



Cheltenham Local History Society

Newsletter No. 93

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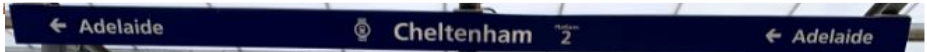
**Cheltenham
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City of Charles Sturt



EDITORIAL

If this doesn't look like the Cheltenham we know, that's because it's on the far side of the world. Some years ago we had a report from Cheltenham, NSW— a suburb of Sydney—by a member who had been there. This namesake is a leafy residential suburb of Adelaide in South Australia, which is where I shall be when you read this. There's another Cheltenham in Melbourne, one in Auckland and at least two in the USA. If anyone visits any of them, please take some photos and tell us about it!

Kath Boothman

For CONTENTS please see page 23.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Society's Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday 21st May in the Council Chamber, Municipal Offices, Promenade, Cheltenham at 7.30 pm prompt. (See Agenda enclosed with this Newsletter—please bring this with you to the meeting. Copies of the minutes of last year's AGM will be available on the door.) The Mayor, as President of the Society, will chair the meeting and give a short address.

Election of Officers and Committee 2019-20

Officers and committee members (as listed in the 2018 AGM Minutes) will resign in accordance with the Society's constitution, although they can be re-elected if they so wish. Nominations are invited for Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and for committee members. If you would like to nominate someone or be nominated yourself, either for one of these posts or as a committee member, please contact the Secretary Chris Conoley (email chris.conoley@btopenworld.com) or phone 01452 700635 for a nomination form.

After the AGM business is concluded **Richard Cann** will give a talk entitled **The Great East Window of Gloucester Cathedral: let's forget Crécy!**

SUMMER VISITS

You are invited to take part in the following visits with the Society. **IN ALL CASES PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THE FORM ENCLOSED WITH THIS NEWSLETTER WITH YOUR PAYMENT AND A STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.** There will be a priority booking period for members only until 12th April and, as places are limited on these visits, you are advised to book early to be sure of getting a place. If you wish to bring a non-member as a guest, please indicate this on the form when booking your own place. If there is any availability after 12th April, places will be offered to non-members in order of application. If you find that you cannot attend a visit for which you have booked, please inform Sue Brown (01242 231837) or another committee member of your cancellation, so that someone else may have the opportunity to take your place. If you don't let us know that you cannot attend, we shall expect you to pay the cost.

Wednesday 5th June at 6.00 pm and Wednesday 19th June at 6.00 pm

Cheltenham Backwaters—a walk exploring the River Chelt

Mary Moxam will lead this walk, which will start at the Meadows Café, Cox's Meadow at 6.00 pm and last about an hour and a half. It will follow the course of the River Chelt as it meanders across town, finding out about some historic buildings on the way and finishing close to the Waitrose car park.

Wednesday 10th July at 6.00 pm and Wednesday 17th July at 6.00 pm

Walk: 'A Suffrage Stroll'

This walk, led by Sue Jones and lasting about 1 hour 15 minutes, takes in the homes of women activists in the centre of the town, some who campaigned for the vote peacefully and some who became embroiled in more controversy. It starts at the Town Hall where two dramatic events in the story occurred and ends by the Clarence Street Lamp where the violent treatment of local women (and one man!) brought shame to the town. The walk will be illustrated with pictures of the key figures.

Wednesday 14th August leaving at 10.00 am from Royal Well, returning 4.45 pm.

FRAMPTON ON SEVERN

On arrival at Frampton we will be met by Rose Hewlett, who will give us an introductory talk. Frampton village is considered by Pevsner in his *Buildings of England* to be 'the most interesting and attractive in the Vale of Berkeley'. Rose will then take us for a guided walk to explore the green (reputedly the longest in England) and the notable features of the village, which include a variety of Tudor and Georgian houses. Much of the village forms part of the Frampton Court Estate, owned by the Clifford family. At 12.30 pm there will be a ploughman's lunch provided by the WI in the Village Hall, after which the afternoon will be devoted to a tour of Frampton Court and its gardens.



Gloucestershire Local History Association

LOCAL HISTORY DAY

*Saturday 11th May from 10.30 am
at the Oxstalls Business School, Gloucester*

Open to all, admission FREE

There will be a programme of talks, and refreshments will be available.

EVENING LECTURE PROGRAMME 2019-20

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

Tuesday 17th September:

Tim Brain—A History of Policing in Gloucestershire

Tuesday 15th October:

Mick Kippin—‘Broken by Age or War’: Life at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea

Tuesday 19th November:

**Steven Blake—Researching ‘the Old Man’: the story of Cheltenham’s
Sherborne Street Sweeps**

Tuesday 10th December:

Jonathan Briggs—Mistletoe, History, Legend, Myth and Harvesting

Tuesday 21st January 2020:

Richard Goddard—The Battle of Tewkesbury 1471

Tuesday 18th February 2020:

Paul Drinkwater—Dr Walter Hadwen: Hero or Charlatan?

Tuesday 17th March 2020:

Martin Horwood—Cheltenham’s Past Members of Parliament

Tuesday 21st April 2020:

Neela Mann—A History of the Early Quakers of Cheltenham

Tuesday 19th May 2020:

**AGM followed by Mike Bottomley—Katherine Parr, Gloucestershire’s
Queen: the Life, Love and Times of the Last Wife of Henry VIII**

MORNING LECTURES 2019-20

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 1st October:

Joanna Vials - ‘A Magnificent Edifice’: building the church of St Gregory the Great, 1853-76

Tuesday 4th February 2020:

Ally McConnell—The History of Dowty’s and the archiving project

Tuesday 7th April 2020:

tbc

Reminder...

MORNING LECTURE

*Tuesday 2nd April, 10.00 am for 10.30 am
at St Luke’s Hall, Cheltenham*

John Butterworth—History of the Stage-coach in Cheltenham and Gloucestershire

*The 2019 CLHS Journal will be available for
collection at this meeting*

FOR YOUR DIARY

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 26th March:

Neela Mann—Booze, Balloons and Burials: Cheltenham Lower High Street

Tuesday 23rd April:

John Dixon—Barbara Cartland, a Stranger in our Midst

Tuesday 28th May:

Peter Covey-Crump—Journal of a Walk from London to Edinburgh

Historical Association

Meetings normally begin at 7.30 pm and visitors pay £3. Cheltenham meetings take place in the Teaching Block, University of Gloucestershire Park Campus, and Gloucester meetings at the Oxtalls Campus.

Monday 15th April in Cheltenham:

Dr Iain Robertson, University of the Highlands and Islands—Culloden, Clearances and Crofting: Highland History across the 18th and 19th Centuries

Monday 13th May in Gloucester:

Dr Federica Ferlanti, Cardiff University—China and the War against Japan (1937-45): the Making of a Nation

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 29th April:

Norman Baker—Prestbury circa 1750

Monday 20th May:

Tony Noel—A Prestbury Military Artist

Monday 24th June:

Mark Williams—Prestbury Policing

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 20th March:

Eric Miller—Cheltenham Slave Owners

Wednesday 17th April:

Richard Summer—The Gloucestershire-Warwickshire Steam Railway

Gotherington Local History Society

Meetings are held in Gotherington Village Hall, starting at 8.00 pm. Visitors are welcome, £2 per meeting.

Tuesday 26th March:

John Dixon—West Indian Slavery and the Codrington Connection

Tuesday 23rd April:

AGM followed by Barry Simon—St Kenelm and the Kenelm Way

Tuesday 28th May:

Andrew Armstrong—The Siege of Gloucester

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 20th March:

Chris Rowlands—Spirax Sarco

Wednesday 17th April:

Robert Skelt—Guy Burgess, Gentleman, Spy and Traitor

Saturday 18th May, starting at 9.30 am by car from Swindon Village Hall:

Guided visit to Lineover Wood led by John Heathcott

The Holst Birthplace
Museum proudly presents:



"A Woman's Life"



A new play by
Bafta-nominated
playwright,
Carolyn S. Jones
Directed by
Marianne Gaston
Featuring
Emma Wilkes &
Emmeline Braefield



Clara von Holst and Isabella Beeton emerge
from the shadows to reveal their secret lives...

***On Saturday 23rd March at 7.30 pm
in Christ Church Harwood Hall, Malvern Road, Cheltenham***

Tickets: £15 (adults), £13 (Holst Birthplace Trust members), £6 (student/child)
Available from the Holst Birthplace Museum and The Wilson

REVIEWS

On November 20th **Sue Rowbotham** entertained us with the intriguing story of **Maskelyne and Cooke, Cheltenham's Men of Mystery**. John Nevil Maskelyne (1839-1917) was born in Cheltenham, the fourth of eleven children, and grew up in St Paul's. Three of his sisters trained as teachers at St Mary's, and he himself, the only surviving son of the family, was well educated before being apprenticed to a watchmaker. Later he set up his own business in the building which is now the chemist's shop in Montpellier. George Cooke (1825-1904) was the son of a dressmaker from Newent who settled in Cheltenham. Sue thought he and Maskelyne might have known one another in the local militia, where they both played the cornet, before they discovered a shared interest in magic. Maskelyne's aptitude for working with machinery and



George Cooke



John Nevil Maskelyne

Cooke's practical skills enabled them to devise tricks and illusions that they would perform in public free of charge in their early years. From the 1840s there was great public interest in spiritualism, and one day Maskelyne saw a performance in Cheltenham by the Davenport brothers, American illusionists who claimed to commune with spirits. They made a person tied up inside a cabinet emerge untied, as if by magic, and Maskelyne, realising how it was done, decided to expose the trick. He and Cooke built a cabinet of their own and in June 1865 gave a dramatic demonstration before a large crowd in

Jessops Gardens. The success of this performance encouraged them to turn professional, travelling the provinces as entertainers. Soon they had an agent who took them to London, renting the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly initially for three months but eventually for 30 years until Cooke died in 1904. Maskelyne was always the showman and Cooke his assistant, with other performers brought in to add variety, thus providing family entertainment that included music and comedy as well as their own skilfully contrived illusions. Besides performing in public Maskelyne liked making automata: Sue showed a picture of him with one of them, an Indian who played a whistle. Another was a girl 'Zoe' who drew pictures and yet another was a group of several figures forming an orchestra. He was also an inventor, the penny-in-the-slot machine used for public toilets being his best-known invention. He got involved with early films: 'animated photographs' were being shown to great acclaim at the Egyptian Hall in the 1890s. After Cooke's death Maskelyne formed a new partnership with the magician David Devant. Nine of Maskelyne's descendants inherited his skills: his son Nevil, an engineer and magician, had five children who were all illusionists, his grandson Jasper, another magician, was an expert in camouflage and two other grandchildren, Noel and Mary, were illusionists. Mary, who died at 94, was the last surviving Maskelyne, but they are not forgotten. There are two plaques to them in Cheltenham, one in Montpellier and the other in the Everyman, and the Magic Circle still presents a Maskelyne Award every year.

Our speaker on December 11th was **Sue Jones**, who told us about **Cheltenham's Male Suffragists**. Sue noted that 2018 was the centenary of the year when women were given the vote: women aged over 30, that is, who were either wives or heads of household. Men could vote at 21, but so many had been lost in the war that the population was out of balance, and even this restricted group of women now formed 43% of the electorate. Mass meetings for women voters were held in Cheltenham for the first time, at one of which Lilian Faithfull, Principal of the Ladies' College, speaking at a political meeting for the first time in her life, urged women to use their vote for the good of the country. Men were not present at these events, but there is plenty of evidence that male support, including that of important national figures, had helped the women to achieve their goal. In Cheltenham prominent local men served on pro-suffrage committees. One such was the Revd Charles Callaway, who argued that the theory of evolution did not



Lilian Faithfull

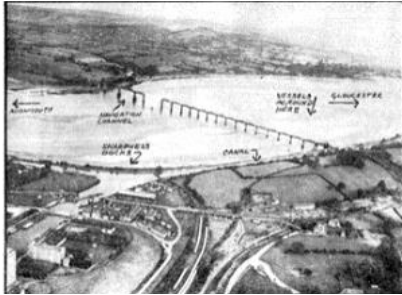


William Earengy

show women to be innately inferior to men. He disapproved of their boycott of the 1911 census and urged them to speak out and make their views known. The solicitor William Earengy, husband of suffragist Florence and brother-in-law of Edith Howe Martyn who founded the Women's Freedom League, espoused the suffrage movement while exerting a moderating influence. He chaired meetings, spoke publicly in Cirencester and Stroud and became chair of the Winchcombe suffrage society: thus at least one female suffrage group had a male head. He had an advisory role in the 1911 anti-census campaign, when his wife Florence boycotted the census. He went to court on behalf of two women who had burned down Alstone Lawn in 1913, not to defend them (he did not approve of militancy) but to retrieve their confiscated belongings. James Agg-Gardner, who served several times as MP for Cheltenham, always supported the suffrage movement. He introduced the second reading

of a bill in parliament that would have given a million women the vote, had it succeeded, and to show their gratitude the Conservative and Unionist women's group presented him with a book of thanks in which the signatures of 500 Cheltenham people appear. Sue showed a page with many male signatures, including the father of Florence and Edith, an ex-headmaster, two architects and a teacher at Cheltenham College, besides several married couples. Another 'hero' was the Revd J H Smith, a Unitarian minister, who often spoke in public condemning the lies told by the government. Finally Sir Hubert Parry of Highnam Court, whose wife was a campaigner, was friendly with Millicent Fawcett. To conclude, Sue played a recording of a song written by Parry for the suffrage movement and sung by Felicity Lott. A listener asked whether men in Cheltenham were ostracised for supporting female suffrage. Sue said no, it was socially acceptable, even though there was a strong anti-suffrage movement in the town too.

On 19th February **Paul Barnett** gave us a talk entitled **Disaster Waiting: the Severn & Wye Railway Bridge Disaster**. He said that since retiring from the navy in 1999 he had become a marine historian, and in studying the Purton hulks he had learned the story of the disaster that occurred on the foggy evening of 25th October 1960 when two large vessels collided with the single-track railway bridge spanning the Severn between Sharpness and Lydney. The bridge, damaged beyond repair, was entirely demolished in 1969 and now there is nothing to see except two hulks in the river. These attracted Paul's interest and he looked in Gloucestershire archives for newspaper reports of the accident, now on micro-film. To his surprise the relevant pages were missing; the archivist explained



they had been handled so much that they were unfit for copying. Subsequently, however, when giving a talk in Wales, Paul was offered original copies of the most important pages. These he showed, a well-illustrated account making clear how the accident happened. Paul had another stroke of luck when a man he met in a pub in Lydney gave him 39 old sepia-tinted photographic plates that he had found in a skip after a neighbour died. These historic

images, taken on the orders of George Keeling, one of the bridge engineers, show the building of the bridge in some detail. All this material is now in an exhibition created by Friends of Purton and can be seen online at http://www.friendsofpurton.org.uk/Severn_Rail_Bridge_Disaster.html

Authorised by Act of Parliament in 1871 and begun in 1875, the bridge was built to provide an outlet via the Sharpness docks for the coal and iron ore mined in the Forest of Dean. It had 21 spans, supported on huge cylindrical concrete piers, and a total length of 1387 yards. Because big ships still used the Severn, there had to be a 70ft height clearance below the spans at high water. (Its design was modelled on that of the ill-fated Tay bridge, which collapsed two months after the Severn bridge opened in 1879.) Paul showed maps to illustrate the position of the collieries, rail tracks, docks and Sharpness canal in relation to the bridge. After its ceremonial opening the bridge proved expensive to maintain, and in 1903 passenger services were introduced to raise more revenue. On the night of the accident strengthening work was being done on pier 17; if the workmen there had not taken time off to watch a boxing match on television they would have been killed. The two vessels involved, oil tankers Wastdale H and Arkendale H, were heading for Sharpness docks, but in the fog they missed the dock entrance and were carried upstream on the tide. When the Wastdale H struck pier 17 its cargo exploded, and flames engulfed both vessels and spread across the river. Paul told the story of the skipper of another vessel who saw the fire and came up-river to help. He and a young volunteer who came with him managed to rescue one man, but five were lost. With two spans gone, demolition of the bridge inevitably followed. That was 50 years ago, and to mark the event Paul had arranged for carved stone memorials to be set up on both sides of the river. Finally he said, in answer to a question, that nobody was blamed for the disaster.



Heritage Open Days 13-22 September 2019

Heritage Open Days has been running in Cheltenham every September for many years, opening properties of interest to locals and visitors alike. It has grown from single figures to thirty open buildings along with numerous walks, talks and other events. We are constantly looking for new buildings or stories to tell of Cheltenham's past. This year the national theme is 'People Power', so we



Normandy House



Masonic Hall, Portland Street

are especially interested in stories of protests and campaigns.

If you happen to know of any likely candidate buildings, would like the chance to showcase some research you have done, would be able to give a

short talk about an object in the Wilson, or just feel it is a project you would like to get involved with, please contact Mike Bottomley



The Cheltenham Ladies' College

bottomley@blueyonder.co.uk (07833 678862) or Jill Barlow jillbarlow@virginmedia.com

Jill Barlow

OBITUARY

DEREK ROWLES, 1936 -2019

Derek died suddenly and peacefully at home on Saturday 2nd February, aged 83. He had lived in his house, 'Charnes', 11 Tivoli Road for more than 40 years and was passionately interested in the history both of his own house and its previous residents and of other houses in Tivoli Road. His enthusiastic research earned two blue plaques: the first commemorated actor Sir Ralph Richardson (1982) and the second the brilliant nursing pioneer, Dame Sidney Browne (2017). Derek wrote articles for the CLHS Journal about Sir Ralph and Dame Sidney. He will be very much missed by his wife Rosemary and daughter Susannah and all his friends and neighbours.

Jo Dean



BOOK LAUNCH

On Sunday 27th January Joanna Vials' book *The Indomitable Mr Cotham* (see below) was formally launched in the presence of a sizeable gathering, which included many members of St Gregory's congregation, at the Chapel Arts Centre. Afternoon tea was served and images from the book were shown on a large screen. Abbot Geoffrey Scott OSB of Douai Abbey opened the

proceedings, commenting that the book was an important contribution to Catholic literature. Joanna then said how much she had enjoyed researching Mr Cotham's life and work in the archives of Douai Abbey (northern France), where the main sources are to be found, and told us the outline of the story while Alan Crickmore read out extracts from Mr Cotham's diary. In conclusion Joanna urged everyone to read the book, even if they preferred to borrow rather than buy it. Many people present had in fact already taken the opportunity to purchase a copy.

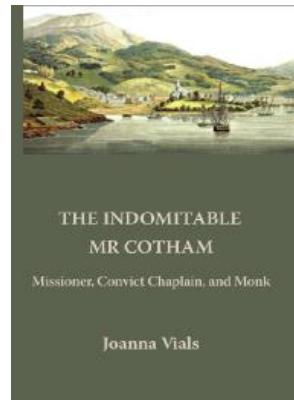
NEW PUBLICATION

The Indomitable Mr Cotham Missioner, Convict Chaplain and Monk by Joanna Vials

James Ambrose Cotham OSB (1810-1883), a Douai monk of the English Benedictine Congregation, was active in the early colonial period in Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania) as a convict chaplain, and after 1851 as a missioner in England.

From extensive use of his surviving papers, Joanna Vials has researched his mission in Van Diemen's Land between 1835 and 1851 and his work in Cheltenham, 1852 to 1873, when he was responsible for building Charles Hansom's Gothic Revival church of St Gregory the Great. Although he faced much opposition in Tasmanian society, besides personal antipathy from his Benedictine superior Archbishop Polding in Sydney, Cotham's work among the transported convicts was highly effective. In fashionable, Evangelical Cheltenham, he brought together the aspirations of the rising professional class of English Catholics, predominantly converts, with the needs of alienated Irish immigrants. Throughout his life he remained close to his family in Lancashire and in Australia (where his brother had settled) and was a welcome guest everywhere, known for his simplicity of mind, humour, determination and gentlemanly manner.

Published by Gracewing at £25. 620pp, illustrated.



Research and Display Evening, 15th January



Last year, for several reasons, the Research and Display Evening had to be cancelled, but this year the event went ahead in the usual way and attracted a good turn-out. At the beginning of the meeting Sally Self put out an appeal for volunteers, who, she said, were needed not only to work on current projects such as the Miles Scrapbooks and the 'Know Your Place' website but also to catalogue material at the archives in Gloucester. For those who preferred to work at home there

were tasks that could be done mostly online, such as looking through old newspapers for the VCH. She also urged people to be willing to be interviewed by the Oral History team (who were present that evening in the Pittville Room), whether or not they had lived for a long time in Cheltenham.

As ever there was a large number of interesting displays on widely varied themes. Topics this time included the Winchcombe Street Explosion of 1904, Cheltenham's Slave Owners, Transport in Cheltenham between the Wars, Heritage Open Days, Education for the Masses from 1670 to 2005, the history of Cheltenham as a spa town, the WWI military hospital at the Racecourse and John Powell, the 'art decorator of church and house', as he called himself, who decorated the interior of St Gregory's church. The Oral History Group had a stall explaining their work, Neela Mann showed a selection of views of the town enlarged from old postcards, and there was a display about the genesis of the new short VCH book *Cheltenham Before the Spa*. Several large maps were pinned up in the Council Room, linked to a display on the Suffrage Census Boycott of 1911. The recent discovery of a presentation book addressed to the local MP James Agg-Gardner, who supported the cause of female suffrage (see p8), and signed by many Cheltonians, had made it possible to find out who the local supporters were and where they lived; their home addresses were marked with dots on the maps. These locations and some information about the people had also been entered on the 'Know Your Place' website, and there was a laptop nearby on which members could explore it.



Also in the Council Room the late Joyce Cummings' books were on sale, raising money (as had been agreed with her family) partly for the Society and partly for the PoTS charity. Drinks and snacks were on offer in the Cambray Room and a raffle was held in aid of the Mayor's charities, which this year are The Pied Piper Appeal and Cheltenham Animal Shelter. It raised £101.50.

LOCAL NEWS

Society Members Meet Royalty



Heather Forbes, County Archivist, with HRH Princess Anne

Several members of the Society were present at the official opening, by Her Royal Highness Princess Anne, of the Gloucestershire Archive at the Heritage Hub on Tuesday 8th January. She was welcomed by Edward Gillespie, OBE, Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire to the newly-refurbished, though still not complete, building. She was introduced to Heather Forbes, County Archivist, given a guided tour and at the end of her visit unveiled the commemorative plaque. She also viewed a display of documents relating to Gatcombe Park and other royal charters. She met groups of staff and volunteers,

representatives of local history societies (including CLHS), Gloucestershire Family History Society, Gloucestershire Police History Project, Gloucestershire Local History Association, Gloucestershire County History Trust (VCH and CLHS), Gloucestershire Rugby Heritage Group, Friends of the Archives and others associated with the redevelopment of the site. Her Royal Highness chatted to us for several minutes and not only expressed her interest in the work we carried out, but also made a comparison with a similar situation near Sandringham – ruined abbeys



Dr John Chandler shows the Princess some archives documents while Mark Hurrell, Deputy Lord Lieutenant, looks on

came into it! We sent her away laughing and joking. At the end of the afternoon we were invited for nibbles and a piece of celebration cake.

Sally Self



L to R in background: Russell and Sally Self, Jane Marley, South Gloucestershire Museums and Heritage Officer, Dr Steven Blake, Dr Jan Broadway and Dr James Hodsdon with a laughing Princess Anne.

Photos courtesy of Gloucestershire Archives

SOCIETY NEWS

New Members

A warm welcome is extended to the following:

Janet Latham
Janet Hextall
Nikki Stephens

Leila Gil
Lynda Walden
Patricia Evans

VCH News

Heritage Hub opening, 8th January 2019. As Sally Self has already made clear on the previous page, this event went off extremely well – thanks to much hard work put in by Heather Forbes and her team. We've probably never seen so many in 'the archives' at once before – and maybe this heralds more users and volunteers in the future! Before the official opening, the Princess Royal met representatives from all the groups with a stake in the new building, and for my part it was a great honour to be invited to introduce her to just a very few of the many people up and down the county concerned with local history and heritage. In what must surely be a world first, the decorations on the celebratory cake (itself in the shape of a book) included two small but perfectly formed Red Books, and the VCH Gloucestershire logo – and of course recognition of all the other Heritage Hub partners as well. We were really touched!



Meanwhile, the work goes on. As I write this, we are planning for an awareness-raising event at the Town Hall on February 25th, which we hope will attract and engage some new supporters, and not just in Cheltenham. Jan Broadway is busy completing some of the later sections of the VCH Cheltenham account. John Chandler has started investigating sources for Swindon Village, and has developed an outline proposal for this section, which will include coverage of the post-war transformation of the area to the west of Kingsditch Lane into a substantial commercial and industrial zone – a different kind of history, to be sure, but well worth recording. We are also starting to plan how to tackle Leckhampton – more on this another time, I hope. With all this going on, Sally, Jan and I all hope that volunteers old and new will find something to enjoy working on.

James Hodsdon

Chair
Gloucestershire County History Trust

Sold out Society Journals to go online

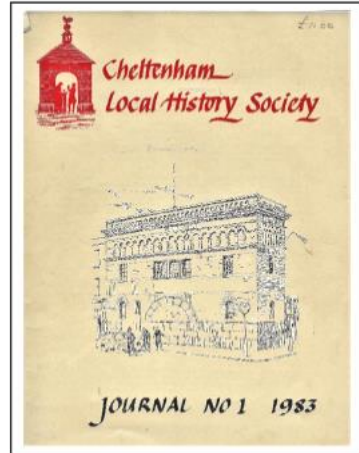
The Society holds a considerable quantity of the back numbers of the Journals, from 1983 to the present. However, as a Journal becomes sold out - 'out of print' - the cost of reprinting small numbers of them becomes too high.

It has therefore been decided that, over the next few years, as back numbers of the Journal go 'out of print', they will be placed online on the Society's website, from where they can be downloaded. This will initially be Journal 26 (2010) and several of the earliest publications, pre-1999. We are in the process of contacting all the regular contributors to our Journals: if you have not yet been contacted, I will soon be in touch with you.

As is inevitable over the 36 years of the Journal's production, many authors have left the Society and the area. If anyone has contact details which may help us to get in touch with authors whose research first appeared before 1999, please contact me.

projects.clhs@btinternet.com 01242 243714

Sally Self



Our first Journal, dated 1983, with the Society's logo, the name in calligraphy and a drawing by Aylwin Sampson of the Clarence Street Palazzo, a late 19th century electricity sub-station and onetime Electric Light Office that for many years stood empty but is now a bed and breakfast hotel.

OBITUARY

CATRIONA SMITH, 1944-2018

We were sad to hear of the recent death of Catriona Smith, who with her late husband Richard (obituary, November 2013 issue) was for many years an active member of the Society. She was a linguist, trained as a legal secretary and, though diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at the age of 19, worked in Switzerland for three years before returning to England and joining GCHQ in 1971. There she met Richard and they married in 1984. They shared many interests, notably music and art, and both worked as volunteers at the Holst Museum, where Catriona was Membership Secretary for some years. In 2012 they received a CAC Award for their services to the Holst and other organisations. Richard's sudden death at the early age of 61 was a severe shock to Catriona, who was never strong. She moved to Jenner Court for assisted living, and more recently to Wentworth Court care home, where she died on December 31st.



*FEATURE***WE WILL REMEMBER THEM**

'Life out here is one of continual hardship and suffering ... in war there is no place for a God of love, no time for the softer emotions, and no inclination to worry about a future when the present is a hell that the devil himself would be proud to reign over' (Pte J. Bowles, Queens Westminster Rifles 1916).

'The brutality and inhumanity of war stood in great contrast to what I had heard and read about as a youth.' (Reinhold Spengler, war volunteer, 1st Bavarian Infanterie Regt.)

It is 100 years since the First World War ended and I have been researching into my ancestors to try and imagine how that war affected the whole family, as well as future generations. I think that they were a typical family of that time.

My great grandfather Amos Byard was originally living in Hereford before he moved to Cheltenham. He married Jane Whiting from Toddington and they had eight children, one of whom died in infancy. Of the seven remaining children, there were two females and five males. My grandfather was one of those children. From my research, I think that three of the sons were conscripted to take part in the war in 1916. My great aunts Amelia and Annie may well have had to assist the war effort by undertaking some vital war work in Cheltenham. The eldest son Walter could well (perhaps for medical reasons) have been judged too old to fight in the war by 1916. The second youngest son, Allen, worked on the railways so would be needed at home, as that work was a reserved occupation.

Private Arthur John Byard was a member of Cambray Baptist Church. He was married in the Church to Winifred Sparrow in 1911 and they had a daughter Joyce. He was a member of the local St. John's Ambulance Brigade and he served with the Royal Army Medical Corps in France. He died of wounds sustained whilst acting a stretcher bearer, leading a party bringing in a wounded man, on 1st December 1917. He was aged 36 and his daughter Joyce was three years old. He is on the Memorial Scroll in Cambray Church, which I attend so many years later! Lance Corporal Francis Spencer Byard was the youngest son. He was killed during the actions of the Somme Crossings during the German spring offensive of 1918, aged 30. He had been married to Mary Carter for three years. Francis is mentioned on three church memorials in Cheltenham. Both Arthur and Francis are buried in France. Amos, my great grandfather, died in 1908 and therefore his wife Jane was already a widow. Her two sons were killed within four months of each other. She had to bear the burden of those losses without her husband's support. My family were one of 100 families living in Cheltenham who had more than one close relative killed in the war.

Private George Edwin Byard was my grandfather. My dad and my grandma never spoke of him. I did hear snippets of information from my mum and from this I have been able (with help) to find out why he was not spoken about. Granddad served with the Somerset Light Infantry, he was awarded two medals



The Bayard family, 1901
 Standing: Annie (19), Arthur (21), Allen (16), Amelia (25)
 Seated: George Edwin (22), Amos (49), Jane (49), Walter (23)
 In front: Francis (13)

and he survived the war. I have not as yet been able to find out where he served but from the information I know, I am sure he served abroad, maybe in France. I heard he had a way of marking his letters to my grandma so that she knew where he was!

In September 1930 my granddad was suffering from 'neurasthenia' which today would be called 'shell shock' or 'post traumatic stress disorder'. His life had become so unbearable (and maybe it was awful from 1918) that he hung himself in the Mill House, Pittville Park. (Mill House no longer exists.) I can only guess how granddad suffered throughout his life. My dad was ten when his dad went to war. I wonder what sort of life they all had when he returned. Granddad was 51 when he died and was buried in 'unconsecrated ground'.

I think very highly of granddad, as he left a note stating that his wife 'had been a most faithful and true wife and had never given him any cause for worry'. He knew that people would judge my grandma, and in spite of his dreadful illness, was kind and thoughtful enough to leave a very explicit note. The coroner remarked that it was a very sad case. Granddad probably suffered so much for his country but his sacrifice was not recognised. He had no support (no NHS) and it is unlikely that he had any public sympathy, though it was reported that the neighbours thought well of him. I know that when he worked for a professional

photographer, he was sacked as a result of his illness. In those days, his family could not have understood his mental condition. How tragic for grandma to be such a young widow, I heard that she did her best to prevent granddad harming himself. My dad was 21 years old when his dad died. We didn't know our granddad of course, he died 20 years before I was born. I am very proud to be his granddaughter. I am also proud to be related to my great uncles Arthur and Francis. So we were an ordinary family, like many, many others throughout Britain, who suffered and were broken because of WW1.

We need not only to remember the many who were killed in this terrible war but also those who were wounded physically or mentally and whose lives were changed beyond recognition. Many of them, like granddad, struggled through the remainder of their life. Maybe those who suffered from the trauma were given little or no sympathy and their sacrifice was not counted. We need to remember their sacrifice, as well as the sacrifice of those who died. Our children and our children's children need to be taught this.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

Jean Willcox (nee Byard)

With grateful thanks to Karen Sayers for her research and help, without which this article could not have been written.

The Deerhurst Lecture 2019



**‘Æthelred, lord of the Mercians (d. 911)
and his Deerhurst connections’**

Professor Barbara Yorke, University
of Winchester

*Saturday 14th September at 7.30 pm in
St Mary’s Church, Deerhurst*

Tickets at the door, price £5 (students £3).

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

Member's Query

Location?

An enquirer needs to know where this photograph was taken. The car is an early Oldsmobile supplied by Strettons of Bath Road, Cheltenham and Worcester Road, Gloucester. Does anyone recognise the background?



Another query, this time one we've already answered, with a Transatlantic connection:

We recently had an enquiry from an American journalist engaged in writing up the story of a murder that took place in Palm Beach, Florida, in 1902. The victim was one Richard Hone, who had been born at Stoke Orchard near Cheltenham in 1859, emigrated to America as a young man and eventually settled in the fledgling community of Palm Beach in 1894. Returning to England the following year he married Mary Jones, also from Cheltenham. The two made their home in Florida running a citrus and pineapple estate. Then one evening in October 1902 Richard was shot dead in his house by an intruder. There were conflicting reports in the local press—it was said that 'a mystery gunman' had got away on horseback—but it has since been established that one of Richard's own workers was the killer and that he was arrested, tried and hanged for the crime. The journalist wished to know about the later life of Richard's widow Mary. We were able to tell him that she came back to live at Berkeley Villas, Pittville Lawn, about 1922, died in 1946 and was buried at All Saints.

For this help CLHS received a credit at the end of the article the journalist wrote for the *Palm Beach Post*.

FEATURE

TWINNING HELPS RESEARCH

As a twinning visit to Göttingen in July is organised it is time to remember the Göttingen Local History Society and how fortunate we are to have such complete historical records in this country. Jessika Wichner of the Society has helped me obtain some of the following information.

The advent of picture postcards at the beginning of the twentieth century made postcard collecting a popular hobby. With postal deliveries several times a day they were the forerunners of texts and telephone calls. My great aunt Ellen Goodman, a keen collector, made several postcard albums and among the cards are about a dozen from 1904 onwards from a lady in Eisenach, Germany, some of which can be detached and read. Apart from the fact that she was the probable recipient of food parcels from my family after the first world war, I knew nothing about this lady except her surname, Kirchrath, and her address. My online search revealed nothing and showed that many older houses in Eisenach had been destroyed and replaced by flats during the East German regime.



Ellen Goodman

Out of curiosity I showed Jessika the 1904 card. She, herself an archivist, contacted the Eisenach Archives who replied that the censuses had all been destroyed during bombing in 1945

but the Address Books, like our Kelly's Directories, had survived, plus a record of Frau Kirchrath's death in 1924. The Address Books showed her addresses from 1887 until she died, and also that her Christian name was Theresa and she was a teacher and a widow. There are several years where no entry has been produced, possibly because the Address Book was lost in the early years or simply was not produced in the chaos years from 1917 to 1920. The address from which she wrote the cards, as shown in the Address Books from 1906 to 1917, was Am Ofenstein 12. It survives, an attractive Jugendstil house converted into a restaurant and bed and breakfast establishment called 'zum Burschen'.

Eisenach is a European city of the reformation and her address in 1890 was Lutherplatz 6. The Luther museum, where Martin Luther lived as a child, is no 8. If, which is unlikely, the numbering hasn't changed, her former home was bombed and the land incorporated in the museum. Her 1887 address, Frauenplan



23, probably now demolished, was near the Bach museum where J S Bach was reputedly born. The death details in 1924 show her maiden name was Kummeritz and that she was 66 and born in Letschin near Frankfurt on Oder.

Jessika's enquiry of the Frankfurt on Oder archives revealed that their building was burnt down in 1944 and that most of the archives were destroyed, so no further personal information about her or her husband and family could be found.



Letschin is now a train stop on the Polish border, but when Frau Kirchrath was born, before the unification of Germany, it would have been well within the borders of Brandenburg Prussia. In 1875 it had a population of 13,357 but this decreased after 1890. Frau Kirchrath's departure was part of a rapid population decline in the nineteenth century as the people of rural east Germany moved to the richer towns further west.

Two postcards are from Switzerland and refer to visits, whether for treatment or holiday is unclear. Switzerland was apparently a popular destination for holidays and health for Eisenach residents at that time.

How the friendship began we will never know. My great aunt didn't go to Germany. Things do not change and the correspondence is all in immaculate English! This was a

friendship which sadly did not result in a twinning visit but apparently survived despite the First World war.

Elizabeth Bennett

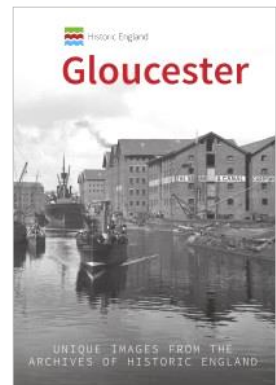
NEW PUBLICATION

Historic England: Gloucester

by David Elder

The photographs in this illustrated history are from the Historic England Archive, a unique collection of over twelve million photographs, drawings, plans and documents covering England's archaeology, architecture, social and local history. Pictures are dated from the earliest days of photography to the present.

Gloucester's history stretches back to the Romans and to the foundation of St Peter's Abbey by the Anglo-Saxons. In the Middle Ages Gloucester became a wealthy borough and a centre of royal power. As a port on the River Severn it benefited from the wool trade as well as other industries, and this wealth continued in later centuries. Today the city is a fascinating mixture of old and new, with its imposing cathedral, redeveloped Docklands area and many historical buildings alongside striking modern structures.



Published in paperback in June 2018 by Amberley Publishing, price £13.49



BOOKS FOR SALE



News from the CLHS Donated Books 'Shop'

Those of you who are able to attend our meetings will be aware that we have received a large number of books from the library of the late Joyce Cummings, which we are selling on a '50/50' basis, returning half to Joyce's family for the PoTS UK charity, for research and support for those suffering from this rare condition, which affects Joyce's grandson. Already we have sold £159.80 worth, meaning £79.90 for PoTS and the same for the Society – and there are plenty of books to go! Not all are on local history as you will see by the list.

From Joyce's Collection

Emma Dent's Diary (Sudeley castle), selected writings, 1851-1896, paperback, £4.50

101 Things to do in War Time, L and A Horth, as new, £3

Jambusters, the story of the Women's Institute in WW2, J Summers, as new, £8

The Falklands War, bound, complete 14 - part magazine series, Marshall Cavendish, £8

The History of the Gloucestershire Constabulary 1839-1985, H Thomas, as new, £10

Cheltenham Swimming and Water Polo Club, Centenary Festival programme 1987, used condition, £1

Eagle Star, a guide to its history and archives, 1977, ex. cond. £8

Gloucestershire Within Living Memory, Glos. Fed Women's Institutes, £7.50

Discover Gloucestershire Ancestors, Vol.2, E Jack. Signed copy, ex. cond. £7

Gloucestershire Worthies, A Sampson - signed copy, as new, £4.50

The Hebrew Community of Cheltenham, Gloucester and Stroud, B Torode, rev. copy 1999, £3.50

A History of Cheltenham, G Hart, First Edition, hardback, used condition, £5

A Portrait of Prestbury, F E Jackson, 1987, good condition, £9.50

From the 'donated books bookshelves'

The Best, H H Martyn & Co, J Whitaker, 1998, large, heavy hardback in very good condition and a rare find nowadays, £25

If you are interested in any of these books please contact me by phone on 01242 232740, or email heatherbell71@hotmail.com Don't forget to come and have a browse of the CLHS book stall at the meetings – it's a good opportunity to ask if you want a particular book I may have at home, or make me an offer on the more expensive books. I'd 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

CONTENTS

AGM; Summer visits	2– 3	Book Launch	11
Lecture programme 2019-2020	4	Local News	13
For Your Diary	3, 5-6, 18	Society News; Obituary	14-15
Reviews	7-9, 12	Features	16-18, 20-21
Heritage Open Days; Obituary	10	Queries	19, 24
New Publications	11,21, 23	Books for Sale	22

CLHS DISPLAYS IN THE LOCAL AND FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY

March - April	Transport in Cheltenham between the wars, 1918-1939
May - June	Tiesset and Wilderspin: Infant and Private Education
July - August	Education for the Masses: Cheltenham Schools up to 2000

NEW PUBLICATION

Stinking Bishops and Spotty Pigs Gloucestershire's Food and Drink

by Emma Kay

Gloucestershire is a large county, rich in food and drink heritage. Famous for Double Gloucester cheese and the cheese rolling event, Old Spot pigs, cider and the birthplace of prominent tea merchant Thomas Twining, Gloucestershire's culinary history is both colourful and diverse. Nutcrack Sunday and Puppy Dog Pie (don't worry, it hasn't always been made from cute canines), ancient markets and progressive agriculturists represent just a few of the many interesting stories that contribute to the narrative.

In this book Emma Kay looks at the regional fare and dishes that have characterised Gloucestershire over the years, as well as its food and drink markets and its famous producers and cooks.

Published in paperback by Amberley Publishing in February 2019, price £13.49



CAN YOU HELP?

Oil Painting

An enquirer living in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania bought this oil painting and is hoping to trace its provenance. A label on the back says 'Barnby Bendall Depository, Cheltenham, Thompson 48', suggesting that it was sold out of the depository, but unfortunately no relevant Barnby Bendall records survive. From the typeface, we guess the label may date from the 1940s. The frame of the painting was made by a firm called Hayward. The picture is signed 'K.' and a few illegible letters. There is no clue to the identity of the sitter. Can anyone shed any light on any aspect of this?



Huguenots in Gloucestershire

An enquirer doing some research on behalf of the Cheltenham Welcomes Refugees organisation (cheltenhamwelcomesrefugees.org.uk) is keen to find out about Huguenot immigrants who settled in Gloucestershire: how they came to be here, and the lives they made for themselves. Does anyone know of any such arrivals, or does anyone have ancestors in this area who were believed to be of Huguenot origin?

The Dobell family

An enquirer wishes to contact Mr P H M Dobell, who is believed to be the copyright holder for the poetry of Eva Dobell (1876-1963). She wishes to include Eva Dobell's poem 'Gramophone Tunes', first published in 1919, in a forthcoming publication by Bloomsbury Academic Press, 'International Poetry of World War I: An Anthology of Lost Voices' and would be pleased to hear from anyone who can put her in touch with Mr Dobell or his heirs, or anyone who knows more about Eva Dobell's poetry.

If you can help with any of these queries please contact Jill Waller on 07512318866 or e-mail jill.waller@virginmedia.com

NEXT ISSUE

Please forward any material for inclusion in the July 2019 issue by
Monday 10th June 2019
 to the Editor: Kath Boothman, 3 Taylor's End, Cheltenham GL50 2QA
 Tel: 01242 230125 e-mail: 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.