

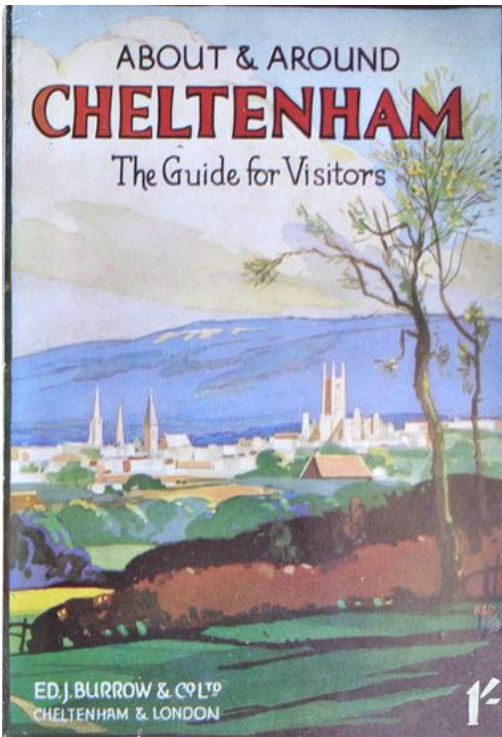


# Cheltenham Local History Society

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July 2018



## EDITORIAL

It's high summer, a good time to consider Cheltenham's history as a tourist destination. This little guidebook to 'England's sunniest and most delightful inland town' presents the town as it was about 90 years ago, when trams still ran and information on Waters, Medical Treatments and Baths could still be obtained from the Spa Manager at the Municipal Offices. It is very instructive and, like any locally-produced guidebook, it paints the town in glowing colours: the first page lists 'Twelve reasons why you should visit and recommend Charming Cheltenham', and more details of most of these are given in the Introduction. We are assured that besides being a fashionable health resort it is a favourite place of residence for leisured folk and a leading centre for education, social life, shopping and sport. Also, of course, it is the most convenient

place from which to explore the unspoilt charms of the Cotswolds, which at that time were still well served by the Black and White Luxury Coaches. The book recommends itineraries for exploring the town as well as for 'motor runs' into the countryside. Adverts for hotels, cafés and shops abound, and there is a wealth of photographs and useful maps. Unsurprisingly, it ran to many editions.

*Kath Boothman*

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## *EVENING LECTURE PROGRAMME 2018-19*

Meetings start at 7.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Municipal Offices, Promenade  
Visitors pay £2.

*Tuesday 18th September:*

### **Mark Davies—The First English Aeronauts: some momentous early air balloon flights from Cheltenham**

James Sadler (1753–1828), ‘King of all Balloons’, defied the constraints of his upbringing to become the first Englishman ever to build and fly a hot-air balloon, in Oxford in 1784. Subsequently an engineer, designer of armaments, and Chemist to the Navy, Sadler returned to ballooning in Oxford in 1810. He and his son Windham set numerous records while ascending from some 40 British towns and cities, many ascents being the first ever from those places. Yet despite a lifetime of achievement, bringing him into contact with some of the most significant names in Georgian Britain, Sadler ended his days back in Oxford in impoverished obscurity. The Sadlers also enabled the first ascent by any English woman and that of the first woman in Ireland.

*Tuesday 16th October:*

### **David Smith—The Fifth Earl of Berkeley and Mary Cole (1784-1811): a Regency Scandal**

Mary Cole was a Gloucester girl of humble origins. Her liaison with the fifth Earl of Berkeley split the ancient family into warring factions. When her husband died in 1810 their eldest son was denied succession to his father’s title. Following appeal the case was heard in the House of Lords and the evidence, published as it came out, was the hot gossip of the summer of 1811. Was Mary a naïve child seduced by an old roué or a scheming gold digger?

*Tuesday 20th November:*

### **Sue Rowbotham—Maskelyne and Cooke, Cheltenham’s Men of Mystery**

Many people interested in Cheltenham history will have heard of John Nevil Maskelyne, the watchmaker from the Lower High Street who exposed the fraudulent American spiritualists known as the Davenport Brothers in Jessop’s Gardens, Cheltenham in 1865. However, few know the full story of the man who was famous as both performer and inventor for more than 50 years, and who was the first of three generations of illusionists to bear the name. Even less is known about George Alfred Cooke, Maskelyne’s friend and stage partner for nearly 40 years, who was also born in the Lower High Street. So who were these men and how did their fame come about? Sue tells the story of Maskelyne and Cooke, and their place in the history both of modern magic and of Cheltenham.

*Tuesday 11th December:*

**Sue Jones—Winners or Losers? The Women’s Suffrage Campaign in Cheltenham**

Some very determined and colourful characters led the women's suffrage movement in Cheltenham before the First World War and this talk will try to assess how successful they were in attracting support. However, when partial women's suffrage was granted in 1918, not all supporters would have been satisfied. With the help of a unique resource in Gloucestershire Archives revealing the names of a few hundred supporters, it is also possible to assess who gained the precious vote they had been hoping for and who would have been disappointed.

*Tuesday 15th January 2019:*

**Research and Display Evening**

*Tuesday 19th February 2019:*

**Paul Barnett—Disaster Waiting: the Severn & Wye Railway Bridge Disaster**

In line with commemorative activities to remember the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the structure's demise, Disaster Waiting gives a comprehensive overview of the bridge's construction, its daily operation and eventual destruction at the hands of two runaway tankers. The talk uniquely seeks to unravel several bridge myths and presents recently unearthed documentary evidence which assist to lay to rest this sad chapter of Gloucestershire Maritime Past.

*Tuesday 19th March 2019:*

**Michael Cole—An Excursion to Southam, 1879**

The starting point is a local history society's field trip from Cheltenham's Plough Hotel to Prestbury, Southam, and thence to Sudeley Castle, where 150 members sat down to lunch with Mr. and Mrs Dent. They returned to the Plough for a formal dinner, and then had a schedule of five talks for the evening at Cheltenham Ladies College. (Some stamina!) Much of the talk concerns Lord Ellenborough and the history both of Southam Delabere and of his memorial chapel to his wife Octavia who died tragically young.

*Tuesday 16th April 2019:*

**Tony Comer—The History of GCHQ**

No further information available at time of going to press

*Tuesday 21st May 2019:*

**AGM followed by Fiona Mead—Letters and photos from St Helena:  
A Glosters officer describes guarding Boer POWs**

In 1900 the 4<sup>th</sup> Gloucestershire Militia was sent to St Helena to guard prisoners captured during the Boer War in South Africa. One of the young officers was Michael Hicks Beach, grandfather of the present Earl St Aldwyn. During his stay he sent home many entertaining letters and photographs which form the basis for this talk, and these are supplemented by photos from the collection of the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum. Together they give a good and often amusing description of life for prisoners, officers and men on St Helena at that time.

## MORNING LECTURES 2018-9

Morning lectures will take place in St Luke's Hall, St Luke's Place, Cheltenham. A donation of £2 from all attending these lectures is appreciated. Tea/coffee and biscuits are served (no charge) from 10.00 am. Lectures start at 10.30 am. All welcome. Parking at the Hall is for disabled only—please contact Chris Conoley (01452 700635) if you wish to reserve a space.

*Tuesday 2nd October:*

**Edward Gillespie—A Brief History of Cheltenham told through its Festivals**  
Cheltenham's brief history—only 300 years since the discovery of the spa waters—has been propelled by an association with leisure, sport and culture. This light-hearted talk focuses on how the reputation and attraction of Cheltenham have been built around festivals of cricket, horse racing, music, literature, jazz, science and much more. Edward Gillespie was Managing Director of the Racecourse for over 30 years and is now a trustee of Cheltenham Festivals, chairing the Music Festival.

*Tuesday 5th March 2019:*

**John Simpson (Pittville History Works Group)—11,000 Histories: putting Pittville online**

Pittville History Works is a new local history group founded in 2014. Our aim from the start was to be fully digital and to take advantage of technology, both to collect and analyse data and to make our findings fully accessible online. We launched our website with historical data relating to the 1,500 people who lived in Pittville Lawn between 1841 and 1901. We now have fully searchable information on over 11,000 individuals going up to 1939. In this talk, members of the group will discuss how this approach has led them to discover more about the area, its inhabitants and its history.

*Tuesday 2nd April 2019:*

**John Butterworth—History of the Stagecoach in Cheltenham and Gloucestershire**

This talk will describe how the advent of a regular stage coach service providing reliable links to London and other parts of the country for the first time led to an economic boom in our area. There will be stories of its famous drivers and of the many people from all walks of life who travelled in the coaches.

The speaker is a newspaper editor, author and historian..



## *FOR YOUR DIARY*

### **Prestbury Local History Society**

www.prestburyhistory.com

Meetings are held at Prestbury Women's Institute Hall (corner of Bouncers Lane/ Prestbury Road), starting at 7.30 pm unless otherwise stated. Guests pay £2.

*Monday 24th September:*

**Neil Pryce-Jones—Brockhampton**

*Monday 22nd October:*

**Mark Williams—Policing in Prestbury**

*Monday 26th November:*

**David Jones—World War One**

### **Leckhampton Local History Society**

www.llhs.org.uk

Meetings are normally held at Glebe Cottages, Church Road, Leckhampton (next to the churchyard), at 7.30 pm. Admission £2 for visitors.

*Wednesday 19th September:*

**Amy Woolacott—Footpaths through Hedges with Gates, Stiles etc.**

*Wednesday 17th October:*

**Don Shewell—St Mary's Church, Charlton Kings**

*Wednesday 21st November:*

**Peter Donovan—Bomber Harris**

### **Swindon Village Society**

Meetings are held at Swindon Village Hall at 7.30 pm unless stated otherwise. Guests are charged £1. (Single membership is £5, family membership £10.)

*Wednesday 19th September:*

**John Chandler—the VCH in Gloucestershire**

*Wednesday 17th October:*

**Arthur Ball—Garden Birds**

*Wednesday 21st November:*

**Norman Baker (Chairman of Prestbury LHS)—the History of Prestbury**

### **Charlton Kings Local History Society**

www.charltonkings.org.uk

All meetings are held at the Baptist Church, Church Street, starting at 7.30 pm.

*Tuesday 25th September:*

**David Elder—Through the Looking Glass**

*Tuesday 23rd October:*

**Mike Wallace—the River Chelt**

*Tuesday 27th November:*

**Bruce Buchanan—Cheltenham Civic Society nominations and awards, with an emphasis on Charlton Kings**

### **Holst Birthplace Museum**

[www.holstmuseum.org.uk](http://www.holstmuseum.org.uk)

#### Exhibition

*July 10th to December 15th 2018 at the Museum:*

#### **Gustav Holst's WWI: with the Salonika Forces**

An exhibition exploring how Holst taught music to soldiers in Salonika and Constantinople during World War I. The story will be told through letters, diaries, photographs and archive film, as well as a reconstruction of Holst's own room in the Salonika YMCA.

#### Concert

*Saturday 29th September at St Andrew's Church, Montpellier Street*

**Holst Birthday Concert** with Cheltenham Choral Society, James Gilchrist and James Wright. Works by Holst, Vaughan Williams, Bach, Tallis, Wood and Mozart.

#### Talk

*Friday 19th October at St Luke's Church Hall*

#### **Nigel Simeone—Holst's Operas**

(Further details to be provided nearer the time.).

### **The Deerhurst lecture 2018**



#### **‘Deerhurst, Pershore and Westminster Abbey’**

Dr Richard Mortimer, former archivist to Westminster Abbey  
*Saturday 15th September at 7.30 pm in St Mary's Church, Deerhurst*

Tickets at the door £5, students £3

Further details available at <https://deerhurstfriends.co.uk>

## REVIEWS

Ray Wilson's talk on March 6th at St Luke's was entitled **The Quarries and Tramroads of Leckhampton Hill**. Ray said that serious quarrying began only in 1793 when Charles Trye inherited the Lansdown Estate. He decided to open limestone quarries on the hill, and in order to bring the stone down to the town he built an inclined roadway, the first section starting near the Devil's Chimney. Ray

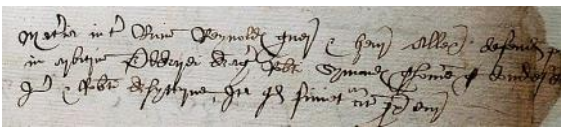


showed a drawing in which the winding drum at the top of the slope that served as a brake for the trams (trucks) could be seen. It was a narrow gauge track with stone sleeper blocks supporting short sections of rail, which had flanges to guide the trams; the tracks were laid side by side so that the weight of full trams going down served to pull empty trams up the slope. From the bottom of the Devil's Chimney incline the track ran along to the top of the steep section called the middle incline, which went via Daisy Bank to the bottom incline, the last downhill stretch. A tramroad from Gloucester

docks to Cheltenham was opened in 1811, mainly to deliver coal to Cheltenham, and Trye soon built a track to link his tramway to it, joining the Gloucester tramroad near the present railway station. Ray showed evocative photos of various parts of the system, but said that little of all this can be seen now. A picture of the quarry face revealed various strata, one of which was a hard stone called ragstone or brownstone that became commercially valuable in later years, chiefly for use in garden walls. Quarrying it meant taking the track up higher and putting sidings at the top of the hill, traces of which are still visible since the Industrial Archaeology Society cleared the scrub from that area. On the flat summit, where there is now a car park, the soil was stripped off and put back after the brownstone had been quarried. In the 1920s the resources of the hill were exploited in a different way, by burning the quarried limestone (most of which was not of the best quality for building) to make lime. At the top of the middle incline four 70-foot tall gas-powered kilns were erected on a massive masonry plinth, together with an electrical plant to power the winding gear for bringing the materials up. The crushed stone was delivered to the kilns by trams running over a bridge and emptying into the tops of them. £180,000 was spent to create this system, which also involved a new incline, but it never worked very well. The lime produced was not of consistent quality and the venture failed. At the foot of the middle incline was Tramway Cottage, where the first of the notorious Leckhampton Hill riots took place in 1902. One Henry Dale had bought the hill, complete with quarries, and was fencing parts of it off, which so enraged local people that they threw the tramway man out of his house and demolished it. Another riot in 1906 was quelled only when the Riot Act was read. As for the Gloucester to Cheltenham tramroad, its usefulness dwindled after the Birmingham to Gloucester line arrived in 1840, and it closed in 1861. Ray showed a reopened gateway where the tramroad used to run into Gloucester docks. There is a plaque, put up in 1991, and nearby stand two replica trams on a section of rail.



Our talk on 20th March entitled **How to Write a History of Cheltenham** was a double-act by **Beth Hartland and Alex Craven**, two of the editors currently working on the Cheltenham volume of the Victoria County History. Beth edits the Medieval section and Alex the Early Modern part from about 1540 to 1945. Alex first told us how the VCH was started in 1899 as a private enterprise aiming to write the history of every parish in England. He showed a map indicating which counties had been covered wholly or partly. Work on Gloucestershire, first begun in 1907-8, had re-started in 1965; a map showed which bits had been done. Cheltenham was to be volume 15. Beth said there were more medieval sources for Cheltenham than she had expected, and she was very grateful to the Society's Latin group for the work they had done on them. Many were in the National Archives, but the earliest, a court roll of 1276, had had to be obtained from the Duchy of Cornwall and undergo restoration before it could be read. She listed some of the other sources used: fine rolls, pipe rolls (payments to the crown) close and patent rolls (letters from the king) and records of the court of common pleas. Alex said court records were essential sources which conveyed



16th century handwriting can leave a lot to be desired

the flavour of life in Cheltenham as nothing else did. Their quality varied a good deal—he showed a clearly written record of 1539 and a barely legible scrawl from 1555. Seventeenth century surveys were another important source. The first accurate map of Cheltenham was the 1801 enclosure map, and historians had to work back from that through text references to see what the town was like earlier. Much of medieval Cheltenham was swept away by developments after 1740. The 1801 map still showed the old burgage plots along the High Street, but also revealed how in many places the once-common big fields had been divided up. Field names were useful evidence too, often indicating what the land was like or who owned it. The townscape was harder to reconstruct; the few houses that survived until the 18th or 19th century were the better ones, mainly farmhouses. In the 17th century, as records showed, there were many dilapidated cottages. Beth showed a list of lords of the manor. Until 1141 the king had held Cheltenham, then the Earl of Gloucester had it, then it changed hands numerous times until Henry V gave it to Syon Abbey. In the early days the land was farmed as demesne, ie by the lord himself, but by the 14th century much was leased out to tenants, who initially had to work the lord's land as well as their own. By 1390, as the accounts showed, they could pay money instead. There were five mills in Cheltenham and Charlton Kings, and areas of woodland, which was an important resource that the landlords always reserved to themselves. Alex noted that after the Black Death there were fewer people to farm the land and more livestock was kept. In the 17th century tobacco was grown—10 acres were planted in Arle in 1619—despite government disapproval, but by the 1690s cheaper American tobacco priced it out of the market. Finally, the old court records dealt with many crimes and misdemeanours, from cheating in business to brawling and vagrancy, giving much useful insight into the behaviour of ordinary people. This was where history really came to life.



On April 3rd at St Luke's **Carrie Howse** spoke to us on the theme of **Rural District Nursing in Gloucestershire 1880-1925**. Carrie said that by the 1880s Florence Nightingale's influence had made nursing a respectable profession, but hospitals were all voluntary-funded institutions caring mainly for the poor, while the rich were treated at home. The first cottage hospital was founded in 1859 at Cranley in Surrey. Bourton's was the third in the country. There were 70 cottage hospitals by 1870 and 300 by 1900. Even so, many poor people still had to go to the hated workhouse hospitals. Respiratory diseases, TB, dysentery and measles

were all common and folk remedies such as poppy-head tea from the local wise woman were preferred to the remedies made and sold by doctors and pharmacists. Thompsons of Tetbury made medicines for farm animals as well as for people and used substances such as arsenic and strychnine in both. There were many patent medicines, too, often advertised as cure-alls, but the poor could not afford these. Some ladies of the manor such as Emma Dent

of Sudeley Castle genuinely cared for the poor and began to employ nurses to treat the people on their estates. The necessary impetus to get a national system going came from Elizabeth Malleon, a Londoner born in 1828, who had been a teacher and campaigner for education before retiring to Gloucestershire in 1881. She opened a reading room in Gotherington, and soon saw that the local people who used it needed medical help. Launching an appeal, she raised enough money to found a Village Nursing Association and hire a trained nurse for the village in 1884. Similar efforts were being made elsewhere too—Charlton Kings for example had a local nurse for a while—but Elizabeth Malleon saw that a national association was needed. Pursuing the idea in the face of opposition from her community at all levels, in 1889 she managed to form a committee including Lady Lucy Hicks Beach, whose husband had been Chancellor of the Exchequer. Thanks to her contacts in high places the Rural District Nursing Association was set up in 1890. It was divided into numerous local bodies often involving people of high rank, as was the urban nursing service run by the recently founded Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses, to which the RDA was soon affiliated. By 1892 nurses were at work in many places in Gloucestershire. Who were they? Because they had to work independently to a large extent, all had to be hospital nurses first, then undergo 6 months' further training. RDNs also needed a midwifery certificate. Each local association had to raise its own funds and provide the nurse with board and lodging and £25-£30 a year, a very modest wage. In poor areas even this was difficult and the accommodation was often spartan. The RDN was constantly on the move either on foot, by bicycle or in a donkey cart: the Gotherington nurse Margaret Powell travelled 185 miles a month in 1895. With few remedies to offer, nurses coped with epidemics and accidents and many worked day and night. It was a hard life, but rewarding. The ladies who tirelessly ran (and sometimes subsidised) the system also gained much satisfaction from it. Elizabeth Malleon was manager of the Gotherington district until she died at 88.



This 1920s district nurse in Kent was lucky enough to have a motorcycle

Our speaker on April 17th was **Barry Simon** with a talk on **The History of Swindon Village**. Barry said little was known of the village's early history. Its name meant 'pig's hill.' The existence of burial mounds nearby, mentioned in a Saxon charter, indicated that there had been Neolithic settlements in the area, and some Roman remains had been found. He showed a picture of the ruined St Oswald's Priory in Gloucester, which had owned the manor of Swindon in the 10th century. The first good description of the village was in Domesday, where it was said to have three hides ( a hide being about 120 acres) and 13 families. The first people to leave traces still visible today were the Normans, who built the



St Lawrence's church

tower of St Lawrence's church, one of only two six-sided towers in the country. From about the 13th to the 16th century the Moryns were lords of the manor and in 1250 Simon Moryn gave one of the village's mills to a leper hospital in Gloucester. The mill, rented out by the hospital, was then known as Prester's Mill. By 1775 it was a cloth mill and dye house. The leper hospital had by then become a mental asylum and the mill came to be called Bedlam Mill, the name it still bears today. In recent years it was sold to developers and in danger of being demolished, but there was strong local resistance and Cheltenham Borough Council gave it listed protection. It was now converted into two cottages. The village used to have a grist mill and a mill pond too, mentioned in 15th century records. There were two or three moated houses in the village, and the lake near the Hall may have been a 13th century moat, perhaps surrounding a hunting lodge. Edward IV and his army passed through Swindon Village en route to the Battle of Tewkesbury in 1471, and there was a legend that Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn honeymooned at Swindon Hall. The present Hall is not old enough, but if there was a hunting lodge nearby they might have stayed there. The Manor House was older than the Hall and was recently found to have timbers dating from about 1580. It was much enlarged in later centuries and, like the mill, was saved from developers by local opposition—a triumph for the nimbys! It was now divided into six dwellings with a large garden. Swindon Hall was also divided up and Barry said he himself lived in part of it. It had started as a farm around 1650 and later belonged to John Surman of Tredington and his descendants, who expanded it into a mansion house. The last of them, the very wealthy John Surman Surman, died in 1880. The house was requisitioned in World War II and had an army camp and later a POW camp in the grounds. It suffered bomb damage to one corner, but new owners restored it after the war. Barry showed pictures of other old houses including the supposed home of Maud of Maud's Elm and Apple Tree Cottage that had once been a school. He also showed old drawings of the church. The nave and chancel, which dated from the 12th-13th century, had been heavily restored by the Victorians. There was a crypt and a ring of 6 bells. A hundred yards away was Manor Farm, until recently still a proper farm. Swindon Village was still very close to the countryside, but at the same time it was part of Cheltenham now.

On 22nd May after the business of the AGM was completed **Alan Pilbeam** gave a talk entitled **A Week's Holiday in the Forest of Dean, 1880**. Alan said that the Forest had been a latecomer as a tourist destination, even though the Wye Valley had been popular since 1770 when William Gilpin took a trip on the river and wrote a book praising its picturesque viewpoints. Cheltenham was attracting visitors by the 1820s and had hotels such as the Plough, the Bell and the Lamb, while Gloucester and Winchcombe had inns for pilgrims from the 15th century. People came to see the Cotswolds but not the Forest, partly because travel to it and in it was difficult and partly because its mining areas were scenically unappealing and the people were unfriendly. This all changed in 1880 when the railway arrived with a bridge over the Severn at Sharpness, a line through to Lydney and a station at Speech House. John Bellows' book *A Week's Holiday in the Forest of Dean* was published in 1881, price 6d, and further editions were produced up to the 1960s. Bellows, a Quaker, moved here from Cornwall aged 20 to work for a printer and in due course took over the business and became an important local figure. As a member of BGAS he developed a keen interest in local history and archaeology. He wrote his book to change the public image of the Forest, giving information on such topics as train times and the availability of refreshments as well as on the history, geography and economy of the area. Alan then showed a series of pictures from the book, many of which were coloured engravings by Bellows himself. There was the original Severn Bridge, for example. There was Lydney station, where a traveller could send a message ahead to have a meal and a pony and trap waiting for him at Speech House. Bellows explored extensively by train and on foot, enjoying the natural history of the area but presenting everything as prettier than it really was in the pictures he used. He went upriver to Goodrich and St Briavels, south of which is an ex-colliery, now a bird-watching site with a memorial to the miners and quarry men. In one place, finding what he thought was a piece of Roman road that could have led to Roman iron works, he persuaded the Ordnance Survey to add it to the map. He was wrong, however: when it was excavated in 2000 17th century charcoal came to light. He visited Newnham, where Severn trows transferred their cargoes to ships, and was much interested in the fossil-bearing rocks at Westbury. He was also interested in the great trees in the Forest, many of them oaks planted in the 1660s for shipbuilding. Alan showed a picture of Trafalgar Colliery near Cinderford, once employing 900 men. The miners typically lived round the edges of the Forest and walked to work, and a miner's diary for 1872 had been found that revealed how very hard their working life was. Bellows also visited an iron mine and depicted its extensive and ugly workings, now long gone. In conclusion, Alan recommended the little book. Though hard to come by these days (*but see p22*) it can still be useful to a visitor finding his way around the Forest.



Trafalgar Colliery

## Between the Wars: Life in Gloucestershire 1919-1939 GLHA Local History Day

*Saturday 28th April 2018*

*At Churchdown Community Centre, Parton Road, Churchdown*



Doors opened at 10.30 am and the meeting began at 11.00 with a welcome from Dr Steven Blake, who noted that this annual event was sponsored by The Notgrove Trust. He introduced the first speaker Alan Crosby, whose subject was 'The Local History of Inter-war England: Themes and Challenges'. A lunch break from 12.00 to 1.30 pm, with refreshments provided, allowed time to look at the various displays. The CLHS display was on the theme of develop-

ments in urban transport. The next speaker was Dr Toby Thacker with the rather intriguing title "‘A Few Fatalities would have speeded things up’: the Outbreak of Smallpox in Gloucester in 1923", followed by the presentation of this year's Bryan Jerrard Award, sponsored as usual by The History Press, to Carol Maxwell for her article 'Painswick's Criminal Past' in Painswick Chronicle 19. The award for the best display went to Nailsworth Local History Research Group. There was a break for tea before the final speaker, David Eveleigh, gave his talk entitled 'Suburban Vernacular: Housing and Domestic Style 1919-1939'.

At 4.00 pm Dr Blake closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their support.



### **Cheltenham South Town Walk, Wednesday 13th June**

On a fine evening about 20 people assembled at the Norwood for a walk, led by Stuart Manton, along the Bath Road and via the Suffolks and Tivoli, covering the area formerly known as South Town. Cheltenham had been a small town, he said, when the waters were discovered in 1716, and even by 1805 when Royal Crescent was built there was little but farmland, cottages and wildlife where we now stood. By 1811 the population had reached 10,000 and was expanding. The Norwood, named for the family who had been lords of the manor since the 15th century, was built in 1821. By then there were stoneyards nearby, processing the stone brought down by the tramroad from Leckhampton Hill. Besides providing refreshment and entertainment the pub was also a venue for auctions and inquests and a toll point on the Bath Road, which until 1864 was a toll road. Stuart told the story of a horse

trough beside the pub, a gift from local ladies, who somehow had not thought of the cost of connecting water to it. Fortunately the town council paid the bill. In 1927 public lavatories were installed under the pavement beside the Norwood, remaining in use until the 1970s, as some of his listeners remembered. Stuart showed pictures of the electric trams that ran down the Bath Road to the High Street from 1902 to 1930. The nearby market building had been Robert Young's from 1886 to 2012 and the Daisy Chain had been Leckhampton Post Office until 1980. Moving up the road we came to Adcock's, which had been a shoe shop for 115 years since the Lawrence family, who made shoes, started it in 1903. It was taken over in 1960 by Adcock's, a company now in its 5th generation. Opposite the Exmouth Arms is the Red Cross shop, once Phipps the pork butcher and from 1922 Winter the fishmonger, where the fish had arrived in the early morning from Grimsby and been laid out on ice. Later it was Thomas Plant the school outfitter. The Exmouth



Arms, which dated from about 1816, used to have a bowling green and was named for Sir Edward Pellew, who had become Admiral Viscount Exmouth. The Big Fish, further up the road, had been a communal kitchen selling cheap take-away food in World War I. Since 1924 it had been a fish and chip shop, where in the early days chips cost 1d and fish 2d. We next stopped at Thirlstaine House, built at a cost of £100,000 in the 1820s by the Scott family and extended by Lord Northwick to house his art collection. In 1863 it was bought by Sir Thomas Phillipps, whose descendants sold it to Cheltenham College in 1947. At the end of Montpellier Grove, our next stop, Stuart said Suffolk Road was originally a farm track from Charlton Kings to Westal Fields. He told us about the shops on the south side, developed from about 1816,

one of which was bombed flat in 1940: he showed a photo of the bomb site. We went next to the Daffodil, Cheltenham's first 'picture house', where once an orchestra played to accompany the films. Later the home of the Cheltenham Film Club, a bingo hall and an antique shop, it had been restored and converted into a restaurant in 1996. Finally we stopped at the Norwood Triangle where Ashford Road meets Great Norwood Street. Here the tramroad from



the hill had run through in 1810, with a stonemason's yard where modern houses now stand. The nearby Railway Inn, which served the quarry and railway workers until the tramroad closed in 1861, had remained a pub until 1968. A lottery grant in 2008 had funded the decorative plaques set into the ground, one of which, Stuart pointed out, bore a design based on the seal of the tramway company. Thus ended our very enjoyable and instructive walk, an hour and a half well spent.

## SOCIETY NEWS

### New Members

A warm welcome is extended to the following:

Roger Chetwode Clarke  
Philip Collins  
Richard Neale

Jenny Lewis  
Robert Rimell

### VCH News – *Cheltenham before the Spa* out at last!

The last stages of editorial work on the VCH paperback, covering Cheltenham's history from the year dot up to 1740, took longer than expected, but the final proof copy was approved in late June, and printing took place immediately after. Along with John Chandler, I feel I've scrutinised every comma and caption several times over, so it is a great relief to see the job finished at last. Obviously we hope that everyone agrees with us that the wait has been worth it, and that it will help spread the word about the VCH Cheltenham project. As you will know, the planned hardback volume is to cover Swindon Village, Charlton Kings, Leckhampton and Up Hatherley, so there is a deal of work still to be done. And before the work comes the fundraising...



At the time of writing, we expect the main distribution of copies to people who have pre-ordered will be at the Local History Afternoon on 21st July. Arrangements for payment (including P&P where appropriate) are being communicated separately. If you didn't pre-order at the special price of £9, there will be limited additional stock available at £12, which is still less than the regular retail price of £14 which we expect to apply if you order at a bookshop or online.

*James Hodsdon*

#### Reminder!

Don't forget to come to our Local History Afternoon on the theme  
*'Salubritas et Eruditio' – Health and Education*

at St Andrew's Church, Montpellier  
on Saturday 21st July from 1.30pm to 5.15 pm

Stalls, displays and refreshments, talks by Robert Rimell and John Putley  
Tickets £3 on the door



## Projects

The Society's volunteers continue to work on the projects: that is cataloguing at the Archives, entering information from the Miles scrapbooks into spreadsheets, pinning information to the Cheltenham maps on Know Your Place (KYP) and scanning the Mike Grindley archive. At the Hub (Archives) we are now working on DC137, Cheltenham Borough Council's plans and maps for Green Spaces, a 20th century archive—we have even come across the plans for our own, and other people's, allotment sheds! A further layer on KYP is being discussed based on the list of suffragettes which Sue Jones has assembled as part of her research for her book, *Votes for Women*. Progress on the Miles scrapbooks and the Grindley deposit is very slow and we could do with more volunteers. Something you might like to consider for the autumn and winter— training and support are readily available provided you have very basic computer skills.

Please note that now I am no longer journal editor I have a new email address. You can contact me at [projects.clhs@btinternet.com](mailto:projects.clhs@btinternet.com)

*Sally Self*

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## Congratulations !

To **Gwyneth Rattle**, this year's winner of the Peter Smith Award, which goes each year at the AGM to a member who has given outstanding service to the Society. How much Gwyneth has the Society's interests at heart was shown in her speech of thanks, which she used to draw attention to the need for new committee members and to urge her listeners to consider volunteering. Quite right! It's only the committee that keeps the Society going. We hope very much people will respond.



And to **Joyce Cummings**, one of our longest-serving members, who on June 5th reached the magnificent age of **90**. As actively involved as ever, Joyce is still answering the many history-related enquiries that come to the Society from far and wide. She is pictured here at her birthday party on June 3rd, a 1920s-themed traditional tea-party held in the old St Paul's School café and attended by a large crowd of friends and family. It was a very happy occasion.





*For those members who were unable to attend the AGM on 22nd May, summary reports are printed below. Full minutes of the meeting will be made available at next year's AGM. If you did not have a copy of the accounts and would like one posted to you, please either telephone the Treasurer on 01242 231837 or e-mail suebrown@waitrose.com*

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 22ND MAY 2018**

*Sue Robbins, standing in for the Acting Chairman Chris Conoley, welcomed the Mayor Cllr Bernard Fisher, who had agreed to be President of the Society for his term of office, and thanked him for taking the Chair.*

### **Election of Officers and Committee**

Nominations from the floor were invited for the still vacant position of Chairman, but there was none.

*The following were elected:*

**Treasurer:** Sue Brown    **Secretary:** Chris Conoley

**Committee:** Chris Bental, Kath Boothman, Alison Pascoe, Sue Robbins, Joanna Vials, Maggie Winterburn.

**Secretary's Report** (*summarised*): Sue Robbins, on behalf of Chris Conoley, said that the Society was still without a Chair and urged anyone who might be willing to take on this role to ask to be co-opted on to the Committee. The Society did much to increase awareness of local history both for its members and for the public at large. It had held ten meetings in the past year, seven at night and three in the morning, with talks on topics ranging from the History of Sandford Lido to the Life of Gustav Holst. The annual Research and Display Evening and one other evening meeting had unfortunately had to be cancelled. The generally high attendance and the quality of the programme was a tribute to the Programme Secretary Alison Pascoe. The summer visits had again been organised by David Johnson and had consisted of two walks in Pittville, an outing to Malvern and Madresfield Court and a visit to the Jet Age Museum at Staverton. She thanked David for all his hard work and Sue Brown, the Treasurer, for her very efficient organisation of the bookings. The Society had mounted various exhibitions during the year in the Cheltenham Local and Family History Library and had taken part as usual in the Montpellier Fiesta, the Gloucestershire LHA Local History Day and the Heritage Open Days. Three Newsletters were produced each year, for which thanks were owed to the editor Kath Boothman. The annual Journal, a more serious publication, had been edited for the past eleven years by Sally Self, who was now handing over to a new editor Julie Courtenay. She paid tribute to Sally for the immense effort she had put into the Journal and the high standard she had maintained as well as for all her hard work on the Committee, from which she was also resigning. The Society was grateful to members who continued to be actively involved in research projects, notably in connection with the VCH but also including the cataloguing of the Miles scrapbooks and the Mike

Grindley archive and a recently-begun Oral History project. She thanked Jan Broadway, who looked after the Society's website, and all Committee members. Jill Barlow was resigning after many years of valuable service on the Committee and had handed over her role as Membership Secretary to Maggie Winterburn.

**Presentation of the Peter Smith Award:** The award was given to Gwyneth Rattle, who by common consent had made a huge contribution to the Society over many years, not only serving on the Committee but maintaining links with other organisations, regularly playing a major part in the packaging and distribution of Newsletters and Journals and providing practical support for Society events and activities.

**Treasurer's Report** (*summarised*): Sue Brown said the Society's finances were sound. Although the constitution did not require it, an independent examination was normally carried out by Alison Milford, a Certified Accountant,. This year she had been unable to do so before the AGM but would do it afterwards. There was an excess of expenditure over income of £1,099.60 in the general fund and an excess of income over expenditure of £476.12 in the restricted funds, which comprised the Peter Smith Award (net expenditure for the year £50), the 2015 Arts Council grant of which £73.88 was spent during the year, the 2017 Arts Council grant which was spent in full and a grant of £600 towards the Society's contribution to the Cheltenham Remembers World War I project being launched on June 7th. Subscriptions were slightly down but still healthy, membership standing at 394. Donations to the general funds had totalled £32. The Gift Aid receipt was £312.75, a reduced figure because the previous year's had included a claim relating to a one-off donation to the Peter Smith Award and because rules on reclaiming income tax relating to benefits included in membership had changed. The Journals and the Society's other publications continued to sell well. Donations from other sales, which included sales of books given to the Society and percentage sales from authors, had amounted to £520.25. Morning meetings had produced a surplus of £289.94 for the year. Due to the unavailability of the Municipal Offices no Research and Display evening had been held. The proceeds of the raffle on that night were normally donated to the Mayor's charities, and as a gesture of good will the Society had given £100 from funds. As part of Heritage Open Days the Society had sponsored performances of the play *The Parrot, the Poet and the Philanderer* by David Aldred and Lou Beckett and had received a grant of £500 towards it from the Cheltenham Arts Council. The third agreed payment of £1,000 had been made towards the Victoria County History project.

**Address by the Mayor, Councillor Bernard Fisher** (*summarised*):

The Mayor said it was a privilege to be Mayor in this anniversary year of the end of World War I. He recalled the traumatic wartime experience of his wife's uncle, who had travelled no farther than Evesham from his home in Broadway until he was sent to France, and had returned a changed man, never happy except when looking after his bees. On a lighter note, he had read in the Journal that in 1890 Cheltenham employed an Inspector of Nuisances (a job he himself might have liked). Nowadays there were still plenty of nuisances but no inspector!

## LOCAL NEWS

### Cheltenham's War Memorial painting goes on display

On the evening of Thursday 7th June the picture '*A relieved platoon of the 1st/5th Gloucesters marching in from the trenches past headquarters at Hébuterne, 1916*' by Fred Roe, RA, recently brought back to Cheltenham from the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum, was formally unveiled at a special preview event at The Wilson in the presence of the Mayor and invited guests. Julie Finch, CEO of the Cheltenham Trust, read out the letter by Bernard Wilson (brother of Edward) from which the words 'At last fighting is over', adopted as the title of the exhibition, are taken. The Mayor recalled that 1700 Cheltenham men had not lived to come home, and said the painting captured the mood at the end of the war. Neela Mann, who had facilitated the return of the picture and researched its background and the people



in it, said the main focus of the exhibition was on two of the men in the painting, Cyril Winterbotham, brother of Clara Winterbotham the first female Mayor of Cheltenham, who was killed in 1916, and Noel Huxley Waller, who led the first Cheltenham territorials out of town the day after war was declared. The latter had been awarded the Military Cross by George V 200 years ago that very day. Kipling had written 'Let us not forget'. We in Cheltenham did not forget, Neela concluded. Cheltenham remembers.

All those present were then invited to take a closer look at the painting itself and hear more about it, and to see the accompanying exhibition of letters, documents and other memorabilia, which is to be open to the public until March 2018.

## NEW PUBLICATION

### Gloucestershire in Photographs

By Aleks Gjika

Gloucestershire is one of the most diverse counties in England, including the Cotswold Hills with their beautiful towns and villages, the Forest of Dean, the River Severn, the city of Gloucester with its magnificent cathedral, and other historic towns such as Cheltenham, Cirencester and Tewkesbury. Photographer Aleks Gjika has captured Gloucestershire's essence in this collection of stunning images, displaying the county at its best. For those who are proud to live in the county, as well as those visiting, this book is a must. Look through these photographs and you will quickly see why this corner of England has such enduring appeal.

To be published in paperback on September 15th 2018 by Amberley Publishing



## Blue plaque to Florence Earengy unveiled

On Tuesday 10th April at 3 Wellington Square, home of Mrs Daphne Walker, the Mayor Cllr Klara Sudbury unveiled a plaque to the suffragist Florence Earengy



née How (1877-1963), wife of the local councillor and solicitor William Earengy. A number of Florence's descendants were present to witness the unveiling, and Maxine Melling, Chairman of the Civic Society and Alex Chalk, MP for Cheltenham, both spoke briefly about her life and achievements.

Despite humble origins—her father was a grocer—she was educated at North London Collegiate School and gained a BA degree from London University. A committed supporter of the women's suffrage movement,

Florence was willing to break the law and refused to take part in the 1911 census, but did not approve of damage to property. Later she became president of the Cheltenham branch of the breakaway Women's Freedom League started by her more radical sister Edith How-Martin, and was very active in the cause before World War I, often speaking at public meetings.



Florence in 1910 with her only child Onenone

## Another plaque

A plaque of a different kind was unveiled on platform 1 at Cheltenham station on Thursday, 12th April. The local branch of the Railway Correspondence and Travel Society was honouring its joint founders, Aubrey Broad and Leslie Lapper, who in 1928 (90 years ago) launched the Society that was to become, and remains, a nationwide organisation and 'Britain's leading railway society' to quote the words on the plaque. (See article on p8 of the March Newsletter). Richard Neale, Chairman of the Cheltenham Branch, introduced the



Society's President the Revd Canon Brian Arman, who performed the unveiling. The handsome brass plaque was funded by GWR Charities, and members of both founders' families were present. After the ceremony, which (appropriately enough) had to be carefully timed to avoid disruption from the passage of trains, most of the assembled company retired to the Lansdown Hotel for tea.

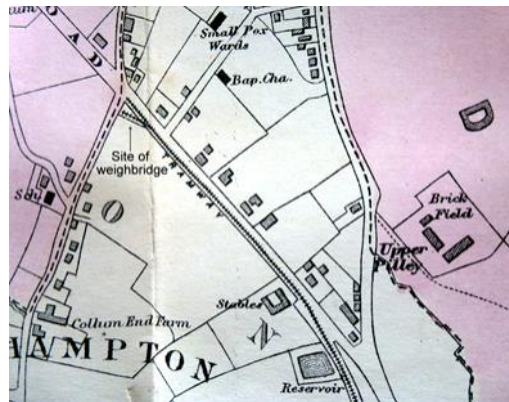
*FEATURE***THE END OF ANOTHER ERA**

Many people will have been sorry to see the Leckhampton Convenience Store close at the beginning of June. Those with longer memories will recall the time when there were two shops – a grocer's (Carlo's) next to the Post Office.



The above photo appeared on a postcard published in about 1910 by Frank Webley, a keen photographer who ran the sweet shop and tobacconist's next door to the Post Office. Of particular interest is the combined drinking fountain and horse trough on the street corner, described when it was installed in 1897 as 'a boon to wayfarers, both four-legged and two'. The fountain and lamp were removed in 1949.

The shops were built around 1900 after the removal of a weighbridge and loading wharf, which were the remnants of the historic tramroad leading down from the quarries. The site is marked on this extract from an earlier map (Bacon's), which also shows some other interesting features that have since disappeared, such as the stables for the tramroad horses, the smallpox wards at the Delancey Fever Hospital and the Pilley Brickworks.



*Eric Miller*

(by permission of Leckhampton LHS)



This year Heritage Open Days will be on the first two weekends in September, but Cheltenham events are concentrated on the second, weekend, 13th -16th September, when you will have a chance to see inside buildings that are not normally open to the public, hear talks and follow guided walks and tours, many given by members of your Society. This year for the first time you will be able to visit Cheltenham Bowling Club, hidden behind its hedge in Suffolk Square, and hear about its 130-year history. Leckhampton Court and Holy Apostles Church will also open their doors. Full details of events in Cheltenham will be found in the brochure available from the Tourist Information Centre from the end of July and on the national website [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk). And it's all free.

*Jill Barlow*



Normandy House, where there will be guided tours on the morning of Saturday September 15th

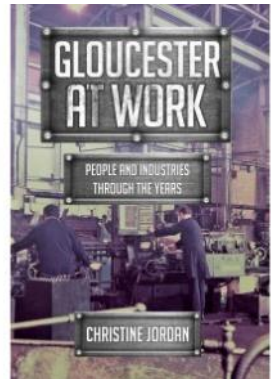
## *NEW PUBLICATION*

### **Gloucester at Work: People and Industries Through the Years**

by Christine Jordan

Gloucester has been a centre for trade and industry since Roman times. From major industrial concerns employing hundreds of people to small family businesses, Gloucester has a wealth of industrial heritage. It is a microcosm of Britain's economic history. Gloucester at Work explores the life of the city and its people, from pre-industrial beginnings to the present day. In a fascinating series of photographs and illustrations, this book takes us from the days when Gloucester had a Roman tile factory and the development of skilled trades in the medieval period to the Victorian economic behemoth it became. It looks at its proud aerospace industry, particularly during the war years, through to its dwindling fortunes in the 1970s and 1980s. More recently, Gloucester has seen an economic upsurge with the creation of digital technologies and cyber security. The book maps some of the contributions made by entrepreneurs, engineers, innovators and skilled tradespeople as well as by the ordinary men and women who have contributed to Gloucester's and the nation's wealth by working in this great city.

Published in paperback in October 2017 by Amberley Publishing, price £13.49







## BOOKS FOR SALE



### News from the CLHS Donated Books 'Shop'

Here is an updated selection of books available from the CLHS Bookshop. If anyone attended the recent AGM and heard the interesting talk by Alan Pilbeam, *A Week's Holiday in the Forest of Dean in 1880*, I am happy to inform you that I have a copy of the book he referred to. It is by John Bellows, paperback, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (1924) and full of interesting facts, sketches and photographs, with a folded map inside the back cover. It is well-used, but quite scarce. The cover price is One Shilling, but I think it is worth £7. If you are interested in this or any of the books below please contact me by phone on 01242 232740, or email [heatherbell71@hotmail.com](mailto:heatherbell71@hotmail.com)

Discovering Alstone, vols 1 & 2. Ed C Green, paperback, £4 each

Everyman Theatre, Official Centenary Brochure, paperback, A4 size, £4

Guide to the Cheltenham Ladies' College, 1931, paperback, A4 size, £4

Pleasure Town, Cheltenham 1830-1860, hardback, £7.50

Cheltenham, A History, S Rowbotham & J Waller, hardback, signed copy, as new, £12

Cheltenham, A Pictorial History, S Blake, hardback, signed copy, as new, £12.50

A History of Cheltenham, G Hart, 2nd Ed 1981, hardback, £10

Leckhampton 1894, the End of an Era, Ed B Stait, 1st Ed 1994, paperback, £4

Old Leckhampton, D Bick, paperback, £3

A Gloucestershire Quiz Book, J Owen, paperback, £2

Bishop's Cleeve to Winchcombe in old Photographs, D Aldred, signed copy, £4.50

The County Maps of old England, T Moule, hardback with dust jacket, reprinted 1991, large with lovely colour plates in excellent condition, £15.

General History – 'Life and Times of...' by various authors, Ed Antonia Fraser.

Hardback, good condition – not in order of reign! Alfred the Great; King John;

The Norman Kings; The Saxon Kings; William I; Edward I; Edward II; Edward

III; Edward IV; Richard I; Richard II; Richard III.

£5 each, £8 for 2 and £10 for 3.

I would like to thank everyone who has brought me their unwanted books – it is surprising how much we can raise for the Society by selling them on. We can also occasionally offer local maps and pictures at reasonable prices.

*Heather Atkinson*



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**CLHS DISPLAYS IN THE LOCAL AND FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY**

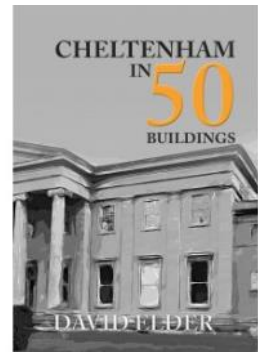
July-August	Food for Free: the History of Cheltenham Allotments
September-October	Getting about the Town: Road Transport in Cheltenham 1919-1939
November-December	A Tribute to the Men of Leckhampton who lost their Lives in the First World War

*NEW PUBLICATION***Cheltenham in 50 Buildings**

by David Elder

From a small market town to its heyday as a fashionable watering place and recognition as ‘the most complete Regency town in Britain’, through to its subsequent reinvention as a centre for religion, education, shopping and festivals, Cheltenham has a proud and distinctive identity. This extraordinary history is embodied in the buildings that have shaped the town, from the medieval church (now its Minster) and the Montpellier Rotunda, where a young Gustav Holst performed, to the world’s first (outside of London) purpose-built Masonic Hall and one of the country’s most iconic buildings of the modern era, the GCHQ Doughnut.

In this unique study well-known local author David Elder guides the reader on a tour of its greatest treasures, revealing that Cheltenham’s history is sometimes complex but never dull.



Published in paperback in November 2017 by Amberley Publishing, price £13.49

## CAN YOU HELP?

### Sandywell Park, 1944

An enquirer writes that in 1944 his father, William H. Luehmann, was stationed in the Sandywell Park area while serving with the 9th Armored Infantry Battalion of the 6th Armored Division. While there he made the acquaintance of 'an old couple' as he put it in a letter to his mother, and said that they practically adopted him. He mentioned he had many pleasant evenings with them before shipping off to France in July that year. He brought home 3 pictures that he had taken, and also stated that the couple's house was built in the 14th century. Can anyone help to identify the people or their house?



### Alice Gardiner's orchestra

These ladies with their banjos, mandolins and guitars were very active in Cheltenham before World War I, did a lot for charity and often provided the music for drama productions. They promoted the use of the balalaika, dressed in Russian costumes and employed Russian musicians to teach them to play the instrument and to arrange music for them. Alice Gardiner was described at her death in 1945 as 'founder of one of Cheltenham's popular institutions, her string band'. An enquirer wants to know more and seeks anyone who may have access to documents and other ephemera relating to the orchestra.



*If you can help with either of these queries please contact Joyce Cummings on 01242 527299 or e-mail [joyce@cyberwebspace.net](mailto:joyce@cyberwebspace.net)*

## NEXT ISSUE

Please forward any material for inclusion in the November 2018 issue by  
**Monday 8th October 2018**  
 to the Editor: Kath Boothman, 3 Taylor's End, Cheltenham GL50 2QA  
 Tel: 01242 230125 e-mail: [kbooth@dircon.co.uk](mailto:kbooth@dircon.co.uk)

We are always very pleased to receive contributions from members—articles of any length, interesting facts and photos, memories, comments, all are welcome.