

## John Tonkin

“Volunteering for Falmouth Art Gallery has developed my skills and given me the chance to observe, handle and study a wide range of Cornish Art.

My love for the work of Henry Scott Tuke RA RWS (1858 – 1929) lead me to an ongoing relationship with Falmouth Art Gallery. I have looked after the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society’s Tuke Collection for over 20 years. The collection is housed and cared for by Falmouth Art Gallery which lead to them enlisting my expertise as a local art historian and Tuke expert.

As gallery volunteers, we are able to work outside our own interests. Working at Falmouth Art Gallery has allowed me to work with masterpieces by John Opie, Dame Laura Knight, Sir Alfred Munnings and John William Waterhouse and has encouraged me to use my eye and opinion on a number of important acquisitions for the gallery.

I have found my role at the gallery vital as it has given me the opportunity to raise the profile of Henry Scott Tuke as an artist, whilst also utilising my knowledge and experience gained over 40 years. I hope this depth of knowledge was integral to the success of the gallery’s 2008 exhibition *Catching the Light – The sunshine paintings of Henry Scott Tuke*. The exhibition, sponsored by the Heritage Lottery Fund, worked in partnership with the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society, the Royal Cornwall Museum and Bonhams Ltd.”