film collection is through deep freeze storage, which is “supposed to, according to the IPI, the Image Permanence Institute, extend their lives up to about 3,500

years” (Interview Wheal Martyn Digitisation Officer 23/08/2017). This type of long term preservation, whilst seemingly impossibly optimistic (and as noted by the Digitisation Officer – “no one can really prove that!”), draws some parallels between cultural preservation and open-ended sustained biological preservation. Rodney Harrison’s (2017) examination of the Svalbard seed bank as an archive of biological diversity, suggests that practices of freezing materials serve also to freeze time. He further posits, “the values of these collections are banked as latent values that are only to be realized at some future moment in time” (Harrison 2017, 86). Working with arrested time offers the hope of stability for an uncertain future (Harrison 2017).

In the final section of this chapter I address how the Wheal Martyn Museum is engaging with the changing nature of the china clay industry, their own volunteer workforce, and with new audiences through new approaches to collecting and to the interpretation of the physical museum site.

## **7.6 Looking Forwards**

The Wheal Martyn Museum is not a traditional museum. Whether arriving by car or by walking or cycling along one of the many ‘clay trails’ in the region, and after passing through a modern atrium housing a temporary exhibition space, café, and shop, visitors are welcomed into the Victorian and Edwardian clay works-cum-museum space by an animated portrait of William Cookworthy, the 18<sup>th</sup> century discoverer of china clay in Cornwall, himself. The former clay works of Wheal Martyn and Gomm provide much of the built infrastructure that makes up the original museum building, with a host of oversized collections exhibited as open-air attractions, including a transport yard, settling tanks, and Mica Drags. From the viewing platform, visitors to the Museum also receive a

panoramic view of an active china clay pit which is located just behind the Museum site, still extracting clay.



Figure 7.7 (left) Ruins of an engine house encountered on the Wheal Martyn Museum nature trail. Photo by Author.

Figure 7.8 (Right) The Lansalson pit taken from the car park of the Wheal Martyn Museum. Photo © Nadia Bartolini.

Undoubtedly it is the combination of the natural exterior space of the Wheal Martyn Museum site, and its historic remnants combined with the presence of modern industry, that makes the Museum such a compelling and interesting place. Taking a stroll down any of the rhododendron lined trails leading away from the main building rewards the visitor with glimpse of a ruinous tumbledown engine house, or a blue green flooded pit juxtaposed against lush vegetation. The visitor is transported into the heart of the Clay Country, where it feels at any turn another ruin might be uncovered or another pool happened upon. At points it feels almost wild and unscripted, and yet the experience is a carefully planned and maintained route around the site.

Conversely navigation inside the exhibition spaces is at present unintentionally awkward and somewhat disconnected. The majority of the Wheal Martyn Museum's collections are displayed in the lower floor of the Pan Kiln building

and many of the displays have not been updated since the 1970s. Rather than holding together in a coherent narrative they represent “a collection of items but without any consistent story going through it” (Interview Clay Works! Project Officer 29/11/2017).

Concurrent with all the transitions presently occurring within the CCHS archive, the Wheal Martyn Museum is also undergoing its own transformation through a Heritage Lottery funded project – Clay Works! – to refurbish the dilapidated Pan Kiln and Mica Dry buildings that make up part of the built infrastructure of the Museum and are covered under the Scheduled Ancient Monument designation. These are parts of the Museum that are actively in the process of decaying – “the roof is in such a poor condition, you know the rain comes through there’s a river down the floor in the winter” (Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Curator 20/02/2017). The Project Officer, who has been leading the Clay Works! project since 2015, explains,

“The Clay Works! project is a project to restore, well, conserve the Mica Dry building and parts of the Pan Kiln building, especially the roof, to preserve them for the future and get them off Historic England’s Heritage at Risk Register’ hopefully. To do that you need to have a sustainable re-use for building, for people to be able to fund these things. The Pan Kiln is obviously part of the Museum, part of the interpretation. The upper floor of the Mica Dry is currently a bit of a ruin, building rubble all over the floor no end wall, bit of a state, so to be able to raise funds to actually do something with that it has to have a new use”

(Interview Clay Works! Project Officer 29/11/2017)

With £1.35 million secured from a number of national and local funders, the ruined buildings will be conserved and transformed into a new exhibition and activities space. The hope is that the renovation work will improve the way that the story of the Museum site and china clay is told, as well as improving access and providing a much-needed area for educational groups.

In this we see the complex nature of official types of heritage-making. As is often the case for heritage conservation, heritage value alone, or the fact that the collections are currently at risk due to the decaying fabric of the building, is not always enough to warrant conserving these buildings with public money. Nor is it enough that they have Ancient Monument Status and are currently listed as Heritage at Risk by Historic England. Instead, there also needs to be a repurposing or commitment to sustainable reuse in order to achieve the necessary funding needed to preserve and protect them for the future. In many ways this practice also ensures that buildings that are preserved for the future continue to have relevance for present and future generations. There are many ways that buildings from the past can be re-used in the present, and for many different reasons. For many buildings classed or designated as heritage, adaptive economic re-use is often one of the only ways that a building can be guaranteed survival after the original use of the building has ceased (Pendlebury, Wang and Law 2017).

The type of adaptive re-use being undertaken at the Wheal Martyn Museum broadly falls into what Luna (2013) terms symbiotic reuse, where the re-use of the building retains its connections to past but also allows for memories to move forwards, and as part of a two-way exchange (Luna 2013 in Pendlebury, Wang and Law 2017). The Wheal Martyn Museum, like many museums, is a hybrid space of the past and the present. The strategic re-use of the Scheduled Ancient Monument, and other original features, such as the waterwheel and transport yard, as part of the more modern museum space feeds into a narrative of continuity of use, and memory on the site. Attending to a timeline where the past and present are blurred, it could perhaps be easier to conceptualise a future, not separated from the present but instead a

continuation of the present (Vidal and Dias 2016). In places such as the Clay Country, where the taskscape of china clay is sustained by acts of dwelling, adaptive re-use of these once industrial buildings – not only as heritage but as spaces of heritage-making – helps to make china clay heritage sustainable for the future.

## **7.7 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has explored different facets of professional and Purpose-led heritage-making practices that have been observed in the CCHS archive and at the Wheal Martyn Museum. It has highlighted the mode of ordering, Practices of Purpose, that often accompanies these professionally led activities, and some of the relationships that Practices of Purpose have with Practices of Passion, as described in the previous chapter, in the CCHS archive and the Wheal Martyn Museum. It has also acknowledged, that alongside the personal and community aspects explored in the previous two chapters, it is often through an engagement with professional practice that tangible heritage-making practices continue to thrive.

By highlighting Practices of Purpose alongside professional practice, I sought to approach one final research question for this thesis, which asked who has authority and ownership over these different collections in the Clay Country. In doing so I unpicked some of the relationships that exist between professional and amateur collectors. I began by juxtaposing two accounts that both relate to the digitisation of historical film, illustrating two very different types of heritage practice. In the discussions that followed I explained that to a certain extent professional practice is concerned with a kind of benign ordering power (Cresswell 2012), often exercised through mediated access to heritage

collections. I drew on Macdonald (1998) and Foucault (1991[1975]) to show how cultural spaces are inherently political spaces and that in them power and knowledge are often interlinked. I also explored the different knowledges that exist within the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS: The Purpose-led museological and archival knowledge on the one hand and the Passion-led knowledge about the industry which makes sense of the archive and museum collections. I have also shown that access to the collections is regulated by power and knowledge, and that in some cases the politics of access can lead us to question what kinds of knowledge are privileged when it comes to accessing and making heritage.

This chapter has also questioned the status of the CCHS archive and the roles of those who care for it. I have highlighted a debate, examined by Flinn (2011), among professional practitioners about the legitimacy of community collections as archives. Drawing on Cook and Schwartz (2002), who state that archives are not passive but are instead active sites where social power, politics, and memory play out, I apply Law's (2004) contention that spaces are often made and regulated by practices. I have argued that caring for objects is a complicated multifaceted set of responsibilities (Thomas 2016) that manifest themselves in the repeated 'rituals' (Cook and Schwartz 2002) of curators, archivist and volunteers alike. Although, as I showed in Chapter 5, personal connections can be a key reason why people care for and preserve objects, collections care cannot be led by Passion alone; Purpose is also needed. Purpose, I argued often works alongside Passion in the CCHS archive, and the Wheal Martyn Museum. I observed that although Passion can be a key instigator of collections, Purpose often sustains the practices of collections care when Passion itself is not simply enough. I also suggest Purpose is a key way



that practices undertaken in individual organisations feed into wider theoretical understandings of the ways heritage is collectively assembled. Furthermore, the professional guidelines that Purpose draws on are often what guides and shapes understandings of significance. It should also be noted, however, that reluctance on the part of heritage professionals to make lasting changes to the collections could be mediated by more comprehensive record keeping regarding why decisions were made (Macdonald and Morgan 2018).

I also unpacked how the collection in the CCHS archive has been characterised and the different ways it has been cared for professionally; I also considered the future plans to move the CCHS collection to a purpose-built archive space at the Wheal Martyn Museum. I argue that rather than being solely categorised as a museum collection (as the CCHS volunteers and Wheal Martyn staff have agreed to treat the collection) or as an archive (as the space is currently called – the CCHS archive) it is in fact hybridised, working towards museum standards but receiving professional guidance from both museum and archive professionals. In essence the hybridity strengthens the collection and opens more opportunities for it to grow and evolve in the future, although there may come a time where hybridity ceases to be useful anymore in the future and choices will have to be made. I also argue that this, at present, a dynamic space of storage, as storage implies both certainty and the unknown. Objects are both fixed, safe, and secure (Geoghegan and Hess 2015) but they are also in waiting too. The CCHS archive is a space caught in-between, between museological and archival, between past and present, and between secure and at risk.

Lastly, I explored the Wheal Martyn Museum, which like CCHS and the china clay industry is in a period of transition and transformation. The new building

work due to start at the site at the end of 2018 will offer an opportunity for the Museum to engage their audiences with the dynamic nature of heritage preservation and management. I have shown how the meeting of both past and present in the use of the built environment at the Wheal Martyn Museum allows for a more fluid timeline at the site which is well placed to engage with the future of china clay as part of an ongoing taskscape in the Clay Country. I also showed how the adaptive re-use of the Scheduled Ancient Monument allows for continuity of memory and a sustainable story of heritage to be told on the site.

Through this chapter I have highlighted different elements of the relationships between the staff and volunteers of CCHS, the Wheal Martyn Museum and their corporate trustee South West Lakes Trust. I examined these relationships alongside the different practices of Passion and Purpose that play out in the Museum and CCHS archive and have shown that different approaches to heritage can often be mutually sustaining, rather than dissonant.

In the final chapter that follows I will explore some of the possible futures that are being made in the Clay County, before drawing together all of the threads of this thesis into a final concluding discussion.

## Chapter 8: The Future Archive

In this concluding chapter I integrate key observations from previous chapters into an extended discussion of heritage-making at the Wheal Martyn Museum and in the CCHS archive. I also offer one final reflection on certain practices that have started to emerge which suggest possible futures for heritage in the Clay Country. This chapter addresses the four key research questions that have guided this research and discusses the role that assemblage and modes of ordering can play in thinking about the ways china clay heritage has been made in mid-Cornwall, before drawing together some final conclusions.

### 8.1 Ephemeral Moments, Durable Heritage

As a participant observer my time in the archive was never meant to last forever. Much advice is given in the methodological literature about ethical integration and practices of embedding into a community when doing ethnography (for example see Crang 1994; Crang and Cook 2007), but we don't often talk very much about how to successfully extract ourselves with the same level of kindness and understanding for the community we have been a part of. I was fortunate, in some ways, that my own personal circumstances pulled me away from Cornwall during my last few months of research, giving me the distance (quite literally) and the space to write and reflect on my experiences. I had attempted to voluntarily leave the archive once already, just before Christmas 2017, but the familiar pull of archive fever (Derrida 1996; Steedman 2001) drew me back in and I stayed on, until Easter 2018 when the matter was eventually taken out of my hands by a family relocation to Edinburgh. Back in the December of 2017 I simply felt I wasn't finished. I had more I wanted to do,

more stories to gather and more records to consult. I also felt a pang of guilt about the idea of leaving: if I had genuinely become a volunteer in the archive, and no longer *just* a visitor, how could I leave just because my research had come to an end? I was also reminded of the responses I received in my questionnaire survey and the dedication so many members had shown, one clearly stating, “why would one not continue a long-term interest except for illness and the restrictions of age, death” (QU-157). In the face of such dedication I felt shameful at the prospect of leaving. On my last day in the CCHS archive I spent some time reflecting on the experiences of the last two and a half years of being involved with china clay heritage, stretching back to the very first meetings. In my diary I wrote,

“It’s strange to reflect back, as I write this out sat in the only room I know won’t be disturbed in, the ‘Red Room’ - the conference room, the only time I’ve ever worked in this room was my initial meeting in here in 2015, so it is almost fitting that this is where my archive journey ends as well. But so much has changed in these three years, this is not the same archive as it was then, neither is it the same society and I am not the same person either.”

(Fieldwork Diary 11/04/18)

The research I have gathered since that initial meeting in 2015 has sought to answer four key questions about the relationships with the past in the Clay Country. They were,

- How has the heritage of the clay mining region in mid-Cornwall been produced through practices of collecting, archiving and curation, in both the past and the present?
- Who are the people who care for the collections of the Clay Country and what motivates them to undertake these caring practices - what makes these collections special to them?

- Who has authority and ownership over these different collections, and what are the relationships that exist between professional and amateur collectors?
- In moments of change how can ephemeral things be made durable - what can be saved for the future and what cannot?

The discussions across the previous chapters have proposed that the answer to the first question lies in the multiplicity within practices that take place across the CCHS archive and the Wheal Martyn Museum, expressed through different types of collecting and ordering. I have also touched on the personal and local collecting that has taken place across the region, in community halls and inside homes, which has fed into creating the rich heritage assemblage in the Clay Country. The Wheal Martyn Museum and the CCHS archive are examples of the types of places where the heritage-making process settles into distinct rhythms of practice, and over time the process solidifies into a durable place of heritage. Materials also become entangled in these rhythms, and, as part of the heritage assemblage in the Clay Country, also achieve a degree of permanence. Meanings and values surrounding such places (and objects) however are always fluid, even if slower transformations seem to imply stability (Cresswell and Hoskins 2008).

By attending to the natural rhythms of heritage-making at the Wheal Martyn Museum and in the CCHS archive I identified two modes of ordering, Practices of Passion and Practices of Purpose. These practices were simultaneously 'out there' being done and 'in here' being devised through my observations in these spaces, and as I attempted to make sense of the messy heritage assemblage (Hinchliffe 2007, 178). Modes of ordering also offered some insight into the way

that processes become solidified in place. Multiplicity in ordering addresses heterogeneity in the heritage assemblage and offers a way to reconcile difference in practices and motivations into one cohesive sustainable entity. Where one mode of ordering fails, or falters, another often takes over in its place (Law 2003). Juxtaposing Passion and Purpose orderings, rather than individual actors, highlights how heritage-making practices in the Clay Country – like the identities of those who perform them – are not one dimensional; instead they change, evolve and adapt over time. Instead of highlighting dissonance, this approach has shown how the heritage assemblage is often strengthened by difference in practice, rather than unsettled by it.

Before drawing the remaining threads of this research together, this chapter considers one final element of the questions posed at the beginning of this thesis and looks to the possible futures for china clay heritage, and the Clay Country more widely.

## **8.2 Heritage Remade**

“there’s always going to be new developments, and Wheal Martyn needs to really tap into those and keep itself relevant to the modern world as well as to the historic”

(Interview Clay Works! Project Officer 29/11/2017)

The collections, and the built environment, of the Wheal Martyn Museum and the CCHS archive are made up of fragmentary material traces, saved and intended to be preserved for the future. Some of these buildings, objects, and records lost any tangible relationships to living beings long ago, whilst others still have an active role to play in present lives. Cheryl McGeachan (2016) has posited that the temporal aspect of these traces is important, as some traces are ephemeral and fleeting whilst others remain in place, both visible and

invisible. It is impossible, however, to predict which traces will perpetuate into the future, no matter what processes are put in place in the present to preserve (or, indeed, forget) them; the things that we receive as heritage are made up of things that were intended to be kept, as well as things left to decay (Houston 2013). The site of the Wheal Martyn Museum itself was a rediscovered 'relic' – an abandoned and forgotten ruin, overgrown and thick with rhododendrons – transformed in a matter of years into a viable museum site.

When the performance group WildWorks came to the Clay Country village of St Dennis in 2008 to work through ideas of continuity and change they began by identifying three distinct themes for the region: Honouring the Past, Valuing the Present and Imagining the Future (WildWorks 2008). The workshops on these themes drew out intense examinations of community values over the course of several months which culminated in creation of the film *Heart of Clay* (2008) and an exhibition of memory boxes, some of which found permanent homes within the local community (Penryn Campus Archive Box 3: AC2010-009). Ten years on, however, very little appears to have tangibly changed and the community has a new resident in the form of the Cornwall Energy Recovery Centre, locally known as the 'St Dennis incinerator', despite fierce opposition from the local residents (and highlighted in the WildWorks consultation). The WildWorks community consultation did, however, show the importance of engagement with community values, even if sometimes the things that are hoped for never materialise (or in the case of the St Dennis incinerator fail to disappear).

Conversations surrounding what it means to be a resident of the Clay Country, the legacy of industry, and the unique challenges felt by Cornish communities

are still needed today, especially in the face of on-going social and political turbulence. Communities who take pride in, and place value on, certain aspects of their shared history as heritage will likely always recognise those community identities, regardless of any official designations of significance – as was the case in the founding of CCHS. This can become problematic, as Caitlin DeSilvey (2012; 2017) has noted, when those identities become centred on material relationships, highlighted in her study of the collapsing harbour at Mullion on the west coast of Cornwall. Similarly, a Cornish identity focused squarely on mining and fishing has become increasingly unsettled with the demise of tin mining, and an increasingly precarious fishing industry (Hale 2001; Laviolette 2003; Laviolette and Baird 2011). Discussions that take place in these situations instead become focused on how a community can move on whilst continuing to recognise and cherish the past.

For many years there has been a sense that china clay has been “the poor sister of Cornwall’s industrial heritage” (QU-9) and has not received the attention it deserves. As such the Museum and CCHS work tirelessly to raise the profile of china clay history, in the region and beyond. Since 2015, the Wheal Martyn Museum, as part of a Subject Specialist Network within the Cornwall Major Partner Museum programme, has hosted an annual Industrial Heritage conference. In doing so the Museum opens up a new space for discussions surrounding Cornwall’s vast industrial heritage that places china clay at its centre and ensures that it remains part of the conversation in the future. Additionally, preparations for different futures continue to be made through school and learning programmes and a commitment to raising visitor numbers and engaging with the local community. Creative arts events on site



and discussions with local people regarding the redevelopment programme are paving the way for new stories to be told in the Museum's space.

The Museum also acts as a negotiator for the knowledge accumulated and created by volunteers, researchers, and users of their collections. Heritage institutions, such as museums and archives, are no longer thought of simply as sources for information; they are also tasked with communicating that knowledge and information (Black 2005). At present the Wheal Martyn Museum has roughly 30 to 40 regular volunteers, the majority of whom are retirees of ECC and Imerys. These guides at the Museum are an essential part of telling the story of china clay. Although their continued presence is not sustainable due to the increasing age of the group, for now they are able to offer unique insights into the china clay industry and the associated landscape. Public interaction with cultural processes and products also allows objects themselves to convey meanings, ideas and emotions, with the museum space acting as a mediator for these non-verbal messages (De Blavia 1998). Museum theory has developed to encompass these ideals, and in following this approach in the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS archive, *Practices of Passion and Purpose* are able to reach a common ground within a Community of Practice, striving for shared goals around the promotion of clay heritage and the communication of expert knowledges.

The importance of a shared community approach to heritage can be viewed as an aspirational future-making device, as well as a way of celebrating a shared past (Smith and Campbell 2017). Since the mid-2000s there has been a concerted effort in the museum sector to reengage museum audiences (see Black 2005; Simon 2010) through participatory methods. Museum visitors, to a

certain extent, are seen as constructivist co-curators of their own experiences who bring their own ideas, preconceptions, and interests into the exhibition space (Black and Skinner 2016). Over the course of my time in mid-Cornwall, The Wheal Martyn Trust made great steps to sensitively begin to reimagine what the Wheal Martyn Museum might look like in the future. Suggestions raised at community consultations by local residents and current visitors have included a desire for more engagement with china clay as an artistic material, and more opportunities for hands on activities. Furthermore, the wealth of expertise in the China Clay History Society is a considerable resource that the Wheal Martyn Museum can draw upon for new exhibitions and new imaginations of china clay.

In some cases, and where appropriate, reimagining futures may also involve moving away from the traditional depiction of a community's or industry's history, as part of planning for the future involves acknowledging that communities change and may move on from industry ties over time. The Wheal Martyn Museum is currently in a transitional period and still in recovery from a period of stagnation. Growing the Museum and engaging with new audiences is opening up new opportunities for exhibition and event programming. Whilst still retaining the core offer of a Victorian clay works and associated museum, there is also the potential to tell new stories and chart the progression of the modern industry and the Wheal Martyn site itself,

“the core of the site is the Victorian clay works that is still up there, but you need to interpret it in a different way and make it more relevant so that people come, and part of that is the site didn't stop in 1966 ...but then we need to tell the whole story of the industry. So that's from Cookworthy and even earlier, through to tomorrow”

(Interview Clay Works! Project Officer 29/11/2017)

As shown in Chapter 3, the Wheal Martyn Museum was initially conceived, in part, for the local community to learn about the industry but it was noted that by the early 2000s, after many years of difficulties, the Museum's 'brand' had taken "a battering", with many local people considering the Museum as either 'tired' and 'run down' or misreading the space as exclusively for the management of the clay industry and funded entirely by the industry (*Diagnostic Planning Study and Short Feasibility Report 2002*, pp. 2 Wheal Martyn Cabinet 6.3). At present engaging with the local community has largely gone hand-in-hand with developing the Wheal Martyn Museum's offer as a heritage attraction. An overhaul of the gift shop and café as well as existing atrium displays, all of which are free to visit, has increased the Wheal Martyn Museum's appeal as a community hub, something which the Museum's management are actively promoting in order to

"include all sorts of people from the local community and people to think of this place as somewhere they can come and use as their own space"

(Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Manager 20/02/2017)

In part this has been achieved by regular meetings of groups such as the Wheal Martyn 'stitches' group, an art group, a forest school for children, and a memory café for people with dementia, as well as one-off special events including family fun days and the use of the site as a venue for other local events. Despite this, however, it is estimated that only 10-15% of annual visitors to the Museum, up to 2017, were residents of the local area (Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Manager 20/02/2017). In order to balance the need to engage the local community, as well as continue to grow as a tourist destination, in 2017 an annual 'locals pass' was introduced, distinguishing the local community from the wider tourist audience and encouraging local people to visit regularly.

### 8.2.1 A Historic 'Mining' Town

In part, these new developments and narratives that the Museum is engaging with are directly related to the ways that the Clay Country presents itself to visitors to the region. Tucked away in the stores of the CCHS archive is a mounted copy of the sign which greets drivers as they enter the town of St Austell. Visitors are conventionally welcomed to "St Austell: Historic market town'. However, the sign in the photograph has been modified. A large red cross covers 'market' and above it reads 'mining', printed in bright red and attached with sticky back plastic; a rebellious act of decoupage.



Figure 8.1 Welcome to St Austell historic mining town, in the CCHS collection. Photo by Author.

It is not uncommon to see references to mining towns on the 'Welcome to' signs across Cornwall. Further west, both Redruth and Camborne claim their affiliation to Cornish metalliferous mining, so the 'artist' behind the cardboard cut-out in the archive could be forgiven for wondering why St Austell does not do the same.

Before the discovery of china clay in the parish of St Stephen in Brannel in 1748, St Austell was little more than a rural church town. Although there had been some modest successes in metalliferous mining, it was thanks to the

china clay industry that St Austell, despite being neither an ancient town nor an administrative borough, grew to become one of Cornwall's largest settlements (Rowse 1960). The wealth brought into the town during the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, has not afforded St Austell with a burgeoning tourist trade, as seen in other, often coastal, parts of Cornwall, or a particularly attractive town centre; it has been said that "the rest of Cornwall sneers at St Austell" (QU-47). Additionally, the surrounding areas – once moorland punctuated with rural hamlets and small-scale farming settlements – was transformed into a tumultuous and scarred landscape of open cast china clay pits and towering waste tips.

The town unfortunately has also suffered from unfavourable comparisons, and often appears somewhat hard and run down next to the nearby pretty fishing and port villages of Charlestown, Porthpean and Pentewan. Unlike other towns which have benefitted from profitable industries, St Austell also has very little in the way of public buildings or statues erected either by or for the industry. It has been suggested (*Diagnostic Planning Study and Short Feasibility Report 2002 Wheal Martyn Cabinet 6.3*) that due to the current active status of the industry the element of nostalgia which would have promoted china clay has not yet materialised.

### **8.2.2 Clay Town**

One development in recent years has been the resurgence of the White Gold Festival (a predecessor known as White Gold Week was once prominent, but the celebrations had been long abandoned by the end of 1990s (*Diagnostic Planning Study and Short Feasibility Report 2002 Wheal Martyn Cabinet 6.3*)). The current White Gold Festival, which first took place in 2016, is the result of

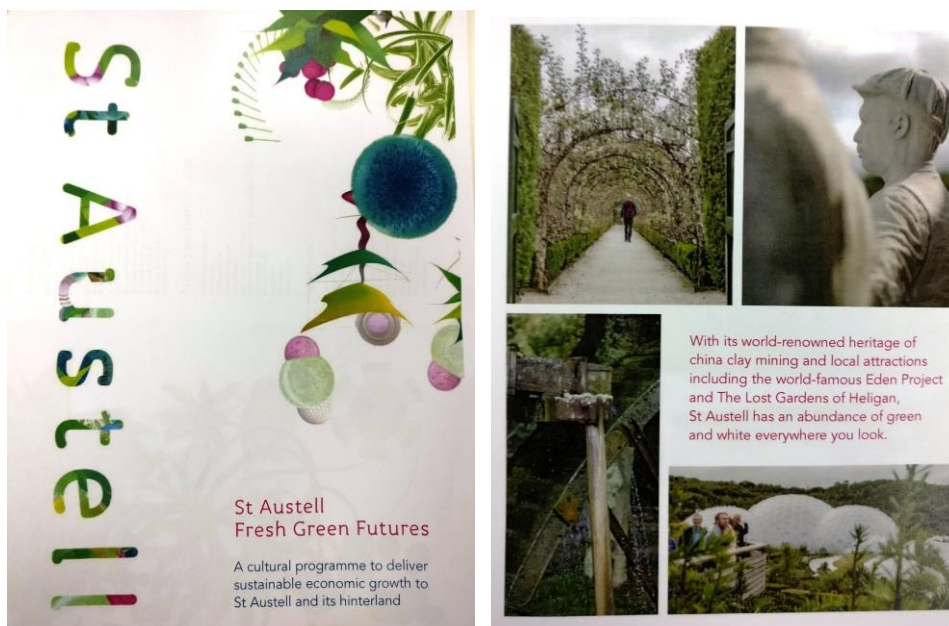
collaboration between the founder of The Eden Project, and a representative for St Austell Brewery, Cornwall Council and the St Austell Bay Economic Forum, as well as other regional partners (Whitegold 2018a). The festival aims to promote the china clay product, and the town of St Austell, through artistic intervention and creative practices. The festival is also in conjunction with the 'Clay Town' initiative which is seeking to re-brand St Austell as a centre for ceramic art, as homage to the china clay industry (Whitegold 2018b). The initiative also has prominent messages about ecological and community restoration and is as much about regenerating St Austell as a centre for tourism and creative industries as it is about celebrating the industry of the past.



Figure 8.2 Which way? Signage on the Clay Trail at Carluddon.  
Photo by Author.

Clay Town seeks to reimagine St Austell's town centre and hinterland. The proposals represent a shift in the way key stakeholders see the primary value and appeal of the region, as well as a greater emphasis being placed once more on the economic value of the 'White Gold' (china clay), as highlighted in Chapter 5 albeit in a different way. In the promotional material the Clay Town group proposes their "new story explains what St Austell has to offer, captures

the spirit of the area and will be what puts us ‘on the map’ for all the *right* reasons” (Clay Town 2018, my emphasis). The language in the proposals used harks back to the “Cornish entrepreneurial spirit” (Staughton 2018, 4), a phrase that was often used to describe the actions of both the historic land and mine owners (Cornwall Council 2011; Sharpe 2005) and the itinerant Cornish metalliferous miners, who due to the wage system were often treated as self-employed (TUC 2018). The programme suggests a fresh, green, start to the brand and image of St Austell and aspires that by 2030 “St Austell and its hinterland will be celebrated as a green and ceramic cultural centre, as a place of innovation and an active theatre” (Staughton 2018, 5).



Figures 8.3 (left) and 8.4 (right) Promotional material for the work programme attached to Clay Town proposals. Photos by Author. Promotional material © St Austell Bay Economic Forum.

The proposal is a notable example of heritage-remaking at work. Through a very specific lens the Clay Town proposals attempt to utilise St Austell’s clay mining past by celebrating a ceramics-based heritage. Interestingly, although ceramics have links to the region through the raw material, china clay potteries remained largely absent in this region, and in Chapter 3 I showed how pottery

manufacturing was sometimes construed as competing with Cornwall's tin and pewter wares. The focus of Clay Town dovetails with popular tourist attractions, The Eden Project (built in a disused clay pit, and representative of 'regeneration') and The Lost Gardens of Heligan (incidentally located in the gardens of the former home of the Tremaynes and Johnstones - wealthy clay landlords, although this clay link is likely to be unintentional). The new initiative looks to build a new future for the St Austell area, but one that simultaneously exalts and excludes the historic industry.

In light of the new heritage developments in the Clay Country, such as the Clay Town initiative, the proposed, but still unspecified, move of the CCHS archive to the Wheal Martyn Museum, alongside the dynamic nature of the present industry, suggests that the futures of china clay heritage will perhaps be even more multiple than at present. Heritage-making across the Clay County region has also been shown to be partial, with uneven designation and contesting valuations of the landscape and the built environment. In Chapter 5 I suggested that this is due in part to the transformational nature of the landscape and the china clay industry itself. In its 'unfinished' and fluid state the Clay County is left open to multiple readings, which in turn leads to the possibility of multiple futures for the landscape and for the material collections that have documented its change over the last 250 years.

The remainder of this chapter now addresses the three remaining research questions this thesis has sought to answer and offers some final concluding thoughts on heritage-making practices in the Clay Country.



### 8.3 A Multiple Industry

“China clay isn’t, never has been and never will be either a suburban or an indoor activity. It’s huge, and rough and wet and windy, and it won’t take at all easily or quietly to being cooped up in a museum however neat and tidy and scientifically satisfying that may be”

(Kenneth Hudson *Thoughts on Visiting Wheal Martyn* Dec. 1973)

Looking back over my fieldwork diaries from my 18 months in the CCHS archive, the Blackpool pit, and its associated documents, was by far the focus of most of my archival musings. Its position in the landscape and in the history of the industry often occupied my thoughts. For me the Blackpool pit had been like an anchor, its history, and its prominent position in the china clay story gave me something to cling too in amongst the sea of excess.

“So many times I have felt overwhelmed by China Clay, by the industry, by the product, the area, the knowledge, the ‘actors’ – there’s too much. Blackpool emerged as an anchor, but Blackpool is just one version of the Clay\*, there are so many different china clays, only in accepting this can I truly make sense of the clay.

\*Blackpool, microcosm for the declining industry - of humble beginnings meteoric rise and eventual decline but this is only one version”

(Fieldwork Diary 10/01/18)

But I also came to realise that this narrative of success and eventual decline is just one of many versions of the clay industry. Among my rambling thoughts I told myself the only way to make sense of all the entanglements was to acknowledge that there was multiplicity. Once I began to accept there were multiple versions of china clay – the industry that was in decline and fading and the other which was thriving – and china clay history – the types that exalted the industry and others that condemned the past (as well as the ones that disinherit the industry all together) – I could begin to make sense of the mess (cf. Law 2004). Among hastily written notes, scribbled down one morning in January

2017, just as I had decided to stay longer in the archive, one (almost) sentence stands out to me clearly,

“Multiplicity – different types of archives, different futures, as well as different presents, what version of the archive/ of china clay is being saved?”

(Fieldwork Diary 17/01/18)

Working with multiples required this research to conform to an ontology that allowed for more than one world ‘out there’ (Law 2004) and a constructivist epistemology that saw different pasts, presents, and futures continually being made and remade by different people and practices (Dewsbury 2010; Law 2004). This thesis has, admittedly, only really dealt with some of the stories that are told in the Clay Country, namely those that championed the industry and its achievements, narratives that Jesse Harasta (2012) has called ‘Industrial Triumphantist’. This is just one version of the china clay story, and there are countless others ‘out there’ that frame china clay in a different and less positive lights (see Trower 2009).

The Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS archive in their own ways were both multiple too. The Wheal Martyn Museum has undergone many changes in the years since its opening in 1975. Whilst it cares for many of the same objects and still has the same charitable objectives, it has evolved as an institution. No longer dependant on the industry for funding, the Wheal Martyn Museum is now an independent trust with close ties to a new institution, South West Lakes Trust. Mirroring the changes that have taken place in Cornwall over the last 40 years South West Lakes Trust, as an education, leisure, and recreation charity, is perhaps a more accurate representation of the version Cornwall that the Wheal Martyn Museum is now a part of. SWLT represents a Cornish economy

that is sustained by leisure and tourism instead of the traditional mining industries. The Wheal Martyn Museum today is also taking on new ideas, projects, and qualities which distinguish it from the first original museum whilst still retaining its institutional purpose. With the completion of the ClayWorks! construction work the very fabric of the buildings themselves will physically transform as well.

In contrast, the CCHS archive is somewhat enigmatic. This is a space full of lively conversation and community building among a subset of local residents, where 'honouring the past' (Wildworks 2008) is a key part of the practices carried out. In conducting this research, however I often questioned how to best present this space through a more traditional heritage-making lens. Putting aside its institutional affiliation to the Wheal Martyn Museum for a moment, in its essence is it an amateur community archive in need of professional revaluation, or, is it an extension of the Museum collection and should be treated as such? Over the course of this research I came to feel that the space inhabited by CCHS and their extensive collection was best categorised as neither solely museum space nor archival; instead I suggested that it was, and continues to be, a hybridised, animated, and dynamic space of storage. I argued this because storage implies both certain and unknown futures. The objects in the CCHS archive are fixed, safe, and secure, but they are also uncertain too and in waiting, to be moved, in time, to the Wheal Martyn Museum and to a new space of heritage-making, and perhaps with a new mode of ordering to see it into the future.

#### **8.4 Blurry Boundaries and Multiple Expertise**

My second research question asked: who are the people that care for china clay heritage, what are their motivations, and why is this heritage important to them? In the past seven chapters, I have shown that there are a number of different characters in the story of china clay, and people and objects take on multiple roles that often became intertwined and overlapping. There are the professional 'museum people', whose expertise and experience centres on collections care and heritage management. They are joined by the amateur archivists, who are experts on the industry, its history, geology, and the processes of extracting the clay from the surrounding countryside. These are regular volunteers and members of the China Clay History Society, but around the peripheries there are also the occasional or short-term visitors who drop in and out or seem to slip in between visitor and volunteer status (people like me). At the centre of all these interactions are the objects themselves, actors by proxy (Gell 1998), that draw a secondary type of agency from their interactions with people, which give their mute actions meaning (Hetherington 1997). Together, these different and multifaceted individual actors become enmeshed in the heritage assemblage that is being made in the Clay Country; people and objects come together in a complex configuration that blurs the lines between the social and the material (DeLanda 2006). These different practices and methodologies are manifested in different performances of heritage and memory-work, and this observation gave rise to my identification of Practices of Passion and Practices of Purpose as two distinct, but interrelated, modes of ordering.

Drawing on Morgan Meyer's (2008) assessment of the boundaries of science production at the Luxembourg Museum of Natural History, I also found that within this configuration of heritage and industry there are multiple

understandings of what constitutes expertise. Furthermore, in different spaces of heritage-making different types of knowledge are privileged and perpetuated. As shown in Meyer's study the boundaries between amateur leisure time and professional working time are often not clear cut in heritage environments. This was also seen in the Clay Country, for example members of CCHS told me,

"I like my work, I like what I do but the more of this I'm doing, Wheal Martyn, China Clay History Society, the films, see I class this now as my job and what I do for Imerys is just a well-paid hobby"

(I 4 03/12/2016)

"I've been here for since about 2009 we come once a week on a Wednesday morning and we look at it as almost as being as a working day because we start at 9, as a structured working day."

(I 9 07/02/2018)

Additionally, many CCHS volunteers continue their research away from the archive and many also curate their own personal collections in their own homes. The home offers time and leisure that the museum does not, and when professionals and amateurs begin to work together across the professional and domestic spheres, space, time, and practice collide (Mayer 2008) and become entangled in the complex assemblage of heritage-making. As I showed in Chapter 7, the ability to continue work in their own homes resulted in debates within CCHS regarding the removal of objects from the archive environment. Taking objects home blurs the lines between home and museum and is a controversial practice in professional museums and archives. For CCHS and the Wheal Martyn Museum this resulted, on this occasion, in enforcement of a purity of ordering where Purpose could not allow the Passion's practice of home borrowing to continue.

These observations also fed into my third research question which asked who has authority and ownership over these different collections and I sought to examine what the relationships were between professional and amateur collectors. I found that Passion and Purpose did not necessarily correspond specifically to certain institutions or specific individuals; rather they were mutable and characterised by different types of practice which may have been evident in those institutions, or within the practices of certain individuals. It is true that the practices carried out by the Wheal Martyn Museum tend to align more strongly with Purpose, whilst those of CCHS often align closer to Passion but this is not a political distinction between professionals and amateurs however. Instead it was the result of a ritualised acting out of applied theory (Cook and Schwartz 2002) and best practice within institutions; by this I mean that through the repetition of the same practices, practice tends to self-perpetuate and become habitual. Throughout its history the Wheal Martyn Museum has moved backward and forward between Passion-led and Purpose-led ordering. Prior to 2010, and the new leadership and curatorial programme enacted under South West Lakes Trust, elements of the Wheal Martyn Museum may too have aligned closer to Passion (although we cannot know for sure), but today it is primarily a Purpose-led institution. CCHS is perhaps a little more nuanced, with its members and archive volunteers aligning with both Passion and Purpose, often adopting mutable positions depending on what issue was to be addressed. For example, although predominantly Passion-led for most of its history, CCHS joining the Cornish Archive Network (CAN) in 2006 certainly demonstrated that the Society has always been to some extent, as it is now, in tune with the need for the professional guidance that comes with Purpose as a mode of ordering. This further shows how modes of ordering are not static and

often co-exist within the same people, showing different facets of themselves in different situations (Law 2004, 112).

Passion and Purpose was also seen to be related to feelings of ownership.

Whilst Purpose took the role of a steward, or as an institutional owner, Passion demonstrated a more personal investment in the collections. Thinking about heritage in the Clay County through modes of ordering, I have argued, is one possible way of critiquing the concept of dissonance in heritage-making.

Heritage dissonance, as described by, Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000), is considered a component part of heritage, and often stems from an understanding of heritage as something that has a 'zero-sum' nature. It is suggested that if heritage belongs to one group then it cannot equally belong to another. Smith (2006) has noted that in the case of working class and industrial or labour heritage, visitors' feelings of ownership and personal connections to heritage places are often expressed more clearly. By comparing visitors to labour heritage sites with visitors to other types of heritage site (such as a country house), Smith (2006) highlights that labour heritage visitors are more likely to be from the local area and are less likely to reinforce the Authorised Heritage Discourse when asked to explain what heritage means to them.

Instead of claiming heritage is something they 'just do' or 'should support', among labour heritage site visitors, Smith (2006) posits, intangible aspects of heritage such as memory, skills, workplace experiences, and family connections often are seen to be on par with the tangible material of the museum or heritage site. Furthermore, visitors to labour heritage sites are more likely to challenge official designations of heritage which do not fit with their own experiences. This trait has also been noted by Ainsley Cocks (2010) among Cornish residents living in traditional mining regions. Because of this, active engagement and

performativity have been seen to be more prevalent in industrial heritage sites, often as a way to validate and underscore personal experiences (Smith 2006, 235).

These examples show that local people, especially in post-industrial areas, often take ownership of their local heritage in ways that subvert or challenge the Authorised Heritage Discourse, but does this attest to a 'zero-sum' nature of heritage ownership? As I have shown in previous chapters, when it came to making-heritage in the Clay Country, the integration of Passion and Purpose modes of ordering alongside the working in a Community of Practice had the ability to supersede notions of insider and outsider when members worked towards a common goal, as well as mitigating divisions between different expressions of museum practice by professional curators, amateur volunteers, and outside parties (Høg Hansen and Moussouri 2004; Meyer 2005), highlighting that difference can also be a productive and sustaining feature in heritage-making communities.

### **8.5 (un)Sustainable Heritage**

The ability of multiple ordering practices to sustain heritage-making does not mean that they can also protect against all losses; some things cannot be saved, and it is possible that part of the legacy of CCHS in a possible future could, in part, be the phasing out of its existence. Although heritage-making practices most often focus on what can be preserved, as seen in Chapter 6, as memory intertwines with history there are always losses (Nora 1989). These should not necessarily be lamented, as Nora does. Instead, it is possible to adopt open-ended approaches that allow for change and revaluation. It was the threat of loss that catalysed CCHS to initiate their collection and assemble a



rich archive that encompasses both the collection of history and practices of memory-work. Addressing the last question that this research has tried to address, I sought to probe deeper into some of the moments of transition where losses become gains, and question how, in moments of change, ephemeral things can be made durable.

Writing over 50 years ago, Rita Barton (1966) concluded her history of the china clay industry by reflecting on the state of the industry between 1845 and 1960 with a somewhat melancholy sentiment,

“In the century which lies between, a hundred or more pits have run out their lives and been abandoned, as were unnumbered earlier workings – mere scratches on the surface by the present day standards of the industry- belonging to the more distant past. Signs of these former activities fortunately remain but a vigorous and forward looking industry cannot afford sentiment and the big yellow earth movers which disrupt the peace of Hensbarrow today not only prepare for the future but also destroy the past”

(Barton 1966, 206)

In her conclusion, Barton declared that the china clay industry's years are numbered. Like tin and copper, she predicts that china clay will one day pass into history, although current estimates suggest that the industry could still have decades, if not centuries, of prosperity before that outcome materialises. The china clay industry, by the destructive nature of its extraction, often destroys the physical traces of the past industry in order to secure a future for the industry. In this industrial landscape, the physical remains of the past, it is implied by Barton, are unsustainable if the future industry is to prosper. It is poignant to note that the popular narrative told over china clay was then, as it is now, one of decline, whilst the industry itself is keen to stress the opposite. It may be that since the decline of tin and copper the collective consciousness of the region is almost waiting for china clay, Cornwall's last extractive industry, to disappear

too. Referring back to Phillip Payton's (1996) assertion, highlighted in Chapter 6, the conflation of cultural change and cultural extinction has been common feature of Cornish historical commentary.

As changes occur in the heritage-making practices across the Clay Country, there are some facets of CCHS and its relationship with the Wheal Martyn Museum that are unsustainable, some of which I have already discussed above. Most prominently, the number of 'old boys' in CCHS is slowly decreasing and with them their intimate knowledge of china clay is disappearing too. The personal and family connections that contribute to the work carried out by many of the CCHS volunteers, it was shown, will eventually come to an end, with many members finding themselves to be the last of a generation. This is not a rapid transition however, and there is still plenty of time to put in place measures to try to secure their knowledge. One of the ways CCHS have been trying to combat this is to pursue a programme of oral history recordings, to capture spoken memories of the industry and create a permanent historical record, but this is not able to truly capture the animated connection many members have to items in the collections.

In periods of transition it is easy to perceive that many things are happening at speed all at once; time accelerates, although in reality the transitions which are happening are quite slow. As one volunteer told me regarding the cataloguing systems, "we were talking about the same thing in 2012 as were talking about now 6 years later and still we haven't moved forward" (I 11 21/02/2018). This inactivity was keenly felt by some volunteers in the archive. I had several conversations where a volunteer shared that they did not expect to see the outcome of their labours and the eventual movement of the collection into a

more sustainable location as part of the Wheal Martyn Museum site. One volunteer confided to me, “eventually they’ll [the collections] finish up at Wheal Martyn, when they make the new building, when they build but... I don’t think I shall ever see it, I’m 86 now” (I 8 29/11/2017). This was not an uncommon sentiment. During a conversation at the Wheal Martyn Museum that took place as part of a workshop on artistic interpretations of changing landscapes, one participant mentioned something she called the ‘I’ll be dead’ narrative. The ‘I’ll be dead’ narrative, she explained, most often comes out when discussing future plans with elderly generations; often people struggle to see themselves reflected in these futures.

Without a safe and secure archive building the future of the collections held by CCHS will always be somewhat uncertain, but it is a project that will take time, money and careful management to achieve successfully. Although the archive building is a shared hope of both the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS, an agreed timescale has yet to be approved for its construction.

“I know it’s a real frustration to them that the archive is further down the list but it’s the only way that it can be done... and it’s the only way it can be funded”

(Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Director 08/06/2017)

I also found that decisions external to the Museum and the CCHS archive could sometimes unsettle the relationship between the different practices of heritage-making, and relations between the Museum and CCHS. In part, I wondered if frustration may also have stem from the difference in pace. Museums and archives, although dynamic in many arenas, can be slowed down by the procedures of applying for and receiving funding to carry out new projects; this can be an arduous and prolonged process. In contrast, many CCHS and Wheal

Martyn Museum volunteers told me how their work in the china clay industry was all to do with keeping the clay stream moving, day and night. Towards the end of my fieldwork I noted,

“\*\*\*\*’s frustration on how long [it] takes to get things done, “I shouldn’t get annoyed but I do”[he said]...I said that it was okay to be annoyed because when you care about something you want to see it done, but it’s also a wider symptom of museums... in my experience, it happens a lot. \*\*\*\* then talked about working in surveying, requests come in and things needed to get done quick otherwise you’d hold the whole plant up. Perhaps this is part of the issue – like [another volunteer] mentioned – a whole lot of people used to working in a no-nonsense ‘just get on with it’ environment – the mind-set is to just get things done quickly and practically.”

(Fieldwork Diary 10/01/18)

It was also this no-nonsense approach that founded the archive in the first place when the collection was salvaged. As I have shown however, these differences can sometimes be compatible, rather than conflicting. I found that both Practices of Passion and Practices of Purpose, impulsive action and careful consideration, were needed in the heritage assemblage, and to retain its sustainability.

The CCHS collection is protected, and legally owned, by the Wheal Martyn Museum, and the Museum staff and CCHS volunteers have been preparing the collection to be documented on the MODES digital documentation system (a system which is specifically designed to complement the spatial organisation of a museum environment). The management of the materials in the CCHS collection needs to be brought up to professional standards to be viable and sustainable for the future, and to do so it will need to be professionally evaluated by a collections management professional. Depending on which type of heritage professional carries this task out, an archivist or a curator, this assessment will likely affect which parts of the collection are deemed to be most

valuable, even subconsciously. External valuations are a key part of how official types of heritage are made (see Cresswell and Hoskins 2008; Hoskins 2016). It is telling however, that official heritage-making processes seem to put more emphasis on the specialist knowledge and views of an impartial valuation than the knowledge and understandings of the people that the heritage in question directly relates to (see Cresswell 2012) (although it should be noted that community consultation does often take place in these evaluations). The practice of external valuation does play an important economic role in the allocation of funding towards particular projects, but it is also complicit in perpetuating that specific sort of heritage knowledge that Smith terms the Authorised Heritage Discourse (2006). In turn, these processes of appraising and externally evaluating raise interesting discussions around whether or not certain 'heritage assets' can be seen to have intrinsic values (Fredheim and Khalaf 2016).

Although in day-to-day practice the distinctions between archive and museum are somewhat arbitrary, the words used to describe collections do have a tangible effect on the management of the materials. Under the care of ECC many of the collections held now by CCHS were indeed archival, held in the private archives of ECC or in the offices, and some of the documents still retain traces of these old archival systems. In the process of the takeover by Imerys and the salvage of these materials by CCHS, the materials became part of a museum collection.

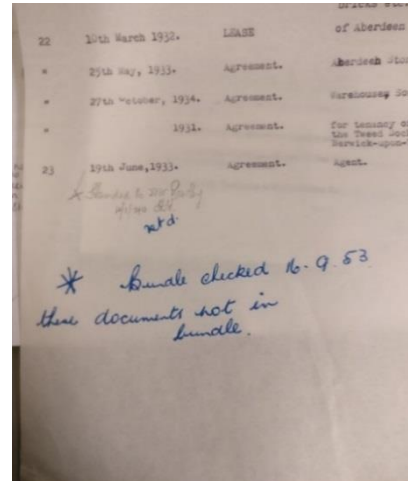
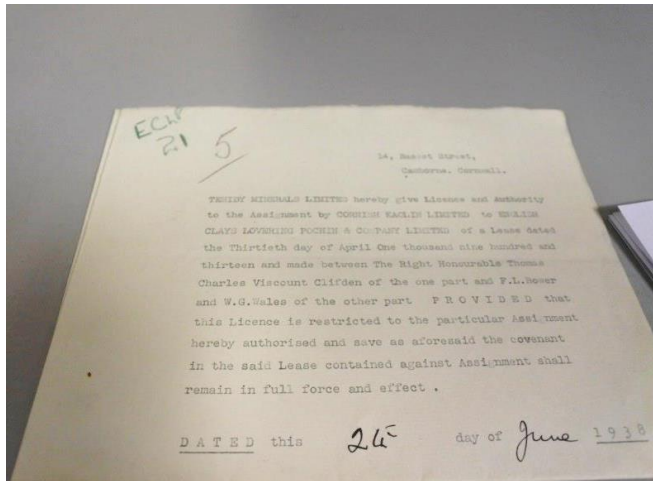


Figure 8.5 (left) Document in the CCHS collection with traces of previous ECLP cataloguing in top left corner, ECLP 21/5. Photo by Author.

Figure 8.6 (right) Document in the CCHS collection with handwritten filing notes from 1953. Photo by Author.

In Chapter 7 I noted that my observations and discussions with the Museum’s Director and Curator showed that the CCHS archive was an interesting example of a hybridised heritage space, both museum and archive, with both elements of open and closed storage, and how a conscious effort has been made to refer to ‘the collections,’ a term which encompasses both the materials at the Wheal Martyn Museum and in the CCHS archive.

Reflecting on these discussions and the decision by the CCHS archive sub-committee to work towards reframing the collection as a community archive, I suggest this reframing could be expanded and could also work, in time, towards a framing of the proposed new archive space at the Wheal Martyn Museum as an open and multi-functional community space. This space would be neither fully museum nor archive – although in practice it would be managed in line with the Wheal Martyn Museum’s Accreditation Standards – and could encompass the archive collections, study space, exhibition space and a small lending library, which would also in line with the Wheal Martyn Museum’s programme of activities to become a ‘community hub’ (Interview Wheal Martyn Manager

20/02/2017). In doing so, this potential new building, might be better able to carry on the spirit and the culture of the CCHS collection and its extended community, now and in the future. Of course, this too would take time and money, but it could serve to combine elements of both Passion and Purpose as the archive collection moves into a new space of ordering, combining what is currently cherished about the collection in its current space with the professional standards the collection needs to be sustainable in the future. As was shown in Karen Till's (2005) study of new Berlin, open archives, where history is continually retold through dialogue and ongoing research, can allow for more nuanced and dynamic understandings of changing landscapes and difficult pasts. The history of the Clay Country is of course very different from post-war Berlin; however, the notion of competing landscape valuations does lend some comparisons. Places, such as the Wheal Martyn Museum and the CCHS archive, which straddle the pasts, presents, and the futures of the Clay Country are an important part of encouraging open-ended dialogues. The Wheal Martyn Museum's plans to become a dynamic hub for the community and "somewhere they can come and use as their own space" (Interview Wheal Martyn Manager 20/02/2017) means that these conversations, whether they, to borrow from WildWorks (2008) honour the past, value the present or imagine the future, will have a lasting space to continue.

### **8.5.1 Preserving the Present**

How, then, can collections, and the spaces that are used to care for them, remain open to continual engagement and memory-making? One possible solution undertaken by many museums and archives, including the CCHS archive and the Wheal Martyn Museum, has been to engage in contemporary collecting practices. In DeLyser's (2015) exploration of her personal collection of

*Ramona* tourist trinkets she opens with the comment that all too often archival collections, (including other established collections), are approached as “collections already created” (DeLyser 2015, 209) when in fact they are most often in a state of constant making. Similarly, Cresswell’s (2012) examination of collecting in the home of an activist showed that periods of transition can elicit practices of contemporary collecting. Ephemera from demonstrations to save the Maxwell Street Market, such as leaflets, placards, newspapers, and photographs, resulted in contemporary collections that stemmed from an event that had a direct emphasis on preserving the past.

A distinction should be made here between contemporary collecting and growing the collection in the present. Ontologically, these two practices are very similar; both attempt to second guess the future in deciding what will become valuable and then choosing to preserve it. But whilst growing the collection often fits nicely into the realm of collecting the past, contemporary collecting seeks to choose items from the present that are to be kept for the future. Unlike growing the collection with past objects, contemporary collecting is exclusively a future-making practice.

In the collections of CCHS I found there was a blurring between past and present. Although the majority of the collection was historic and salvaged, much of the Society’s self-generated material had also been collected and saved as well, including newsletters, members’ own publications, photographs of events, and crucially other member’s own collected archives that contained notes, reflections, and research alongside the historic documents. Past and present blurred in this archive because the volunteers themselves were part of both the present and the past they were striving to collect and pass on to the future. For



the most part this was an archive where very little material was actively excluded, and all traces were deemed equally valuable.

In professional collections the line is often slightly more clearly cut, largely as there are policies in place to aid this type of collecting in the first instance. For most professional private archives, of a business or university for example, the present or very recent past is often the focus of the collection. In museums, contemporary collections are the result of specific theoretical positions taken by institutions and individual curators in relation to the work the collection should be performing, and many larger museums now have dedicated curators for modern collections. For the Wheal Martyn Museum, contemporary collecting was one of the ways their collection could continue to achieve sustainable growth. Unlike most industrial heritage collections, the Museum is in a somewhat unique position that their focal industry is still active, and this opens up an avenue of collecting which other industrial heritage sites are unable to access.

## **8.6 Final Conclusions: Heritage and Hope for the Future**

As I have shown, heritage is conceptualised in most contemporary academic writings as a process enacted through practice and performed in different types of collecting and preserving practices (Smith 2011). Heritage, as it is enacted however, is also 'a thing' that is made durable; objects and buildings become fixed as heritage by their relationships with people and places (Cresswell and Hoskins 2008) and through the practices that are undertaken to conserve their materiality, referenced as evidence of a relationship with the past. Collecting these objects from the past is one of the many practices that are carried out in the making and sustaining of heritage.

Collecting takes many forms; it encompasses the traditional accumulation of materials by individuals and institutions but is also present in the official heritage practices of creating lists and scheduling. Despite these practices carried out in the present to preserve the past, ultimately, we cannot control if the things we preserve today will be useful in the future, and how they will be received as different types of heritage (DeSilvey 2017; Holtorf 2015; Houston 2013). As such present heritage-making practices might best be seen through a lens of hope (see Harrison 2017). Participating in heritage-making enacts a “discrete forms of temporal reasoning” which holds that the things we choose to save will be appreciated and utilised in the future (Harrison 2017, 87). Furthermore, it has been argued that the redemption of “past hopes” is what is important about heritage preservation, not the preservation of the material remains of the past itself (Adorno and Horkheimer 1979[1941], 148 quoted in Pearson and Shanks 2001, 156).

Smith and Campbell (2017) have addressed this hope through what they term ‘nostalgia for the future’. This type of progressive nostalgia, that is both sentimental for the past and hopeful for the future, is a complex emotional expression where,

“That which is remembered is done so with a sense of loss tempered with overt pride, empathy and gratitude, which is in turn underlined by a desire to assert a sense of communal belonging and sense of place in the context of rapid deindustrialization and social change”

(Smith and Campbell 2017, 613)

Through my observations during my time in the Clay Country, I could not ignore the feeling that there was a hint of sentiment present in the practices of CCHS and a deep sense of gratitude from many towards the industry for the

experiences their working lives gave them, feelings which I later credited to Practices of Passion. As one respondent told me,

“With 46 years in the industry I hope I can pass on my experience through working at Wheal Martyn and my close association with the China Clay History Society”

(QU-45)

I also found that for some members of CCHS there was also sense of disbelief that there are not more retired china clay employees joining the History Society, or ‘giving back to the industry’ by contributing to recording its memory or history. This, too, is perhaps nostalgia for a way of life that was more prominent in the past which many do not experience today. Over time, attitudes of gratitude towards the industry will naturally dilute and fade, as the last of the generations who remember a time of wide-spread employment in the china clay industry begins to fade away too. Whilst they remain, however, many who engage in heritage-making will do so in the hope that the future generations will pay attention and realise what china clay “meant to mid-Cornwall” (QU-172).

For professional staff at the Wheal Martyn Museum, I found that hope for the future was not primarily based on personal memories or gratitude towards the industry. Rather, it was based on a hope that the Museum will be able to continue to positively serve the community. As such there is an emphasis on achieving financial sustainability for the Museum, and by extension the CCHS archive, by expanding the visitor experience, increasing ticket sales, and growing the Museum as a successful enterprise; in doing so the Museum will be able to continue to care for its material collections to the best standards and practices. I came to see this focus on proficient collections care as a central tenant of Practices of Purpose. Coupled with the desire for financial and

material sustainability there was also a desire, or a hope, that the work being done and the decisions that were being made would be appreciated in the future,

“It’s all about keeping options open for people who come after us, to my mind if I can leave Wheal Martyn in better state than I found it... [that’s a job well done]”

(Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Curator 20/02/2017)

Through these varied practices we can see that heritage-making is, in part, built on a hope for the future. Heritage legacies come in many different forms, such as the Curator’s hope to leave the collection in a better place than she found it, the Director’s desire to grow the Museum financially so that it can better serve the collections and the community in the future, as well as the actions of many CCHS volunteers to pass on their debt and gratitude to an industry through being attentive to its memory and history.

### **8.6.1 Negotiating Passion and Purpose**

Before this thesis draws to a close, I offer a final reflection on the way that dissonance was present in my research and influenced the way I have presented it here. As noted in the introductory chapter and in Chapter 4, in some ways, this thesis can be understood as a co-production that was formed by the relationship between my position as a researcher, volunteer, and as an advocate for the work being carried out by the Wheal Martyn Trust, and from the relationship between different modes of ordering – Passion and Purpose. As with any collaborative effort, there were moments of consensus, but also challenging moments and compromises, which I will discuss below.

In the final months of my research I provided some participants with draft versions of chapters for their comments and feedback: Chapter 6 was shared

with committee members of CCHS and Chapter 7 with the Director and the Curator of the Wheal Martyn Museum. I made the decision to open up my drafts for feedback, partly as an ethical decision, as I believed strongly that the participants in my research had a right to comment on my interpretation of their practices, but I also saw this as an opportunity to validate my observations and to rectify any factual errors I may have inadvertently made. The response I received from CCHS largely focussed on a reiteration of the work the Society had been doing to capture the knowledge of its own members through the oral history programme. They also highlighted the breadth and depth of knowledge held by the members of the Society, and acknowledged the debt owed to those who had donated their collections to the Society. The response from staff at the Wheal Martyn Museum was a far more careful and critical response, that was primarily concerned with how the work might be perceived by external audiences. In their comments, they took on the role of constructive critics and 'devil's advocates', exploring different potential interpretations of the information presented and seeking to minimise the risk of confusion and misunderstanding by the eventual readers of my thesis. Aside from rectifying some oversights and correcting some factual errors, some concerns were raised regarding the way I had presented the current physical state of the Museum building, as well as questioning the necessity for what I had termed 'a critical understanding of the relationships' within the Wheal Martyn Trust from my perspective as an academic researcher.

From the conversations which followed it was soon apparent that those in a management capacity were aware that the profusion of different, and sometimes conflicting, opinions and perceptions about the way heritage is managed and presented in the Clay Country makes for a particularly

complicated heritage-making assemblage. But, as stated previously, there was also a real commitment by all to achieve a sustainable future for china clay heritage. From the perspective of the Museum, part of achieving sustainability was also to be mindful of the ways the Museum and CCHS are portrayed to their audiences.

In participating in this last act of co-production, my dual citizenship as a visitor and a volunteer was inevitably subjected to the same modes of ordering I had witnessed across the Wheal Martyn Trust. Perhaps predictably, the responses I received from different individuals aligned with what I had come to understand about the different modes of ordering, Passion and Purpose. The feedback from CCHS was knowledge-focused and shared with pride in the collections, past members, and the industry they represented. From the Museum's management the feedback was cautious, explored all the possible outcomes, and was bolstered by formal relationships with 'official' heritage-making bodies – the UK Museum Accreditation Scheme and the Museum's external funders.

As both a visitor and volunteer, I was shaped and 'ordered' by Passion and Purpose. Passion, over 18 months, encouraged me to develop a type of 'object-love' (Geoghegan and Hess 2015) for the archive, whilst Purpose, in these final weeks, grounded me by emphasising the necessity of best practice guidelines to safeguard the Museum's professional – and local – reputation. These conversations eventually led to a series of mutually agreed amendments to the drafted thesis that were more attentive to the positive benefits of the relationships between Passion and Purpose within the Wheal Martyn Trust.

These interactions with the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS fed into my own critical evaluation of the thesis and of the aims that the work was trying to

achieve. Indeed, in the wider practice of critical heritage studies, there is a need for researchers to communicate clearly with the practitioners 'on the ground' and especially for scholars to be more attentive to the effect of their academic jargon (Harvey and Walters 2018). Conversations with the Director and the Curator of the Wheal Martyn Museum emphasised the difficulties and disconnections that an academic concept of heritage dissonance can sometimes have for practitioners and those involved in the day-to-day processes of heritage-making. In the process of reviewing drafts and discussing the material a strong sense of the ways dissonance and difference can be productive emerged between both myself and the management of the Wheal Martyn Trust, as well as the potential uses for the modes of ordering of Passion and Purpose I had identified through my observations and semi-structured interviews. These conversations were therefore critical in refining my own understanding of the way that Passion and Purpose interacted in the Clay Country and in my choice to focus on what happens when dissonance is placed alongside the mutual aims of a Community of Practice, which by this point also included me as a researcher/volunteer, in a wider heritage-making assemblage.

### **8.6.2 Modes of Ordering to Achieve Sustainable Futures**

Practices of Passion and Practices of Purpose involved in the Clay Country both compliment and conflict with one another, but through their differences they help to make and sustain heritage in the Clay Country. Throughout this thesis I have shown there needs to be salvage, enthusiasm and object-love, as much as there needs to be collections development plans, disaster management plans, and professional development.

In thinking about the concept of dissonance, I am reminded of a final 'small story' I encountered in the archive about two china clay companies, 'The Great Halviggan China Clay Company' and 'Cornish Kaolin', during the year 1927 (See Appendix D). For many years these pits had shared a narrow border, but as long as each company respected the boundary lines they both worked in relative harmony with each other. The amicable working relationship came to a halt, however, in April 1927 when a petition for a 'Case for Arbitration' was made to Mr Noel Bellamy, a surveyor living in St Austell (CCHS 74/3.16). Mr Bellamy was asked to settle a dispute, where Cornish Kaolin was accused of knowingly violating the boundary line by the Great Halviggan China Clay Company. Through overzealous extraction of clay too close to the border Cornish Kaolin had caused a clay slip in the Great Halviggan pit, ruining a large portion of merchantable clay.

The china clay industry during the interwar years was characterised by many small pits, like Great Halviggan and Cornish Kaolin, working in close proximity to one another. Balancing competing interests however was a delicate task that could be tipped over the edge by the slightest antagonism. This small story highlights how heritage dissonance is often conceptualised, as separate groups that work in relative harmony until a build-up of small transgressions boils over into moments of confrontation. Dissonance has been claimed to be a key part of heritage-making and is unavoidable; as something is claimed by one group or by one understanding of heritage it often leaves little room for other interpretations without conflict (Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge 2000). Dissonance, in this reading, ripples along the borderlines, gently brushing against opposition in indirect resistance to one another's beliefs and practices, in the background; when mobilised, however, dissonance can become



disruptive and destructive. This thesis has shown, however, that heritage dissonance does not have to be conceptualised as disruptive, and that approaching heritage as an assemblage negates the assumed 'zero-sum' characteristics of heritage. Dissonance, or difference, can also be what sustains the process of heritage-making and encourages its growth. Indeed, the proliferation of multiple small pits and china clay companies, and their competition for resources, made china clay extraction into the profitable industry it was during the 20<sup>th</sup> century; it created the dynamic china clay landscape, and contributed to the progression and growth of the industry. The 'dissonance' here was creative and productive.

### **8.6.3 Productive Heritage Dissonance**

In light of the discussions that I have presented in this final chapter, I propose that heritage processes that are conceived as a present-centred activity will always struggle to perceive dissonance as a productive force. A heritage process that is future-facing, however, can find new ways to see how different motivations can feed into new assemblages of heritage. Of course, this does not negate some of the atrocities or deeply felt hurt which can come about because of discordant relationships to heritage around the world today, but in this particular case study of the Clay Country, as discussed above, it has been more beneficial to understand heritage dissonance as productive, and as part of working towards shared goals and imagined futures.

The different ways in which amateur and professional practices operate can sometimes seem dissonant, especially when expertise is not held exclusively by professionals (Meyer 2008; 2005). This is because different types of practice are related to different expressions of knowledge (Latour and Woolgar 1986;

Law 2004). The theoretical position that has underpinned my research was that methods are integral to the production of knowledge; they are the means by which realities are shaped, and often those methods are multiple (Law 2004). The idea of methods shaping realities has been explored in relation to heritage collections by some critical heritage scholars, including Tony Bennett et al. (2017) and Rodney Harrison et al. (2016). I have tried to further these discussions by examining the different types of expertise in the Clay Country related to the china clay industry and collections management. What I have concluded is that often different knowledges, working backgrounds, and attribution of values manifest into different relationships with the archival and museum material. The identification of these performative narratives was what led me to understand heritage-making in the Wheal Martyn Museum and the China Clay History Society as being sustained by the two modes of ordering, Practices of Passion and Practices of Purpose that have been discussed over the chapters in this thesis.

The contribution to wider research that this research offers is perhaps in how the application of modes of ordering could be made to other heritage-making practices or in other organisations. Other concepts which have drawn on thinking from Science and Technology Studies, such as Actor Network Theory, Non-Representational (or 'more than' representational) Theory and the development of assemblage theories have proven progressive and useful to the study of heritage, collecting, and memory (see Bartolini 2015; Bennet 2007; Harrison et al. 2016; Hetherington 1997; Macdonald 2009; Lorimer 2005; also see Rubio 2016). For me, in the Clay Country, Passion and Purpose were just two modes of ordering that stood out as being significant in the heritage-making practices I was observing, and I started to see ways they could be applied

outside of the Clay Country as well. Furthermore, in wider contexts, other modes of ordering could be equally useful. The more I began to think about the wider application of modes of ordering to heritage, I came to see other ordering strategies that could also be applied productively in analysis. For example, perhaps Law's (1994) strategy of enterprise also has some value for heritage organisations, as do Hinchliffe's (2007) strategies of care and remediation. I also came to imagine that a strategy that centred on materiality could have some use as a mode of ordering in wider heritage-making contexts as well.

#### **8.6.4 The CCHS Archive: Heritage for the Future**

The story of china clay, of CCHS, and the salvage of the collection, will carry on as long as there are still those who continue to tell it, even after those who experienced it are no longer around to 'tell the tale'. As we have seen, absence isn't necessarily the same as loss but, for CCHS, the eventual absence of its founding members and their personal connections to the industry will inevitably change the dynamics of the archive and the collection. Loss, however can also offer new heritage materials and new perspectives (DeSilvey 2006; 2017).

As the industry progresses, the methods for extracting and managing the china clay have progressed with it. Machines replace roles once performed by humans, drastically reducing the operational workforce. The once plenteous white pyramids, the "gigantic cone[s] of dazzling white sand" (Barton 1966), that dominated the sky line of mid-Cornwall are all but gone from the horizons, and in their place are levelled and 'benched' flat mounds, the white sands muted by gorse and bracken.

"A whole new landscape is evolving. The gentle sloping heathlands and moorland of the granite terrain is giving way to dramatic changes in

contour. The land can return to a landscape of heathland, wooded hills, lakes and open pastures rich in wildlife”

(Imerys, *Back to Nature* n.d. CCHS Collections)

The landscape fondly remembered by many members of CCHS no longer exists. A handful of conical tips and the images in the Wheal Martyn Museum, CCHS archive, and numerous personal collections are all that is left of the way the landscape looked during the heyday of china clay. These salvaged traces of a once familiar industry create a rich collection of personal memories intertwined with the archive material.

But who is this archive for - the present users or the future? The current caretakers of the CCHS archive have expressed hope that the collection will persist into the future, but the steps that must be taken to enable that future will alter the way the collection can be interacted with in the present. Similarly, the Wheal Martyn Museum must continue to find ways to translate this dynamic space of storage into a compliant part of the Museum environment.

In this discussion I have presented the multiple future prospects for the material collections of the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS, drawing on the discussions highlighted in the previous three empirical chapters. I suggested some possible future outcomes for the CCHS collection. I have also theorised about the future of china clay heritage in the Clay Country more generally, paying special attention to developments, such as Clay Town, that mainly fall outside of the scope of the Wheal Martyn Trust. As spatial and temporal entities, the Trust's collections at the Wheal Martyn Museum and in the CCHS archive cannot be divorced from wider practices and processes happening outside of their remit. The Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS can, however,

decide how to portray these changes within their own spaces of heritage-making.

Heritage I have argued, drawing on MacDonald (2009), Harrison et al. (2016) and others, is best conceptualised as a complex assemblage of human-object relationships. As such, relationships in the assemblage allow objects to act, with people and upon people (Gell 1998). Furthermore, their associations with people give voices to their otherwise mute actions (Hetherington 1997). In this way, to the right people photographs of Pan Kilns smell distinctly of evaporating clay; maps tell stories; and collections deputised for a much-missed friend, their own words and turn of phrase captured and retained in their own handwriting. Such material relationships are ephemeral and transitory, and once the relational bonds break down they will transform into new actions and new stories, and some will also cease to exist at all.

As MacDonald (2009) notes, any account of an assemblage is fragmentary; it was not possible to follow all of the relationships that were involved in heritage-making in the Clay Country. For example, it was not possible to engage with the wider CCHS members (those who do not volunteer in the archive), apart from one or two isolated cases. How these people are involved in heritage-making for the future through receiving and reading the newsletter or attending events is unknown. Traces of all these relationships, however, endure in the archive (McGeachan 2016) and await further excavation.

We cannot say what futures will materialise for the collections of the Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS or how the things that have been kept – and the things have been lost and let go of – might be taken up by future generations. In viewing the heritage of the Clay Country as an active assemblage of

interconnected human material relationships, however, the captivating nature of the CCHS collection will not be lost through any subsequent appraisal or remaking in the Museum space, just transformed for new heritages to be made in the future.

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# Appendix A (1): Copy of Questionnaire

## PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

### “Excavating the Archive in Cornwall’s Clay Country”

#### PhD Project at the University of Exeter.

PLEASE ENSURE YOU HAVE READ THE ATTACHED INFORMATION SHEET BEFORE COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE, THANK YOU.

1. What is your age? (please tick the appropriate box)

18-24   25-29   30-39   40-49   50-59   60-69   70-74   75+   Prefer not to say

2. What is your sex

Male   Female   Prefer not to say

3. What is your postcode?

4. What is/are your role(s)? (please tick the appropriate box(es) )

Wheal Martyn Museum Employee  

Wheal Martyn Museum Volunteer  

China Clay History Society Member  

China Clay History Society Committee Member  

Other: i.e. private collector (please specify)  

5. How long have you held your current role(s) (if more than one role please specify)

0-6 mo.   6 mo. - 1 yr.   1-3 yrs.   4-7 yrs.   8-12 yrs.   13-15 yrs.   15+ yrs.



6. Could you please describe what initially drew you to your role and the reasons you continue to fulfil it? (Continue on separate piece of paper if necessary)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

7. Do you have any personal or familial connections or experiences of the china clay mining industry? (please describe in the space provided)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

8. a) Do you feel that long term preservation of china clay heritage is beneficial to the whole of Cornwall?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

b) What would be your recommendations for the future of these collections?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

9. How does your role(s) affect the way you think about the china clay mining industry?

.....  
.....

.....  
.....

**10.** Does your role(s) help you to learn more about the history and heritage of china clay mining in mid-Cornwall?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**11.** Outside of your role(s) within china clay heritage are you involved in any other ways of supporting or promoting the history and heritage of Cornwall?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**(Please rank your answers on a scale of 1 to 5).**

**12.** Do you feel that there is a sense of community attached to your role(s)

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

(No community at all)

(Very strong community)

**13.** Do you take pride in the collections and archives that you support or care for?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

(No pride at all)

(Very strong sense of pride)

**14.** Do you consider your role(s) to be a part of your identity?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

(Not part of my Identity at all)

(Very Strong part of my identity)

**15. Please record any other thoughts or comments you have in the space provided.**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Thank you for taking the time to respond to this questionnaire.**

**I ask that responses are returned no later than September 2016**

## **Appendix A (2): Interviews General Lines of Enquiry and Prompts**

### **Pre-questions: Working history**

When did you start working in China Clay?

What is your working connection to China Clay?

What is your connection to China Clay/ Blackpool pit?

Which department did you begin in?

What is your role?

How long have you been involved at Wheal Martyn?

Can you tell me about the project you are working on?

### **Family Connections**

Were your family involved in china clay?

What memories do you have of your family and china clay?

Did your family members tell you anything about china clay/ their work?

What do you know of your family history?

Do your family connections impact on your interest in china clay?

### **Museum Professionals (Wheal Martyn staff)**

Can you describe a typical day in the Museum?

What is the goal, or the best outcome of your practice?

How many members of staff do you have?

How many volunteers do you look after?

How has the Museum changed since you became involved?

What are the visitor and volunteer demographics?

How do you plan your programming?

What is the relationship between other heritage bodies and your role?

How do you balance having management and collections in different locations?

What is your decision-making process, how does something get chosen for preservation?

### **Heritage Volunteers (CCHS, Charlestown)**

How do you balance work and volunteering?

Can you tell me how your collection began?

Can you explain what practices you carry out?

Who else is involved with your collection, or with your activities?

What made you begin volunteering?

What other projects have you worked on?

How much responsibility do you have for the collections?

### **The China Clay Industry**

What is the relationship between the industry and the collections/museum/your practices?

What parts of the industry are left in your area?

Why did you go into the china clay industry?

Has the industry changed? In what ways?

Was there a Cornish-ness to the industry?

Do the skills you learned in the industry help you to care for its heritage?

### **Futures (future industry, future for the collections)**

How does Wheal Martyn Museum and CCHS fit into your idea of future of the china clay industry?

What are your long-term plans for the Museum/collection?

What are your plans for the future?

Which pasts are you bringing to the future?

What happens if the industry declines in the future, how will that affect your plans for the collection?

What are your biggest priorities?

What sort of timescales are you working on?

What will happen when the next generations see these collections?

How long do you expect to continue working/volunteering?

What would you like to see happen to the collection in the future?

### **Communities**

Can you tell me a little more about the communities you are working with?

What is the community like at CCHS?

Are you from Cornwall/the Clay Country?

What has been the community response to the proposed changes to the Museum?

Is there a close community surrounding your collections?

Can anyone become a member (of CCHS)?

Was there camaraderie in your working life?

### **Collections care**

Do you think this is an important collection? Why?

Why should this collection be preserved?

How large is the collection?

What happens to the things you choose not to keep?

What is the value of the Museum to you, what makes it a special place?

Who has access to the collection?

What percentage of the collections are currently on display?

How did you acquire your/the collections?

What guides your collecting? Are there any limits to collecting?

What happens when things 'don't fit in' with the existing collections?

### **Personal connections**

Do you have a favourite object in the collections?

What personal connections do you have with other people you volunteer/ work with?

Does it help to have people here with a shared history when you are researching the collections?

Do you have a personal connection with any of the collections?

Do you keep any personal collections?

What motivates your collecting/caring of these objects?

Will you leave anything to the Museum/History Society?

Do you find your personal connections to china clay beneficial to your research now?

Do you enjoy what you are doing?

Does the collection prompt any personal memories for you?

Do you have any other associations with local heritage?

# Appendix A (3): Interview Information Sheet

## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

“Excavating the Archive in Cornwall’s Clay Country” (working title): PhD Project at the University of Exeter.

### Participant/Observation and Interviews

#### **What is the study about?**

“Excavating the Archive...” is a PhD project that is being undertaken at the University of Exeter. It aims to understand and document the ways that the heritage and history of the clay mining industry in mid-Cornwall is collected and archived. The project is seeking to explore how these collections gain value by the actions of those who care for and maintain them. This project also researchers how these collections are related to heritage in the region.

#### **Who is involved?**

Robyn Raxworthy is the PhD researcher and is funded by the College of Life and Environmental Sciences at the University of Exeter. She is supervised by Dr Caitlin DeSilvey, College of Life and Environmental Sciences, and Dr Garry Tregidga, Institute of Cornish Studies. The PhD is part of a larger Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project which looks at how memory and cultural heritage can be sustained in changing landscapes and heritage structures.

For more information on the larger project see: <https://heritage-futures.org/>

#### **How will the information be collected?**

Detailed notes will be taken in a field note book throughout the study and a voice recorder may also be used in lieu of note taking if consent is given. Interviews and focus groups will be carried out with members of the China Clay History Society and staff at the Wheal Martyn Museum to document their personal experiences of collecting china clay heritage and the everyday actions that are undertaken to care for these collections.

#### **How will the information be used?**

The information collected will be used to support the arguments made in my PhD thesis. The information collected may also inform a range of outputs (future print and online publications, presentations, reports etc.). Once completed the PhD thesis will be made available in the university library at the Penryn Campus. The information that is collected will be treated with care and in accordance with current data protection laws and university guidelines and all efforts will be made to grant participants anonymity.

**What if I change my mind?**

You can choose to withdraw from the project at any time. To withdraw from the project please use the contact details provided, you will not need to give a reason for withdrawal and any information provided by you will be destroyed, although please note that any already published materials that draws conclusions based on the information you have provided cannot be destroyed.

Thank you.

Robyn Raxworthy

PhD Candidate, College of Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Exeter.

[rar214@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:rar214@exeter.ac.uk)

07702091333

I agree that the information I supply will be used a part of this research

Signed:

Date:

I consent to voice recordings to be made of the information I supply for the purposes of this research.

Signed:

Date:



## **Appendix B (1): Questionnaire Responses**

See Disk 1 Attached

## Appendix B (2): Brief Data Analysis (Questionnaires)

|                                      |      |      |
|--------------------------------------|------|------|
| Local (PL24, PL25, PL26)             | 42   | 49%  |
| Semi-Local (Cornwall and west Devon) | 20   | 24%  |
| Not Local (Rest of the UK)           | 9    | 11%  |
| N/A (No Data)                        | 14   | 16%  |
| Total                                | N=85 | 100% |

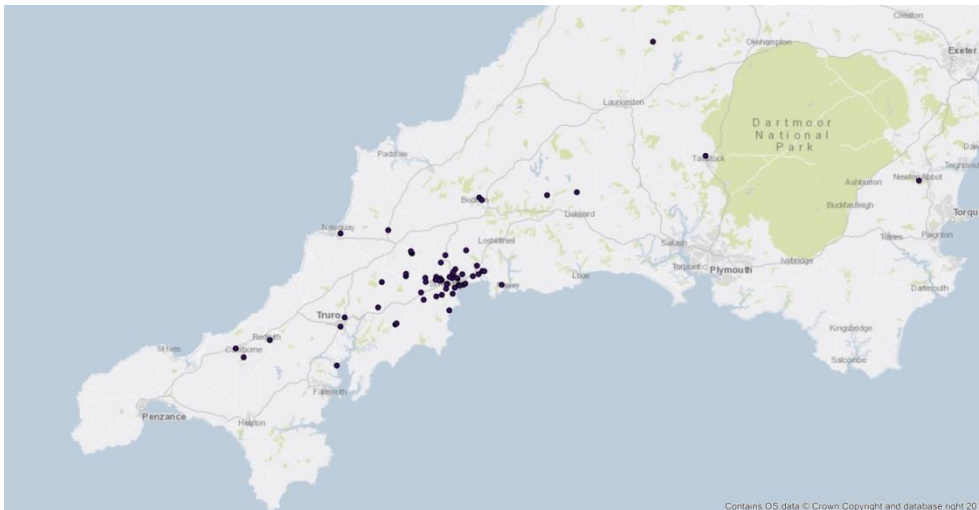
Table A.1: Breakdown of respondent locations

|                                      |       |      |
|--------------------------------------|-------|------|
| Local (PL24, PL25, PL26)             | n/a   | 61%  |
| Semi-Local (Cornwall and west Devon) | n/a   | 28%  |
| Not Local (Rest of the UK)           | n/a   | 9%   |
| International                        | n/a   | 1%   |
| Total                                | N=223 | 100% |

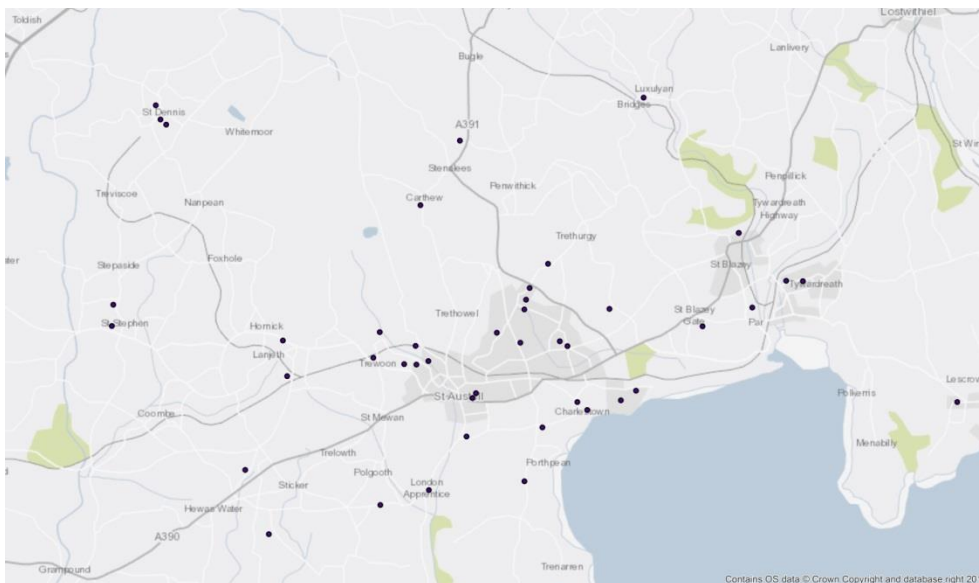
Table A.2: China Clay History Society Membership data 2017



Map A.1 Spread of CCHS membership across Southern Britain. Created in ArcGIS. Contains OS map data © Crown Copyright and database rights 2016



Map A.2 Spread of CCHS membership across Devon and Cornwall. Created in ArcGIS. Contains OS map data © Crown Copyright and database rights 2016



Map A.3 Spread of CCHS membership surrounding St Austell. Created in ArcGIS. Contains OS map data © Crown Copyright and database rights 2016

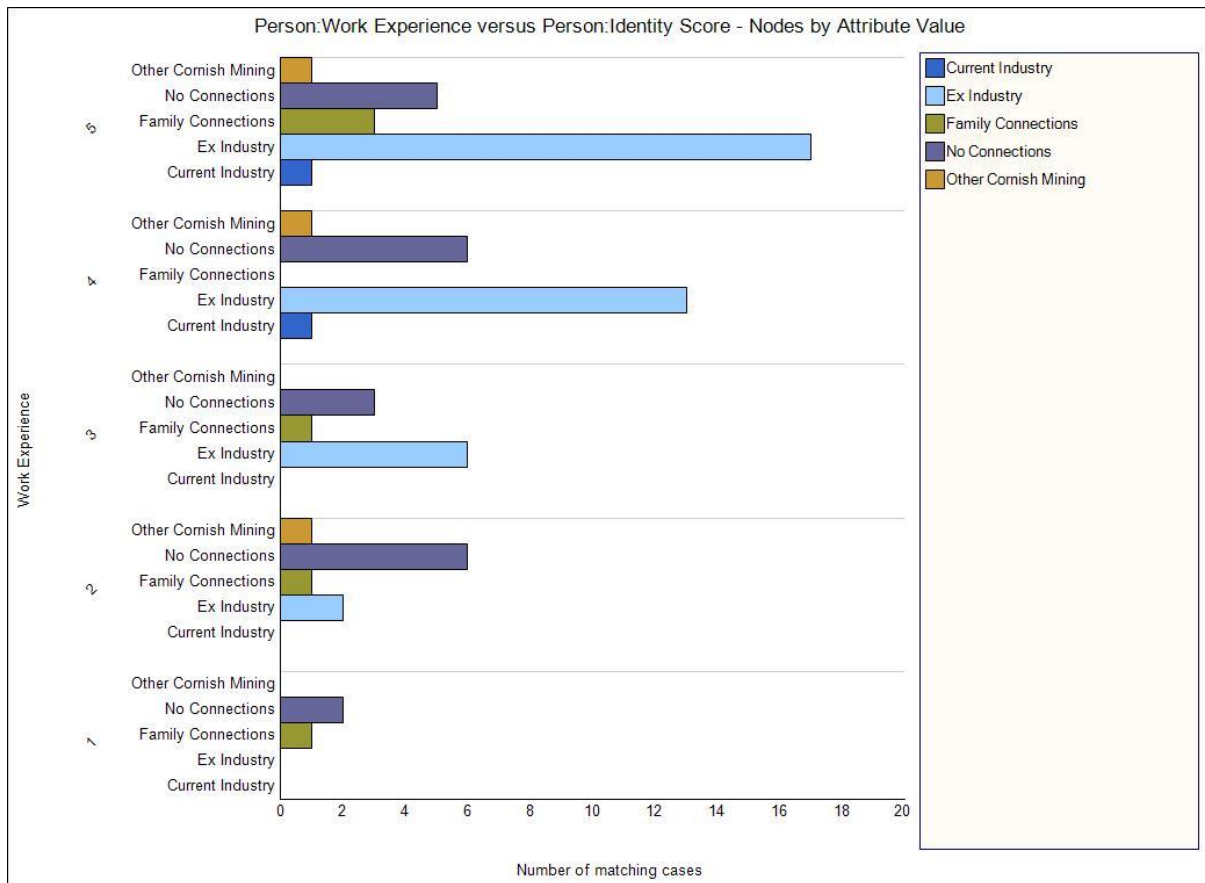


Chart A.1 Identity scores (1-5) broken down by past work experience (N=71). Created in NVivo

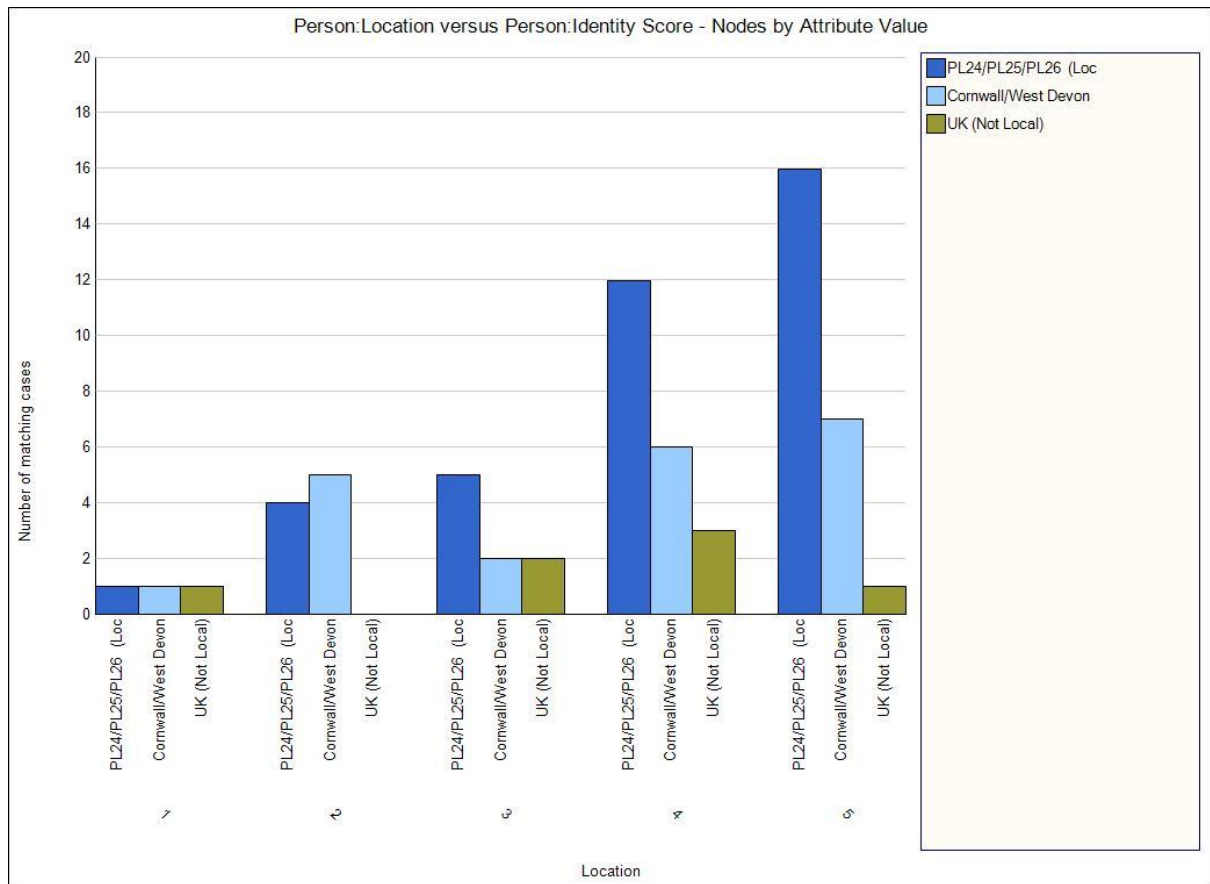


Chart A.2 Identity score broken down by location (N=66). Created in NVivo

## **Appendix C: CCHS Audit (including Floor Plan)**

### **China Clay History Society Room and Storage Audit**

Compiled: October 2017

By R. Raxworthy

## **Contents**

### **Introduction**

#### Audit

1. Yellow – Documents/'Archive'
2. Green - Ledgers and Minute Books
3. Blue – Maps
4. Red - Committee Room
5. White – Office/Photographs
6. 1 - Photographs, Oversize and Frames Photographs, Aerial Photographs
7. 2 – Interview/Additional Work Room
8. 3 - Storage

### **Appendix**

- 1) Plan of CCHS rooms at Tehidy Centre

### **Introduction.**

The storage and room audit of the Tehidy Centre was carried out as part of a wider effort to document and rationalise the archive collection. It is estimated that the archive contains over 1,000,000 pages of information as well as thousands of photographs and countless maps, books and ledgers. In order to completely understand the scope of this important resource it is important to begin documenting how it is stored at Tehidy and what challenges there are to the preservation of the collection. This document is a starting point to this process and will allow more detailed documents to be made in the future. This document will also contribute to the writing of an emergency plan for the Tehidy centre by highlighting what health and safety measures, including fire and security, are already in place as well as documenting known risks.

## 1. Yellow Room (Documents/Archive)

1.1 Capacity: Near-Full

1.2. Contents:

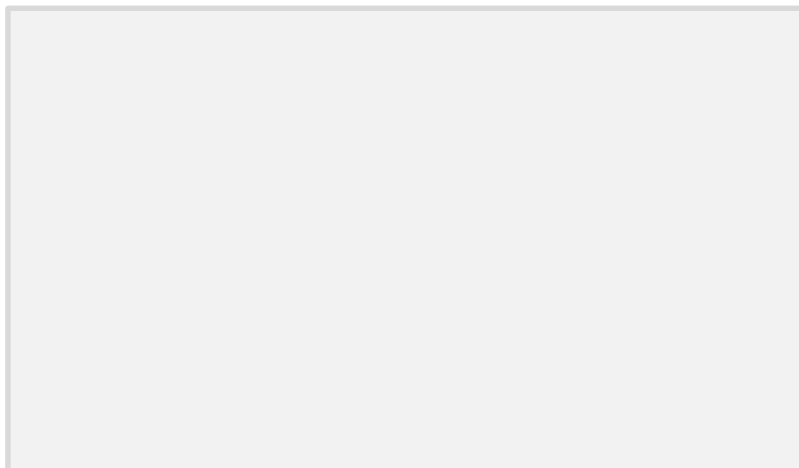
- c. 359 boxes (strong cardboard, some metal) of paper records relating to ECC and associated companies and clay works
- 16 boxes (strong cardboard) of paper records relating to Goonvean
- c. 80 Separate plastic ring binder folders individually boxed (strong cardboard), assorted content.
- 1 metal filing cabinet, assorted content
- c. 16 shelves of maps and plans, assorted materials
- Estimated c.1,000,000 pages of information

1.3. Storage:

- Main Archival Collection stored numerically (ECC 1- 395; Goonvean 1-16) starting in front left corner and running to far-right side, across:
  - 10 Rows of Shelves
  - 3 Bays per Row
  - 6 Shelves per Bay
- Maps and plans stored across the top of the back 4 rows and in one full bay, separate numbering system.
- Ring binders stored in cardboard boxes in shelving to the front right, separate numbering system.

1.4. Environmental Controls:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 



## 1.5. Health and Safety

### 1.5.1. Fire Safety:

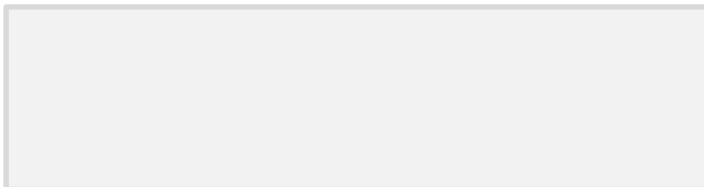
- Fire Door
- Smoke detector on ceiling
- Fire action poster by door

### 1.5.2 Potential Hazards:

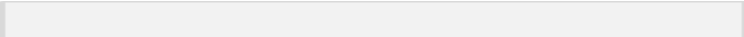
- Excessive storage on the tops of rows
- Multiple stacked empty cardboard boxes
- Disused AV equipment on the floor in front left corner
- Buckets and ladder front right corner.
- Unmarked heavy boxes in storage units
- Large amounts of flammable material in close proximity

### 1.5.3. Likelihood of accident: Low

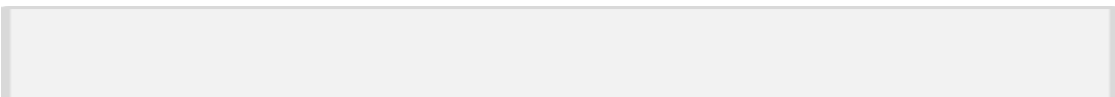
## 1.6. Security

- 
- 
- 

## 1.7. General Observations

The room is relatively over crowded but well managed. There are two desks for working and three chairs. 

The room is used less frequently than others with only one volunteer using the room for research regularly. There is some, although little, use of acid free tissue in boxes and some boxes are over filled, whilst others are almost empty.



conditions are very much affected by the weather and the room can become very cold in the winter months. Storage bays are unmarked, although individual boxes are clearly numbered and follow a coherent system.



## **2. Green Room (Ledgers and Minute Books)**

### 2.1 Capacity: Near-Full

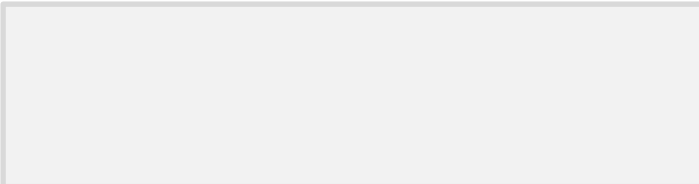
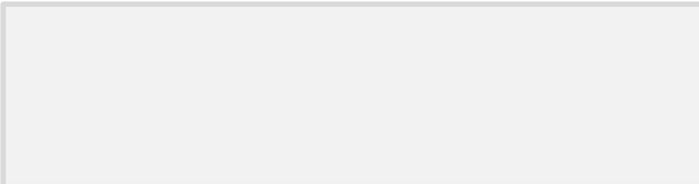
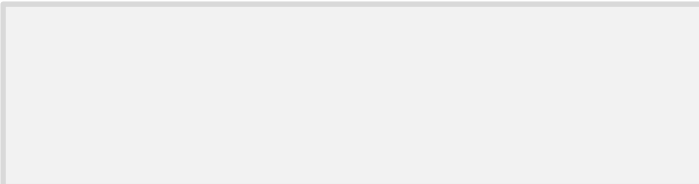
### 2.2. Contents:

- Assorted company minute books
- Assorted company ledgers
- 3 wooden bookshelves, books on the industry
- Selection of historical newspapers
- 2 working printers
- 2 work desks

### 2.3. Storage:

- 3 wooden bookshelves
- 8 metal cabinets, labelled with shelf numbers, 4 shelves in each
- Ledgers and minute books stored vertically in the cabinets
- Some oversize books stored horizontally, stacked

### 2.4. Environmental Controls:

- 
- 
- 

### 2.5. Health and Safety

#### 2.5.1. Fire Safety:

- Fire door
- Smoke detector on ceiling
- Fire action poster

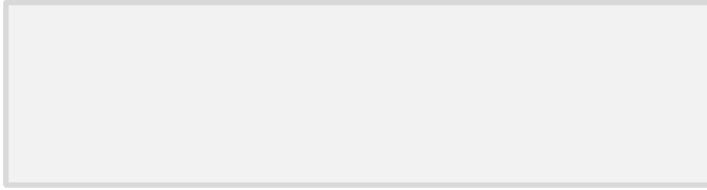
#### 2.5.2. Potential Hazards:

- Heavy over-sized books
- Printer leads, trip hazard

#### 2.5.3. Likelihood of accident: Low

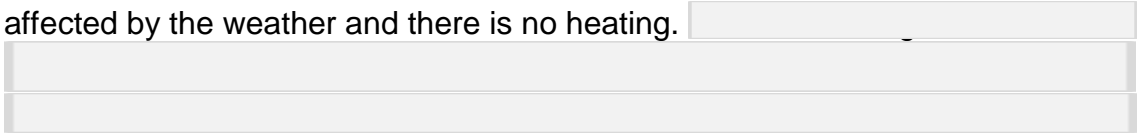
## 2.6. Security

- 
- 
- 



## 2.7. General Observations

The room is smaller than the neighbouring archive room and the storage for the ledgers and minute books runs around the perimeter of the room with two work tables in the centre. This room is used often normally with many people coming and going. There are about three volunteers working in the room regularly, although there are often more. The environmental conditions are largely affected by the weather and there is no heating.



Storage bays are all clearly numbered or marked.

### 3. Blue Room (Maps)

3.1. Capacity: Near-Full

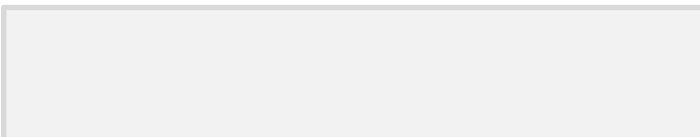
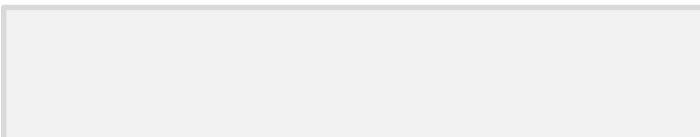
3.2. Contents:

- Assorted paper maps, mainly Ordnance Survey
- Plans
- Exhibition boards for photographs
- One small wooden work table and office chair

3.3. Storage:

- 7 metal hanging cabinets for OS maps, largely full
- Maps largely follow a storage system based on the OS system
- 2 large wooden chests for horizontal flat storage, surface is also used to lay out maps
- 2 smaller metal chests, stacked each with 5 draws
- 1 standard metal filing cabinet

3.4. Environmental Controls:

- 
- 

3.5. Health and Safety

3.5.1. Fire Safety:

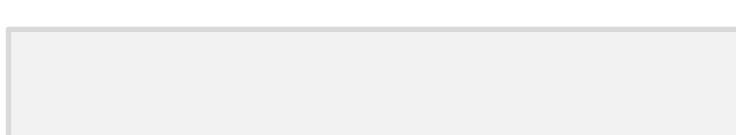
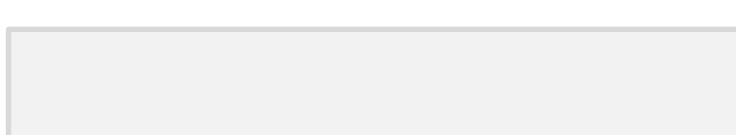
- Smoke alarm on ceiling
- Fire action poster by door

3.5.2. Potential Hazards:

- No obvious hazards

3.5.3. Likelihood of accident: Low

3.6. Security

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### 3.7. General Observations

The room is spacious. Most of the Ordnance Survey maps are stored vertically in hanging cabinets. The maps have been appropriately modified to allow for this storage although there are some maps which are very fragile and require unfolding after removal from the hanging cabinets. Oversized items are stored horizontally, and the wooden cabinet also doubles as a working table as there is not one in the room. Generally, 3 volunteers work regularly in this room to appraise the map collection and prepare maps for long term storage.

#### 4. Red Room (Committee Room)

##### 4.1. Capacity: Ample

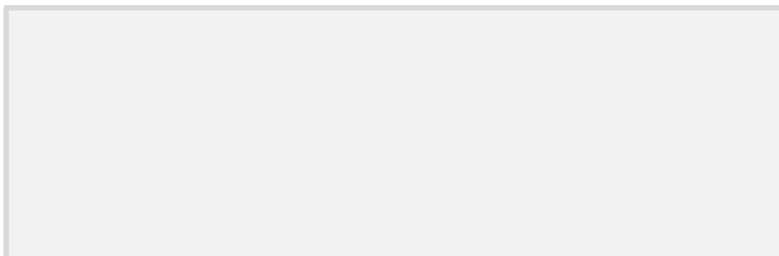
##### 4.2. Contents:

- Multiple published books on china clay as well as other associated industries
- Oversized maps and plans
- Various other documents
- Back copies of CCHS newsletter
- Large working table, multiple chairs
- Sofa/chair
- Desk and chair
- Kettle/tea/coffee/biscuits
- Framed photographs on walls

##### 4.3. Storage:

- C. 40 box files containing various documents
- 3 metal filing cabinets
- 2 wooden book shelves
- Multiple cardboard tubes to hold maps

##### 4.4. Environmental Controls:

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##### 4.5. Health and Safety

##### 4.5.1. Fire Safety:

- Fire action notice
- Smoke detector

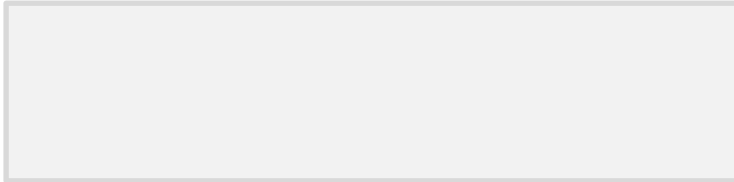
#### 4.5.2. Potential Hazards:

- No obvious hazards

#### 4.5.3. Likelihood of accident: Low

#### 4.6. Security

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#### 4.7. General Observations

This room is not intended for storage and serves as desk space. It is also the main room used for committee meetings and other meetings held at Tehidy. The bookshelves hold general interest books about china clay mining and associated industries.

## **5. White Room (Office)**

### 5.1. Capacity: Adequate

### 5.2. Contents:

- Assorted Colour photographs, organised variously by site and location, including overseas
- Black and White photographs organised by operation
- Photographic slides
- Photo albums
- Office equipment
- 5 desks
- 3 computers
- 3 printer/scanners
- Some temporary storage of \*\*\*\*s archive, items for appraisal

### 5.3. Storage:

#### 5.3.1. Back Room

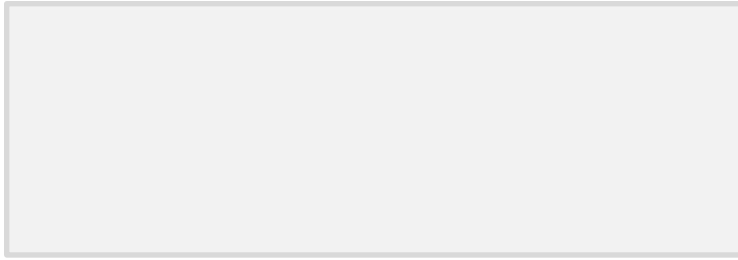
- C. 50 Plastic ring binders containing photographs across 2 metal frame shelves
- 1 small metal cabinet containing slides

#### 5.3.2. Front Room

- C. 20 folders containing photographs across wall mounted shelving
- C. 30 bound photo albums across wall mounted shelving
- 3 Metal filing cabinets, containing photographs, slides and miscellaneous office equipment
- C.100 folders of landscape photographs, ordered by location across two wall mounted shelves
- Metal cabinet containing boxes of photographs
- C.10 boxes/small metal filing cabinets containing overseas photographs

#### 5.4. Environmental Controls:

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#### 5.5. Health and Safety

##### 5.5.1. Fire Safety:

- Fire action notice
- Smoke detectors

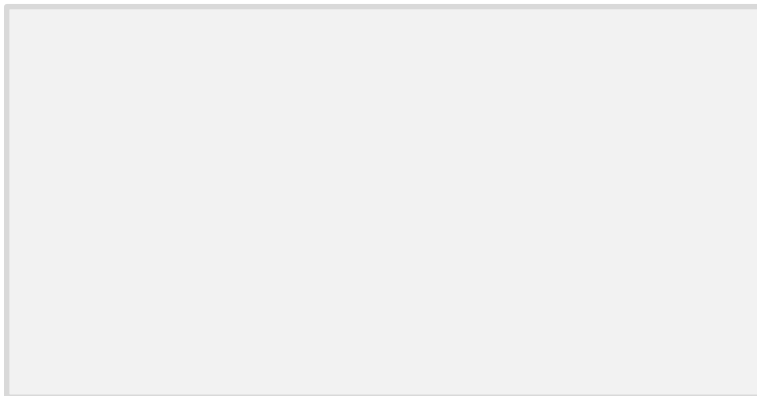
##### 5.5.2. Potential Hazards:

- No obvious hazards

##### 5.5.3. Likelihood of accident: Low

#### 5.6. Security

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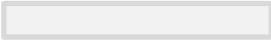


#### 5.7. General Observations

The room is split into two separate areas; a back office which is largely used as \*\*\*\*'s working area and a front office which is used largely by \*\*\*\* to process photographs. There is also a desk for general working. The sign in sheet is also located in the front office, and as such this room is often fairly busy. There is a good amount of space in both offices although storage space is limited to cabinets and wall mounted shelves. Most of the CCHS photography collection is held in these two rooms, although oversized and aerial photographs are kept elsewhere (Room 1 and Blue Room). Most items are stored to a museum standard at present.





 These files can also be accessed from several external hard drives kept elsewhere.

## **6. 1 (Aerial Photographs, Oversize Prints)**

### 6.1. Capacity: Near-Full

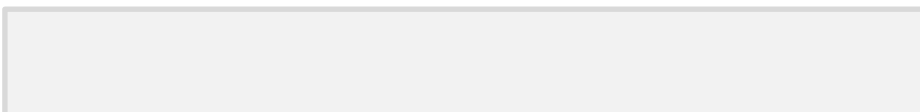
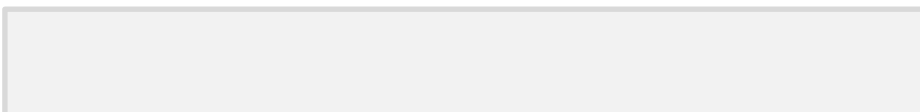
### 6.2. Contents:

- Folders of aerial photographs, many ring-bound
- Several cardboard boxes of framed blown up prints, believed to have been transferred from the Wheal Martyn Museum, ex display boards
- Several large oversized maps stored in cardboard tubes
- Around 40 box files containing various documents
- Rolled maps and plans from \*\*\*\*\*'s collection
- Assorted copies of ECC pamphlets and promotional material
- Several boxes of IMERYYS branded envelopes of various sizes
- One full set of shelves of freight lists
- One full set of shelves of production sales books
- One central work table

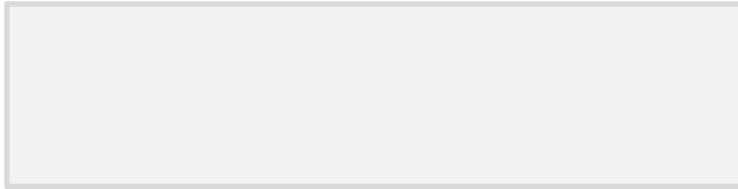
### 6.3. Storage:

- Room is split into two parts, with prints, freight lists and productions sales in one half and aerial photographs, maps and pamphlets and promotional material in the other
- Cardboard boxes used to store oversize prints
- 9 metal full sets of shelves
- 3 wooden sets of shelves
- Some items stored on top of shelves (maps from \*\*\*\*\*'s collection)
- Maps stored in cardboard tubes and in cardboard boxes to the back of the room

### 6.4. Environmental Controls:

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## 6.5. Health and Safety

### 6.5.1. Fire Safety:

- Smoke detector on ceiling
- Fire action poster

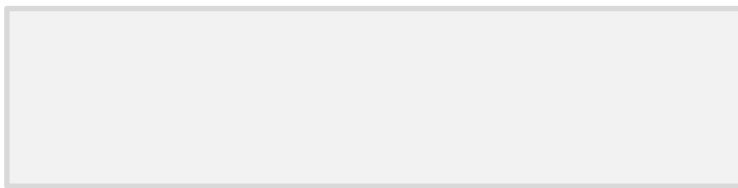
### 6.5.2. Potential Hazards:

- General possibility of over crowding
- Large amounts of flammable material in close proximity

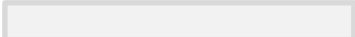
### 6.5.3. Likelihood of accident: Low

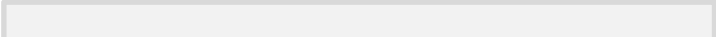
## 6.6. Security

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## 6.7. General Observations

This room has the most amount of duplicated material. There are multiple copies of most of the company (ECC) promotional material and leaflets send out to staff etc., additionally there are huge numbers of IMERYYS branded brown envelopes. Some of the shelves are completely full whilst others are sparsely populated. Much of the first half of the room is taken up by boxes of largely un-used and un-catalogued framed large prints, presumably ex display boards, believed to have been originally kept at Wheal Martyn. 

 storage is mostly in cardboard boxes, office style box files and ring binders. Around 5 volunteers regularly use this room to study maps and identify aerial photographs. There is some possible water damage or damp on the back wall although it does not seem to be causing any problems.

## 7. 2 (Interview/Work Room)

### 7.1. Capacity: Near-Full

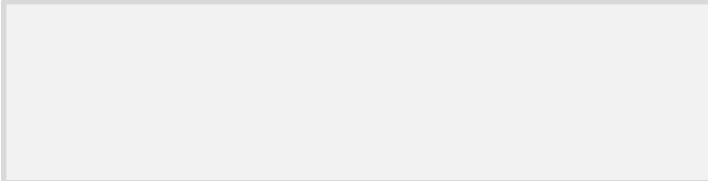
### 7.2. Contents:

- \*\*\*\*'s note books and index card system
- Various maps and oversized mounted photographs
- Books

### 7.3. Storage:

- One large metal hanging cabinet
- One large metal cabinet containing \*\*\*\*'s notebooks
- \*\*\*\*'s index cards stored in small individual metal filing cabinets and drawers
- One other metal cabinet
- One bookcase with books on china clay and assorted industries
- One metal bookcase with books on china clay and assorted industries
- One spare wooded cabinet

### 7.4. Environmental Controls:

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### 7.5. Health and Safety

#### 7.5.1. Fire Safety:

- Smoke detector on ceiling
- Fire action notice by door

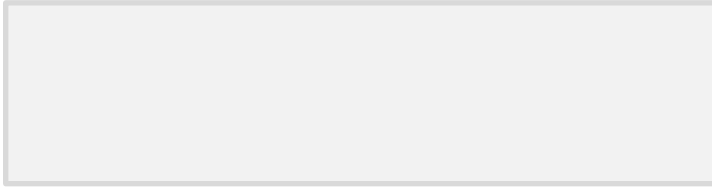
#### 7.5.2. Potential Hazards:

- No obvious hazards

#### 7.5.3. Likelihood of accident: Low

### 7.6. Security

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### 7.7. General Observations

This room is usually used to record oral histories although recently this room has also become a work room for volunteers using \*\*\*\*'s collection and associated card system, which has remained in its original filing system. Two volunteers work in here regularly at present.

## 8. 3 (General Storage)

8.1 Capacity: Ample

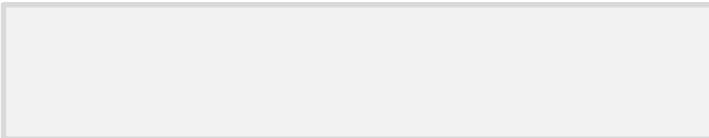
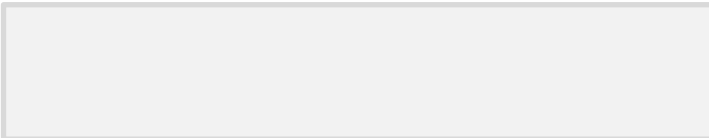
8.2. Contents:

- Assorted 'left overs'
- AV equipment
- Large Display Map

8.3. Storage:

- No discernible storage system
- Metal Filing cabinets

8.4. Environmental Controls:

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8.5. Health and Safety

8.5.1. Fire Safety:

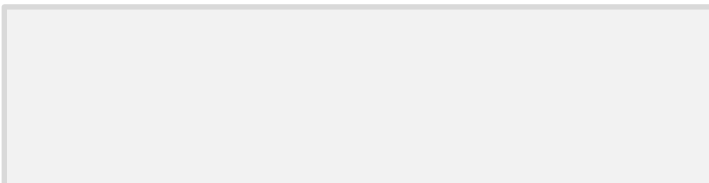
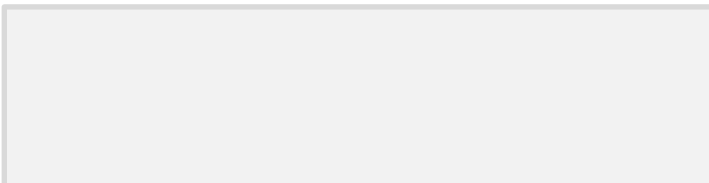
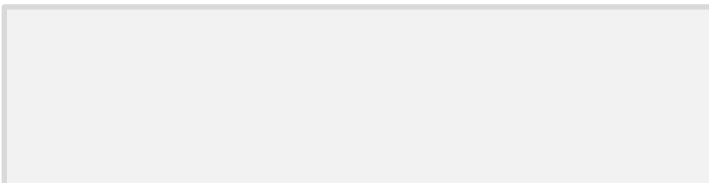
- Smoke Detector on ceiling

8.5.2. Potential Hazards:

- Falling large items
- General clutter

8.5.3. Likelihood of accident: Low

8.6. Security

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8.7. General Observations

This room is largely not in use. It is used as a general store for things that have no other obvious place, there are some disused storage boxes and filing cabinets as well as seemingly leftover display materials such as a large map and some unused AV equipment.

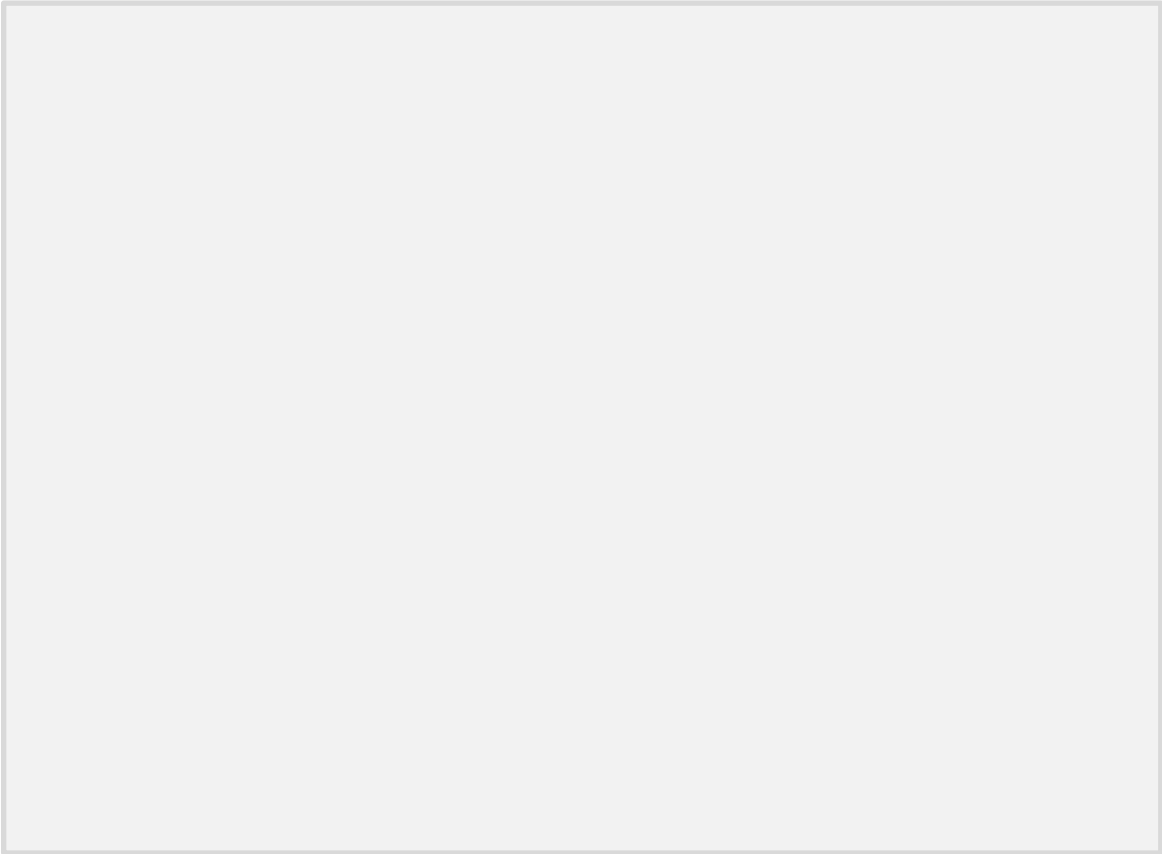


Image A.1 Floor plan of CCHS archival storage. Compiled by Author

## Appendix D (1): CCHS Newsletter Article (February 2018, Edition 48)

### Much Ado about Boundaries

During the early years of china clay many profitable locations could be said to have been somewhat overcrowded, often with multiple landowners and china clay companies all operating cheek-by-jowl across relatively small areas. In this crowded and competitive atmosphere it was inevitable that sometimes china clay companies would fall into disputes over territory and boundary lines.

The 300 acres or so now covered by the Blackpool pit was one of these areas which in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was occupied by a number of pits, including Great Halviggan, Cornish Kaolin(pit), Noppies, Wheal Louisa and the original Blackpool, as well as many other smaller historical works. Many of these pits had multiple landlords as the mineral rights to the grounds they worked were owned by several prominent members of the landed gentry, the most well-known of these in the area of St Mewan being the Agar Robartes and the Johnstones of the estates of Lanhydrock and Trewithen respectively. Over the 20<sup>th</sup> century English China Clays began to acquire these smaller companies beginning with The Great Halviggan China Clay Co. in 1927. By the middle of the century English China Clays also had acquired the Blackpool pit from Parkyn and Peters, which over the next 50 years expanded across Burngullow Common, eventually absorbing all of the other pits in the area and achieving at its peak the accolade of ECC's 'flagship' pit producing between 8,000 to 10,000 tonnes of china clay per week, much of which was high quality coating clays.

### April

During the spring of 1927 a 'Case for Arbitration' was brought to the attention of St Austell based surveyor Mr Noel Bellamy. Bellamy was tasked to settle a dispute between two china clay companies operating on Burngullow Common, in the parish of St Mewan, where "*differences have arisen ... touching their respective rights, titles and interests in connection with the boundaries*". The complaint was brought jointly by The Great Halviggan China Clay Company (who at this time were still under managing director Hart Nicholls and lessees of the '*Halviggan Landlords*', George Horace Johnstone of Trewithen, Sir Charles John Graves Sawle of Penrice and John Claude Lewis Tremayne of Heligan), and by Cornish Kaolin, (registered to Tehidy Minerals and jointly managed by H.G Wales and H.M. Rogers). The Great Halviggan China Clay Company argued that Cornish Kaolin had encroached significantly on the boundary line and caused a clay slip which resulted in clay from the Great Halviggan pit becoming mixed with overburden rendering it valueless. Bellamy was further given the liberty to "*fix the tonnage of the merchantable clay the subject of such clay slip...and the value per tonne of such merchantable clay*".

Although the case for arbitration was brought to Bellamy by the two companies jointly, the agreed terms could be seen to be largely beneficial to Cornish Kaolin as the case was brought only for the "*ascertainment of the facts but not for the ascertainment of damages (if any)*" despite Bellamy's power to fix the value of any lost merchantable

clay. Cornish Kaolin, however, had agreed, if necessary, to pay any costs associated with surveying and remarking of the boundaries.

## July

In July 1927 Noel Bellamy, having surveyed the area and boundary in question, returned his verdict that the boundary line lay in between two stones, which were marked A and B on an attached plan which has since been separated from the documents, and that Great Halviggan should maintain its position at Stone A, and Cornish Kaolin at Stone B. Furthermore, Cornish Kaolin were found to have encroached the boundary line and the expenses incurred in restoring the boundary was £34.16.0. Bellamy also ascertained that a clay slip had occurred at the fault of Cornish Kaolin, and the tonnage of merchantable clay lost from the Great Halviggan pit was 294 tons valued at £1.0.0 per ton. Translated into today's money that equates roughly to around £55 per tonne, although the actual economic value could in fact be much higher. In total Cornish Kaolin were ordered to pay £36.17.0 which covered the costs of resetting the boundary and presumably an extra £2.1.0 cover Bellamy's costs incurred as part of the survey.

## November

Despite the issue of the boundaries being rectified the two companies were still locked in an ongoing dispute over the damages suffered from the clay slip and the value of the 294 tonnes of clay that were lost. Once the true extent of the china clay loss was known The Great Halviggan China Clay Company had begun to pursue damages from Cornish Kaolin to the cost of £1.0.0 per ton as highlighted by Mr Bellamy's verdict.

In November 1927 Great Halviggan, seeking legal advice, submitted an 'Opinion for Council' to Mr F.M Russell Davies regarding Cornish Kaolin's refusal to pay compensation for the damage incurred. In contrast to the earlier conciliatory tone of the correspondence during the 'Case for Arbitration', the tone of this document is more inflammatory opening with *"Cornish Kaolin have been for some years past been extending their clay pit towards the boundary... and have continued doing so in spite of frequent protests made by The Halviggan Company that the boundary was being endangered"*.

The document laid out the events of the previous six months and how Cornish Kaolin had paid the costs and expenses related to the boundary violation but, as per the original agreement, were not ordered to pay damages. Cornish Kaolin had claimed that the clay which was affected by the slip was not yet of merchantable quality and the arbitrator's verdict had not proved that any *"material damage had been suffered by the Great Halviggan company in consequence of the slip and that they were therefore not prepared to admit liability for more than a nominal sum"*. In addition, Great Halviggan claimed that Cornish Kaolin had not responded to a letter which had sought clarification of this statement.

Managers at The Great Halviggan Company were under the impression that Cornish Kaolin had refused to pay damages based on a contention over whether the value of £1.0.0 per ton related to profits or to the selling price of the clay after it was made merchantable. To clarify, Great Halviggan state that during an earlier hearing evidence was presented which showed merchantable clay would sell at £2.10.0 per ton (quoted



as 50/-), not £1.0.0 as Cornish Kaolin believed, and the costs involved in making the clay merchantable would be £1.10.0 per ton (quoted as 30/-) leaving a £1.0.0 profit. It was also claimed that upon hearing this evidence Cornish Kaolin did not provide “*any contradictory evidence*”. To further cement their case Great Halviggan claim that since the hearing Noel Bellamy had confirmed that he had “*intended by his award to decide that the loss of profit to the Halviggan Company was £1 per ton*”.

The opinion returned from F.M Russell Davies was that the question was “*primarily one of construction of the award*” and that the arbitrator clearly found proof of trespass, however the lost clay was also incorrectly labelled as merchantable when it was not. Furthermore, Mr Russel Davis rightly pointed out that the question of damages was not posed to the arbitrator, however he also asserted that the protestations of Corish Kaolin regarding the loss of profits was an incorrect construction Mr Bellamy’s award. Therefore, damages should succeed if Great Halviggan wished to sue Cornish Kaolin and the findings presented should be binding. The Great Halviggan China Clay Company should be prepared however to defend their costings in court.

....

Unfortunately, this is all the information about this case in the archive at CCHS so we don’t know how this case ended, or how these events corresponded with the absorption of The Great Halviggan China Clay Company into English China Clays in that same year. These documents do however give a fascinating snapshot of the sometimes tense relationships between china clay producers working in close proximity to one another during the inter-war years. It is telling that when ECC was created in 1919 one of the key priorities for the company was to acquire the freehold and mineral rights for all of the pits that were in their possession as being beholden to multiple landlords was undesirable, resulting sometimes in cases like as described above. It is unsurprising then that ECC spent well in excess of millions of pounds over the years to realise this ambition.

## **Appendix D (2): CCHS Blackpool Catalogue**

See Disk 2 Attached

## Appendix E: List of Fieldwork Diary entries and Interview Dates

### Pre-Participant Observation

18/03/2016 – Notes from CCHS workshop attended at Wheal Martyn Industrial Heritage Conference, including the ‘how to’ process of sorting objects

15/04/2016 – Notes from meeting with D\*\*\* and discussion of ‘the book’, early observations

08/06/2016 – Notes from meeting with D\*\*\* to discuss possible volunteering at CCHS

30/09/2016 – Planning meeting with D\*\*\* and I\*\*\* re- CCHS volunteering

05/10/2016 – Initial observations of CCHS - relaxed informal

05/10/2016 – Record of chats with D\*\*\* and J\*\*\* about CCHS and Blackpool pit

### Participant Observation Period (Oct 2016 – April 2018)

12/10/2016 – First Blackpool pit archival research, first thoughts on the Yellow Room storage systems

19/10/2016 – Notes on D\*\*\* and I\*\*\*’s interview with A\*\*\* and A\*\*\* (Room 2), dynamics of old friends meeting for the first time in 30 years, and D\*\*\*’s suggestion that I should ‘return to my archival work’ as the interview yielded little about Blackpool

19/10/2016 – reflections on the nature of the Blackpool records, and first experiences of Tehidy in the winter. First conversations with S\*\*\*

26/10/2016 – Archival research Yellow Room: Director's meetings minutes, observations on archive fever 'obsession' and of encountering discrepancies in the archive

27/10/2016 – Visit to Charlestown, interview \*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\*, thoughts on motivations, love of place, and the AHD at work

02/11/2016 – Archival research Yellow Room: questioning the 'localness' truly of china clay based on the records

08/11/2016 – Archival research Yellow Room: realisations that some of the storage containers here in any other context might be considered artefacts themselves (i.e. the 'Carrancararrow Box' Box 138)

08/11/2016 – List of potential interviews, variously confirmed, news that J\*\*\* has been taken seriously ill

12/11/2016 – Email from D\*\*\* informing of J\*\*\*'s death and my reply (on *Heritage Future's* behalf)

16/11/2016 – Interview with \*\*\*\* and post interview discussion - ECC offered good life, people forget

16/11/2016 – Archival research Yellow Room: Penderill Church, ruptures and "thrill of the hunt"

16/11/2016 – notes on D\*\*\*'s announcement for J\*\*\*'s funeral and his gifts to the archive, and the societies debt to J\*\*\*. Thoughts on the cumulative nature of heritage building and creation by the everyday

23/11/2016 – Group interview with \*\*\*\*, \*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\*, notes on meeting after with J\*\*\* about her father's clippings and her private collection

25/11/2016 – Caring for working collections day conference at the Wheal Martyn Museum, notes and observations and observations on the Making of Porcelain temp exhibition

30/11/2016 – Archival research Yellow Room: tea break 'heated discussion' between over a photograph of mica dries, differences of memory and opinion

03/12/2017 – Wheal Martyn: Interview with \*\*\*\*

11/01/2017 – Archival research Yellow Room: review of 2016 work

11/01/2017 – Note that today is the day J\*\*\*'s archive moved to Tehidy, slow progress hampered by heavy traffic in St Austell, slow progress and criticisms not much was brought in, tbc next week.

20/01/2017 – CCHS Meeting with E\*\*\* set up by I\*\*\* to discuss memories of Blackpool, technical notes and a discussion with E\*\*\* about I\*\*\*'s fantastic memory and his recollections of him as the ECC 'mouthpiece', E\*\*\* and I\*\*\*'s sadness at the 'loss' of Blackpool, also stories of damage and flooding

23/01/2017 – Notes and observations of ClayWorks! community consultations at Treverbyn Hall and visit with J\*\*\* to the Linhay and Dry at the Wheal Martyn Museum

25/01/2017 – Archive research Blue Room: Blackpool OS Maps

27/01/2017 – Archive research Blue Room: Blackpool OS Maps

20/02/2017 – Wheal Martyn: Interviews \*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\*, café observations at the Wheal Martyn Museum

22/02/2017 –Archive research Yellow Room: notes on losing my sheet ‘at a loss’ without the guide, allure of the Wheal Martyn Box (Box 41), feelings of conflict re material I haven’t been ‘assigned’, reminder from I\*\*\* and D\*\*\* to be wary of Penderill Church archive. First time an uninvited visitor arrives at Tehidy

27/02/2017 – Wheal Martyn: Interview with \*\*\*\*

15/03/2017 – CCHS note to self re black sign on the door not blue! Small map of site drawn. Preparing for Wheal Martyn Industrial Heritage Conference (17<sup>th</sup>), recognition of the multiple futures open, Notes re: I\*\*\* regeneration or complete chaos.

17/03/2017 – Wheal Martyn: notes and observations Wheal Martyn Industrial Heritage Conference

22/03/2017 – Archive research Yellow Room: Cornish Kaolin/Great Halviggan case for arbitration, notes and observation of D\*\*\*’s tour for V\*\*\* and L\*\*\*. A\*\*\*’s birthday celebrations and chats with I\*\*\*, D\*\*\*, V\*\*\* and L\*\*\*, first noticing the use of J\*\*\*’s archive as sorted by D\*\*\*

04/04/2017 – Observations on searching CRO documents to supplement CCHS research

05/04/2017 – Archive research Yellow Room: Penderill Church, observations on the emergent and iterative nature of archival research and the need for appraisal in research as well as archival theory and practice

06/04/2017 – Wheal Martyn: notes and observations from China Clay History Society Quarterly Meeting (invited to give update but stayed for whole meeting)

12/04/2017 – Archival research Yellow Room: Great/Old Halviggan

18/04/2017 – Visit to the Wheal Martyn Museum with *Heritage Futures* Jennie and Nadia, observations of J\*\*\*\*'s role/practices, vandalism of the Wheal Martyn statues – identity

19/04/2017 – Archival research Yellow Room: observations about difference in opinion regarding A1 images – value/care

03/05/2017 – Notes on Blackpool pit walk

17/05/2017 – CCHS: Interview with \*\*\*\*

24/05/2017 – Archival research Yellow Room: observations of obsolete items at archive, discussions about 'dumping it' and of finding new homes

07/06/2017 – CCHS: Interview with \*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\*

08/06/2017 – Wheal Martyn: Interview with \*\*\*\*

22/06/2017 – Notes and thoughts on duplication

05/07/2017 – Archive research Yellow Room

07/07/2017 – Wheal Martyn: Notes on Archive Planning session meeting with Committee, Wheal Martyn and Cornwall Record Office. SWOT Analysis, big visions and forward planning

12/07/2017 – Archival research Yellow Room

25/07/2017 – Notes from additional research in Penryn Campus Archives, ICS photographs

26/07/2017 – Archival research Yellow Room: notes on Yellow Room audit

02/08/2017 – Notes on Audit (Blue, Green, Red, White)

02/08/2017 – Archival research Yellow Room: 135/7 'old folder'

16/08/2017 – Archival research Yellow Room: also, reflections on wider heritage issues, (Charlottesville), and how to process with Clay Country lens

21/08/2017 – Archival research Yellow Room: JPC box, attention to his descriptions of early history writing in the Clay Country

23/08/2017 – CCHS: Interview with \*\*\*\*

04/10/17 – Archival research Yellow Room: notes on plans for the Imerys exhibition CCHS

1/11/17 – Archival research Yellow Room

8/11/17 – Archival research Yellow Room: notes and observations of K\*\*\*\*'s school photo in the break, thoughts on participation outsider/insider, notes of D\*\*\*\*'s 'slapped wrist' conversation

15/11/17 – Archival research Yellow Room: 138/4 correspondence reports

29/11/17(am) – CCHS: Interview with \*\*\*\*

29/11/17(am) – Archival research Yellow Room: 138/5 correspondence reports, CCHS thoughts on 'last box' in Yellow Room, and feelings of potential endings, CCHS Archival research, green room Ledgers

29/11/2017(pm) – Wheal Martyn: Interview with \*\*\*\* and notes from conversation after

10/01/2018 – Archival research Green/Yellow Room: Cornish Kaolin Minute Book

17/01/2018 – Archival research, Yellow Room: Box 41 Wheal Martyn



24/01/2018 – Archival research Yellow Room: Box 41 Wheal Martyn

29/01/2018 –Wheal Martyn: Research visit to Wheal Martyn Archives, Main Room, Cabinets

30/01/2018 – Response to M\*\*\*s email re swapping map images for newsletter, 'passionate 'frustration

07/02/2018 – CCHS: Interview with \*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\*

07/02/2018 – Archival research Yellow Room: Box 41 Wheal Martyn, Entry on the realisation of the importance of names and people

14/02/2018 – CCHS: Interview with \*\*\*\*

21/02/2018 – CCHS: Interview with \*\*\*\*

21/02/2018 – Entry on the discussions had with R\*\*\* and D\*\*\* after \*\*\*\*'s interview, salvage, control, and legacy

13/03/2018 – Visit to Courtney library to research Halviggan maps for talk evening

15/03/2018 – Wheal Martyn Talks evening – notes on conversation re: how stories are told

21/03/2018 – Reflections on Wheal Martyn Talks evening and thoughts on meeting, notes and thoughts of \*\*\*\*'s interview, start of 'Christmas park' collaboration with J\*\*\*. Visitor vs. Volunteer dichotomy, changes in status?

11/04/2018 – Reflections on last day at CCHS and conversations with A\*\*\*

### Interview Dates

Prelim Interview 1 – 08/12/2015 (unreferenced)

Prelim Interview 2 – 05/02/2016 (unreferenced)

Prelim Interview 3 – 19/10/2016 (unreferenced)

### CCHS

I 1 - 27/10/2016

I 2 - 16/11/2016

I 3 - 23/11/2016

I 4 - 03/12/2017

I 5 - 27/02/2017

I 6 - 17/05/2017

I 7 - 07/06/2017

I 8 - 27/11/2017

I 9 - 07/02/2017

I 10 - 14/02/2018

I 11 - 21/02/2018

### Wheal Martyn Museum

Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Manager 20/02/2017

Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Curator 20/02/2017

Interview Wheal Martyn Museum Director 08/06/2017

Interview Wheal Martyn Digitisation Officer 23/08/2017

Interview Clay Works! Project Officer 29/11/2017

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