

Smallholding New & Features – 50th Anniversary of The Minack Chronicles

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Derek and Jeannie

This year marks the 50th Anniversary of the publishing of the book 'A Gull On The Roof' by Derek Tangye. Who is Derek Tangye you may well ask and what has he to do with smallholding? You may not have previously heard of him as Derek and his Wife Jeannie long ago fulfilled their smallholding dreams and are no longer with us. However they live on in Derek's many books which often complete with illustrations by Jeannie, chronicle the fulfilment of their dream to move to Cornwall and live a humbler more self sufficient lifestyle and work the land. The books may have been written a generation ago but the dream remains the same.

Derek and Jeannie both left high paying jobs in London to rent a small cottage and some land in Cornwall and to try and fulfil their dream. They started as most of us do as dreamers with no real experience and learnt from their mistakes. They had simply holidayed in Cornwall and fallen in love with the idea of living a simpler life closer to nature, but they lived out their lives there in a way that most of us would envy.

The books are full of their trials and tribulations as they try to make their new life work, but they are also full of the joys of living and fulfilling a dream and of their obvious love of nature. Their previous lives working in London are a stark contrast to

their simple life in Cornwall, away from the trappings of money and success. But their love for their new home and their new life shines through in every book, even when things are not running quite so smoothly as they had hoped.

So if you are like many of us just waiting for the right time to fulfil your own dream of owning or renting a smallholding, why not take inspiration from *The Minack Chronicles* and immerse yourself in the world of Minack.

For most of us the dream of self sufficiency, owning and running a smallholding or even a small piece of our own land takes years to achieve. There are financial commitments to consider and often family commitments prevent us from living our dream until the timing is somewhere near 'perfect'. Another factor for many people and one that stops them taking that bold leap to self sufficiency is the basic fear of it not working out. It can be hard to find people who have taken the leap and succeeded to ask them about their experiences or ask the sort of in depth questions we'd love to ask.

There is nothing more inspiring than reading about people who share our dreams and have taken the leap of faith to make them possible and succeeded. Reading about their day to day lives and the difference the change in lifestyle has made to them can be the deciding factor in deciding whether you make the move or not. It can also be a relief to find you are not just a 'dreamer' but are among many who fully intend to one day make that life change to owning a little piece of heaven and trying at least if only partly to work for yourself.

We thoroughly recommend *The Minack Chronicles* having been inspired by them decades ago ourselves, to anyone looking to start a life of self sufficiency and away from the madding crowd.

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