



Maker Heights

Rame Conservation Trust

Arts | Culture | Music | History
Community | Environment

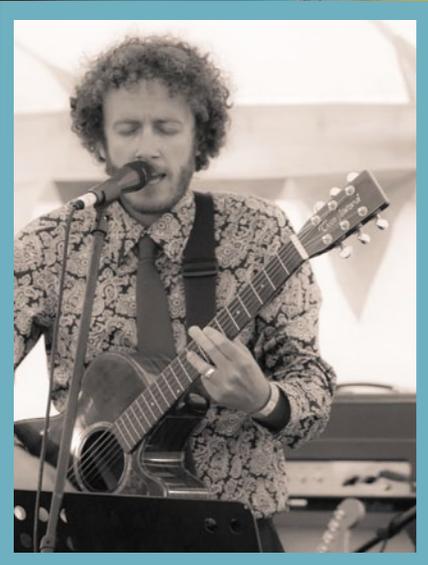
Maker Heights

The Napoleonic barracks of Maker Heights and surrounding lands, are managed by the Rame Conservation Trust, a group of local people dedicated to keeping the site in the hands of the public and out of the clutches of developers. The barracks occupy the highest point of the Rame peninsula in South East Cornwall with views of farmland, rolling hills and woods, Plymouth sprawled across the other side of the Tamar, and the moors beyond, all bounded by the ever-changing sea.

Maker Heights is now one of South East Cornwall's most vibrant and independent creative clusters, providing affordable art studios, work spaces, offices, Cabaret/bar, meeting rooms and other facilities for up to forty wide ranging creative enterprises.

The beauty and diversity of the area has inspired many of the artists to become part of an ever expanding and creative community which currently includes painters, jewellers, furniture makers, ceramicists, textile artists, festival companies and musicians, as well as several sympathetic 'non art' based enterprises that range from 'sustainable energy consultants' to wedding services.

Our aim is to create a nationally significant cluster of professional creative enterprises and practitioners on site who will raise Cornwall's reputation for creative excellence, working together to maximise knowledge exchange and innovative collaboration.



History and Heritage

A military history from 1560 to 1952

The Rame forts form the western part of the most extensive and complete historic coastal defences in the UK.

The sixteenth-century Mount Edgecumbe Blockhouse, just behind the later Garden Battery is the earliest example on the Rame Peninsula.

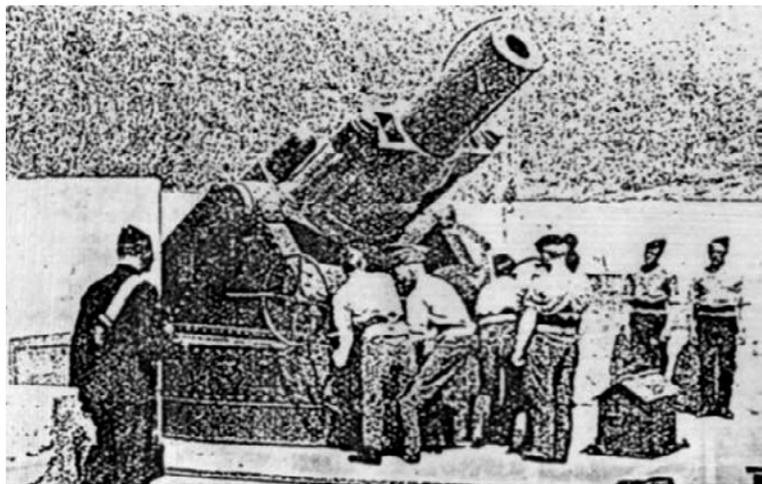
The next main building phase was prompted by the outbreak of the War and American Independence in 1775. Amherst Battery in Kingsand had already been built to repel any enemy force landing in Cawsand Bay, and the strategic importance of Maker Heights was realised with the construction of a number of redoubts in the 1780s. Shortly afterwards, Maker Barracks was built to accommodate the garrison and the area was further fortified in the late nineteenth century with the addition of Maker, Grenville, Hawkins, and Raleigh Batteries.

The Heavy Anti-Aircraft battery behind the Barracks was built in the late 1930's and altered in the 40's. The Bunker and concrete shelters on the Heights at Maker are a very important part of the 200 year long military history of the site. Most significantly, they formed part of the front-line defences of Plymouth during it's greatest threat, the air-raids of the Second World War.

Many American troops were mustered on the Rame Peninsula before D-Day in 1944.

"By Monday evening 28 April [1941], we had seen the spectacle of a great city and dockyard in flames and the black smoke rising from the fuel tanks at Torpoint; we heard the startlingly sudden reports from the A.A. battery and the deep zoom of the naval guns".

Dr H.J.Hewitt (the first Headmaster of Saltash County Grammar)



TOC past and present

Nancy Astor was the first woman ever to sit as a member of Parliament.

It was Nancy Astor who suggested in 1925 that a committee investigate the possibility of establishing a camp for juveniles, out of concern for the effects of unemployment and poverty on their health and morale.

With the help of Government grants and the release to the Committee of Maker Barracks, Maker Camp was established in the summer of 1926 and a long history of providing holidays and fresh country air for children had begun. Maker Camp took hundreds of boys and girls at a time, from organisations like the Kitto institute and the Boys Brigade, for periods from a weekend to a whole month, allowing the children the space and nature of Maker and the Rame Peninsula as a relief from their lives in the city.

Between 1926 and 1985, thousands of children from many towns and cities in Britain came to Maker and enjoyed holidays, and it was only the lack of investment in the buildings that eventually led to the Camp closing down. Hardly a day goes by without Maker receiving a visitor from the past...

Familiar reminiscences are of the girls camped out in the Nissen huts and the boys in the barrack rooms in the main building. There also seem to be plenty of stories about times when boys and girls were not quite where they were supposed to be

In 2003 the re-built and considerably more comfortable nissen huts welcomed the first school groups back to Maker Heights for their residential trip. The visitors books are testament to new generations of young people once again enjoying their stay at Maker.

Canoeing and kayaking on Millbrook lake, problem solving and shelter building in Maker woodlands and enjoying coastal walks are all part of the fun and games associated with the TOC today

"One night in 1982, during a terrific storm, a tree crashed through the roof of the nissan hut, and sliced between the two rows of beds. The night-duty nurse simply clapped her hands and called "Come on girls! Chop Chop! Back into bed! Don't make a fuss!"

"Thankyou for a very exciting and interesting week! we had lots of fun and felt very comfortable in the centre. I hope to return with lots of blue, green projects."

T - from Austria.

"Showers hot, beds comfy, food great and what a fantastic location."
J - Poland.



Arts, Music & Culture

Rame School of Art

Over the years, the artistic community at Maker Heights has grown organically from just a handful of painters and artisans into over 30 exciting and industrious creative enterprises.

Painters, potters, silversmiths, photographers and designers, some of whom carry international status, are exhibiting their Maker created works both nationally and worldwide in London, Paris, Amsterdam and New York.

The artists who are mostly full-time professionals work independently, but form together as the Rame School of Art for an annual collective of work shown at reputable galleries.

Maker Heights holds great potential for the Contemporary Visual Arts in the South East of Cornwall, offering the opportunity for new students and budding artists to learn (by example) how to work and survive in the art world.



Music

The musicians at Maker are both professional and established, collectively encompassing an eclectic wealth of musical styles. Recording artists and music graduates with many years experience in the industry offer encouragement and inspiration, as well as technical advice and sound engineering to the music youth groups, and weekly individual music lessons for children. Maker musicians regularly contribute to live gigs locally and nationally. These artistic enterprises can only exist if studio rentals are kept at affordable rates. As part of our expanding arts directive, it is our aim to continue providing affordable studio spaces and to encourage postgraduate art students, local artisans and artists to live and work on the Rame peninsula.

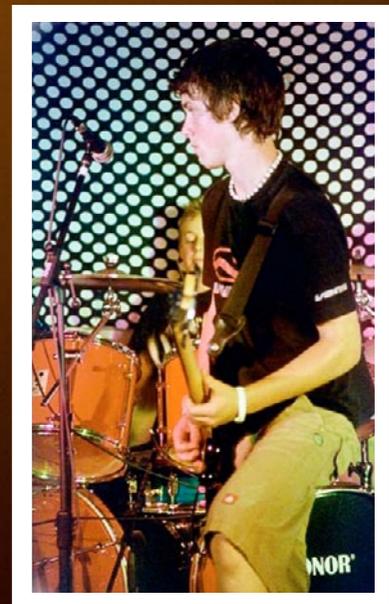
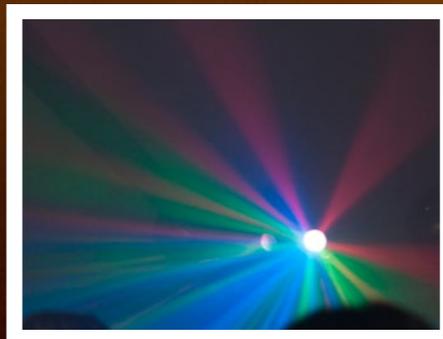


Maker Events

From the very beginning Rame Conservation Trust (RCT) ran a summer festival to welcome people to Maker Heights and at the same time to raise some valuable income.

The first festival took place in August 1999 and ran for a month! Attractions included live music, a beer festival, civil war re-enactments, a horse show, a dog show and a range of family friendly activities. The annual festivals have continued ever since becoming increasingly popular and established on the UK festival calendar. The festival still plays a key role in raising money for RCT but equally benefits many community businesses and importantly showcases the wide range of entertainment talent we have on the Rame Peninsula (as well as being a fun weekend)

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Community

The motivation of a group of local people to form RCT and purchase Maker Camp was to safeguard the unique historic buildings and most importantly to ensure long term community access to the Maker site. From the day it was purchased RCT has maintained an open door policy enabling ramblers, dog walkers and picnickers to enjoy the grounds, campers to awake to unsurpassed panoramic views, history enthusiasts to explore the site.



Weddings

In a growing trend for weddings in open spaces, a number of betrothals have taken place at Maker Heights. 2010 has been a successful year for the Maker Weddings team, whose formula is an emphasis on local produce and supply. Every wedding is different, and every wedding has its own fairy-tale for the telling.

- Youth groups
- Amateur theatre productions
- Art cinema
- Music and art workshops
- Weddings
- Open mic nights

Environment

Woodlands

The Trust manages 67 acres of land and woodland in an area of outstanding beauty. The Woodlands Group is working to open the woods for public access, with paths for walkers and cyclists to enjoy. Management of the woodlands is a time consuming task and over the years dedicated members of the group have put in thousands of hours of work, removing non-indigenous plants, clearing paths and replanting trees to create an amenity that is a benefit to the local community and visitors to the area.

Sustainability

Sustainable does not mean standing still. It does mean doing or having something that lasts. When we use the word sustainable in the context of Maker Heights, it applies not just to the fabric of the edifices, but to the wider environmental, economic and social aspects of our inspirational isthmus. The heritage that is encapsulated in the buildings and surroundings at Maker Heights present a unique set of challenges in a world where sustainability is concerned. Keeping a balance between using original features and services whilst ensuring our environmental impacts are minimised is of primary concern. Using a combination of bygone craftsmanship and modern technology is the key to ensuring that the workspaces can be made warm and effective.

Maker Garden Grow

Rame Conservation Trust and Transition Rame are working together to create a community allotment and garden scheme on the Maker site. Still in its early stages, it is intended that this should be an educational resource and showcase for Permaculture principles, as well as an integral part of Rame's long term strategy for food security.

Over 120 people enjoyed a guided walk around Maker Heights to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of WW2 on 3rd September, 2009. The day culminated in a tea party with distribution of ration packs and 1940s entertainment by Maker musicians.



Maker Heights

The future

A word from the Chairman and Trustees

The work of the Rame Conservation Trust has been to preserve this outstanding site with all of its edifices but more importantly, the people and activities within and around them.

The Trust makes every endeavour to maintain what is a very precious suite of assets, but the resources required to really make a difference are considerable.

We have been sharing our vision of the future for Maker Heights with a number of key stakeholders, including the Architectural Heritage Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund, Regional Development Agency, Cornwall Convergence, Cornwall Council and others.

That vision includes bringing the barrack buildings back to their former glory whilst continuing to develop the wider community aspects, especially its art, music and performance artists; other micro-industries.

It is growing in importance as a social epicentre for the Rame Peninsula, whether as part of the heritage story or contemporary events such as weddings, music festivals or even pantomimes! People of all ages and interests can be found at Maker at different times of the year. People walking, artists working or students learning to play an instrument make up a rich and varied tapestry of our community.

This publication gives just a small flavour of the vision for Maker Heights and we hope that you would like to help us achieve that through your support.

Annual memberships

Single at £10.00

Dual at £18.00

Family at £25.00

Five year memberships (for the price of 4)

Single at £40.00

Dual at £72.00

Family at £100.00

Life Membership

Single at £250.00

Membership Secretary

Rame Conservation Trust

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We're looking forward to welcoming you!