



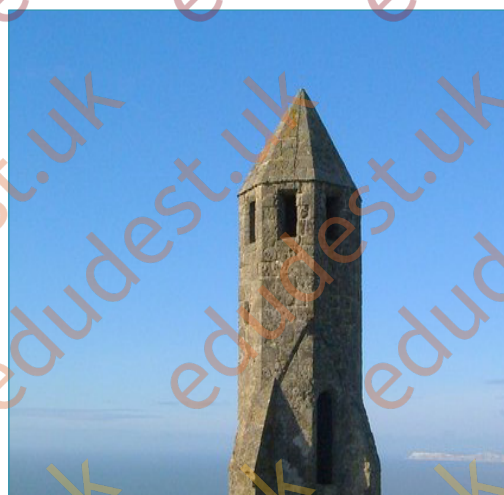
## The Pepperpot at St Catherine's Down

### HISTORY

St Catherine's Oratory - also known as 'The Pepperpot' - is an octagonal tower which was built in the 1300s.

The story behind its building is that in 1313, a ship called the 'St Mary of Bayonne' ran aground in Chale Bay. It is believed that the sailors sold the cargo (which was white wine) to the locals and the Lord of Chale Manor (Walter de Godeton) was later found in possession of many barrels. As the wine had belonged to a religious community in France, he was fined for this misdemeanour and was ordered by the Catholic Church to build a lighthouse and an oratory as penance.

A priest would say prayers (for those lost at sea) and operate the



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- ▶ Write an accurate description of the inside and outside of the building.
- ▶ Imagine that your description is to be used as part of an outside broadcast for radio where you need to help the listener create an accurate image in their mind.

### KEY WORDS

buttresses  
octagonal  
pyramid  
rectagonal  
square  
shaft  
medieval  
slender  
penance



- ✓ Add details about the pepperpot's location and the story behind it.
- ✓ Take photographs/ make sketches to illustrate the descriptions for a classroom display!

**Back at school:** Read out your descriptions to members of an art class who then attempt to draw what is being described. Create your own display with descriptions and images of the oratory.



## ART ACTIVITY

### Joseph Mallord William Turner

The famous painter JMW Turner completed a sketch of Chale Church during one of his visits to the Isle of Wight.

Your teacher will be able to show you examples of this and other sketches and paintings he completed of Island locations.

There is no record of a watercolour of his Chale sketch, but you can see many other paintings of locations such as Carisbrooke Castle, Bembridge Windmill and Cowes Castle.

## TASK:

- See if you can find the perspective from which Turner completed his sketch.

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## POST VISIT ACTIVITIES:

- ✓ Either complete a watercolour (in Turner's style) of your own sketch OR reproduce Turner's sketch as a watercolour painting.
- ✓ You could do a sketch and keep some in pencil (like Turner's image of Bembridge Windmill).





## Myths and Legends - An Introduction



### Definitions

In the earliest times myths and legends were only spoken; writing was first used for boring things like keeping accounts, so myths were not written down until long after writing was invented. In more recent times because few people could write, local legends grew out of things that had happened to them or their friends.

Some people are really good story-tellers and they told stories as entertainment but these stories also created a sense of group identity.

As a consequence of this there are often a number of variations involving the same characters. It is also true that as society changed, people's beliefs changed and so the legends evolved too.

### Myth

A story that was used to explain natural events and supernatural events or gods.

### Legend

A story which many people believed told some part of their history.

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### Smuggler

In the nineteenth century you had to pay a massive tax on sugar, tea and rum when you imported them increasing the price four times. This made them too expensive for almost everyone. So there was lots of money to be made from smuggling tea and sugar into the country without paying tax and there was no shame in buying smuggled goods. The priest got his brandy, the workmen their tea and the ladies their silk handkerchiefs through the smugglers. Lonely places like Blackgang Chine were ideal for doing this in secret because you were less likely to get caught.

### Pirates

Men who used their boat to steal from other boats at sea. Sometimes they just stole the cargo, other times killed the crew by making them 'walk the plank'.

## The Myth of the Blackgang Giant!

This tale has many forms. But all agree that there once were two strange and very different creatures living in Blackgang Chine - a hermit and a flesh-eating giant. The two could not live with each other as they clashed - the hermit liked to protect others, and the giant wanted to destroy and eat them.

The hermit put a curse on the giant one day and a thick mist rushed through the chine, and when it had cleared, they had both disappeared. The reason the earth moves at Blackgang so much - even now - is due to the giant, buried beneath, trying to escape!

### You might like to:

- ▶ Imagine you are a wrecker, a smuggling gang or pirate. Write creatively, using the opening 'One Night at Blackgang...'. Use the space on page 4.
- ▶ Create your own myth about Blackgang and Chale.
- ▶ Write a newspaper article or script or film a news report about the exciting capture of an smuggling gang, or a bunch of pirates!



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## HISTORY

### Blackgang & Chale - a place for Smugglers!

#### Smuggling in Britain: A General History

Archaeology provides evidence that trade between Britain and Europe began in the Iron Age somewhere around 200 BC. Traders from the Roman Empire travelled along the Channel in boats a bit bigger than a modern coach. There were larger boats but these needed a harbour and so limited where you could go ashore and therefore trade.

Having been at sea for a few weeks the crew of the ship would need to get fresh water. Cliffs, like those behind Brading, were known to produce water that was safe to drink wherever they were found. Then in the case of Brading, when the traders got near the shore they would see that there were no defensive features so they would know that the people would not kill them.

This is how trading came to the Isle of Wight. More than a thousand years later in 1215, the Magna Carta gave the king the power to charge import duties. When they were charged on raw wool for spinning, it was easy to make sure it was

paid because there was only a handful of people in a few towns buying and selling.

However, as there was only a few towns, it was easy to get goods ashore without being detected, especially because everyone wanted to buy what you had to sell: they were not going to tell the authorities.

So smuggling flourished all over the country, but especially in the south. Foreign governments used smugglers to carry letters to and from their spies so the forces in favour of smuggling were far stronger than those opposing it.

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Britain is an island with 19,000 miles of coast, so it was easy to get goods ashore without being detected especially because everyone wanted to buy what you had to sell: they were not going to tell the authorities.

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#### Smuggling on the Isle of Wight

On 12th March 1395, the Rector of Freshwater, Thomas Symonde, was charged with being an 'owler' or smuggler of wool.

In the 1720s Daniel Boyce from Stokes Bay on the west of the Island, amassed sufficient wealth to build Appley House in Ryde, it is now a hotel. He used the name David Boyes. Indeed, before the Registration of Births Deaths and Marriages Act of 1836, it was easy to have many names. And before photographs it was possible to pretend to be many different people.

The Smugglers Act 1731 increased the severity of the punishments for those caught. Smugglers caught with weapons could be sentenced to death, people found making signals out to sea at night received one month's hard labour.

Duties on Imported Liquor were put up so high by the Act of 1751 it made duty-paid alcohol unaffordable.

Between 1777 and 1801 William Arnold was customs collector at Cowes. He realised that many smugglers made enough money to bribe the officers who were meant to stop them to turn a blind eye. So he tried to identify and then sack corrupt officers. William Arnold's son became Dr Thomas Arnold of Rugby School and his grandson was Matthew Arnold the poet. William Arnold was able to achieve more because he had the support of the government and the Royal Navy, who were concerned about the consequences of the French Revolution of 1789.

(continued overleaf...)





## Smuggling on the Isle of Wight (continued)

Almost all imported goods except food had duties on them and this allowed smugglers a very broad range of activity. However it made it very difficult for the customs officers because they had so much to try to control. In 1842 the Prime Minister Robert Peel removed duties from some obvious goods like gold and silver, printed or died fabric from China, the Caribbean and the Middle East, but for some reason there had also been duties on coconut shells and ribbons. This meant that the customs officers had only to concentrate on alcohol, tobacco, and sugar.



James Buckett lived in Brighstone and this is his account of smuggling in the nineteenth century as he gave to his son at the end of his life:

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local demand and would therefore not be reported to the authorities. Plus if he continued to fish and only smuggled from time to time, he would not get rich enough to arouse anyone's suspicion.

James described how a local farmer or businessman would put up £50, which in the middle of the nineteenth century was a year's wages for a working man. He had wherry called The Bet, this was a small open boat about 20 feet long. At the time of the month when there was no moon, he set off at night for Barfleur on the east side of the Cherbourg peninsula. There he would buy barrels of brandy that had been roped together in pairs for easy loading and unloading.

The aim was to get back to the Island when there was no moon to help the coastguard see, however the wind might not blow or there could be a storm, both of which would make the return journey difficult. The south of the Isle of Wight is full of chines and caves that are ideal for hiding things in.

While at sea he was on the look out for coast guard cutters, which had more sails and so moved much faster and could easily catch a wherry especially when it was heavily laden with barrels of brandy.



### ACTIVITIES:

- ▶ Create a smuggling timeline using this information above, as well as your own research.
- ▶ Complete a class project on 'Smuggling Through Time'!