



# Cheltenham Local History Society

Newsletter No. 95

Affiliated to Cheltenham Arts Council  
Registered Charity No. 1056046  
<http://www.cheltlocalhistory.org.uk>

November 2019



## *EDITORIAL*

Many of us are old enough to remember when nearly everything we bought was labelled 'Made in England'. Locally-made branded products such as these three ales were once quite common, too. Cheltenham spa waters, for instance, were bottled for sale from the early 19th century until well into the 20th. Cheltine Foods were produced for many years at the bakery in Chester Walk, where Andy's Candys were also made at one time. These companies expired decades ago, but the brewery off the High Street, outlasting both of them and no doubt many other small local manufacturers, did not close until 1998. Malting and brewing have a long history in Cheltenham. Whitbread PLC, the ultimate successor to the Cheltenham Original Brewery Company that produced the ales with the labels above, gave a large deposit of its company records to the Archives in 2001, which has recently been sorted and organised to make it easily accessible. Researchers invited! —see page 10.

*Kath Boothman*

For CONTENTS please see page 23.

## *LECTURE PROGRAMME 2019-20*

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

*Tuesday 17h December (postponed from 10th December):*

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

A wide-ranging talk on mistletoe's place in cultural history, some myths and some truths, some biology and cultivation advice plus a discussion on why we have so much in our area and the history of the local trade supplying mistletoe to the Nation (and the Empire!) at Christmas. Jonathan Briggs is a Stroud-based botanist and industrial archaeologist who has been studying mistletoe for over 30 years.

*Tuesday 21st January 2020:*

### **Clive Montellier—The Battle of Tewkesbury 1471**

On Saturday 4th May 1471 the 'Wars of the Roses' came to a head at Tewkesbury. The Yorkist army, commanded by Edward IV, and his brother, the future Richard III, chased down and defeated the Lancastrian army of Queen Margaret and her son Edward, Prince of Wales. The outcome crushed the hope that the heir to the House of Lancaster would again take the throne of England. The talk concentrates on the last few days of the chase, why Tewkesbury was chosen as the site for the battle and the aftermath of the outcome.

*Tuesday 18th February 2020:*

### **Paul Drinkwater—Dr Walter Hadwen: Hero or Charlatan?**

Dr Hadwen was a very remarkable man with strong convictions. He was invited to Gloucester at the time of the great smallpox epidemic of 1896 to set up a medical practice. He involved himself in many community issues as a local councillor and JP. He was an anti-vaccinationist, an anti-vivisectionist and a vegetarian. Popular with his patients, he was viewed with some suspicion by the medical profession, which led to his trial and acquittal for the murder of a child under his care. His legacy includes the Evangelical Church in Southgate Street, Gloucester and the Hadwen Medical Centre in Abbeymead.

*Tuesday 4th February 2020 at 10.00 am for 10.30 am:*

(Note venue: St Luke's Hall, St Luke's Place)

### **Ally McConnell—The Dowty Group: a History of the Company and an Introduction to the Archive**

The Dowty Group was a massive employer and much loved local firm in this county and around the world. The extensive archive, stored at Gloucestershire Archives since the 1990s, is now being catalogued. The project archivist will take you through 60 years of Dowty history, from before the company's formation in

1931 to its sale in 1992, using examples from the archive to illustrate the complexity of the company, reveal superb local, social and family history resources, and showcase the work being done on this previously hidden collection.

*Tuesday 17th March 2020:*

**Martin Horwood—Cheltenham’s Past Members of Parliament**

Cheltenham won its own parliamentary representative in the Great Reform Act of 1832, having been represented by Gloucestershire’s county members before that time and back to the medieval origins of Parliament. Unusually, it has remained a single-borough seat ever since, giving a brilliant insight into not only changing local political fortunes but also the very evolution of parliamentary elections. Cheltenham has sent a fascinating cast of characters to the Commons—sailors and soldiers, flamboyant aristocrats and grassroots radicals, trusty old warhorses and precocious students. And it has rarely been a ‘safe’ seat, witnessing nearly two centuries of furiously contested dogfights between Liberals and Tories.

*Tuesday 7th April 2020 at 10.00 am for 10.30 am:*

(Note venue: St Luke’s Hall, St Luke’s Place)

**Jill Ruiz and the Boaters Group—the Lives of the Narrowboat Women, their Children and their Crafts**

The Boaters Group are Friends of The National Waterways Museum, Gloucester and volunteers for The Canal and River Trust, with a particular interest in the lives of the narrowboat women and children and their crafts from the 1850s to the 1920s. They are in the Museum once a month demonstrating crafts such as rag rugging, crochet, spider web belts and bonnet making. Four Group members, in costume, will talk about the lives of these people, bringing along craft items to show and encouraging listeners to come up at the end and have a go themselves.

*Tuesday 21st April 2020:*

**Neela Mann—A History of the Early Quakers of Cheltenham**

Behind a crumbling wall in Grove Street lies a wealth of Cheltenham’s early history. The Friends’ Burial Ground contains the resting place of people of great importance to Cheltenham. There was a Quaker community in Cheltenham when the town had only one church. This talk, based on research by Jill Waller and Neela Mann, will tell a little of Cheltenham’s Quaker history and of the people who contributed to the growth of the town.

*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**

Using music, readings and video to recreate the atmosphere and intrigues of the Tudor Court, this talk tells the largely unknown story of Katherine’s journey from obscurity to the heart of English history and on to her final resting place at Sudeley Castle. The first woman to write and publish a book in English and the only one of Henry’s Queens to survive the accusation of treason with her head intact, we find out how, amongst all the power games and plots, Katherine Parr eventually took control of her own destiny and the tragic consequences of that decision.

## *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 November:*

**Sue Jones—Cheltenham’s Suffragette Movement**

### **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.

*Wednesday 25th November:*

**Neil Pryce-Jones—Tradesmen of Prestbury**

### **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 11th December:*

**Patrick Furley—Magic Lantern Christmas Show**

*Wednesday 8th January 2020:*

**Nicholas Herbert—Road Travel and Transport in Georgian Gloucestershire; Turnpikes and the Improvement of the Roads**

*Wednesday 11th March 2020:*

**John Putley— ‘Get Orff My Land’: History of Farming in Gloucestershire from Prehistory to WWI**

### **Gotherington Local History Society**

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

*Tuesday 26th November:*

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

*Tuesday 21st January 2020:*

**Angela Applegate—Music, Friendship and the Cotswold Hills: a Life of Gustav Holst**

*Tuesday 25th February 2020:*

**Alex Knight—The Anglo-Saxon Dene**

*Tuesday 24th March 2020:*

**Andy Meller—Poppies Among the Daffodils: the Lives and Works of the Dymock Poets**

### **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 Oxstalls Campus.

*Monday 9th December in Cheltenham:*

**Dr Steph Mistoris (University of Wales) - The History of the Christmas Card**

*Monday 13th January 2020 in Cheltenham:*

**Professor John Hughes (University of Gloucestershire) - Voicing Change: Bob Dylan in the 1960s**

*Monday 24th February 2020 in Gloucester:*

**Professor Barbara Yorke (University of Winchester) - King Alfred and the Vikings**

*Monday 23rd March 2020 in Cheltenham:*

**Dr Johannes Lotz (University of Birmingham) - Chinggis Khan and the Mongols, c1200-1350: from Pastoral Nomads to Universal Emperors**

### **Holst Birthplace Museum**

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

#### **Exhibition**

*July 20th—December 14th*

#### **A Victorian Childhood Exhibition**

What was life like for a child growing up in the Victorian era? Glimpse young Victorian lives through objects from the times, including some from Gustav Holst's own childhood.



### **THE PATERSON MEMORIAL LECTURE**

Wednesday 11th December 2019 at 7.30 pm  
in Harwood Hall, Christ Church, Malvern Road GL50 2JH



#### **CHARLES LANDRY**

#### **The Civic Society in a Nomadic World**

Charles Landry is an international authority on the use of imagination and creativity in urban change. As the well-known author of many publications that focus on cities, at this year's Paterson Memorial Lecture Charles will explore the global dynamics of cities, how they affect places like Cheltenham and how such places can make the most of their potential.

The ticket price of £10 includes a glass of wine and nibbles after the talk.

## REVIEWS

### *Summer events and visits July - August 2019*

#### **‘A Suffrage Stroll’, Wednesday 10th and 17th July**

This evening walk, led by Sue Jones, began at the Town Hall. Sue said a dramatic incident had happened on that very spot. In August 1913, when the Town Hall was being repainted, a workman found a sinister-looking object with black powder scattered around it on the step: an improvised bomb, clearly an attempt to damage the building. Having been in the army, the man kept his head and dumped it in a bucket of water. Attacks on buildings by arsonists and bombers were happening at that time, but usually local people were not responsible. The suffragette movement (not to be confused with the more law-abiding suffragists) took off in Cheltenham in 1911 when Ada Flatman started a militant group. A bye-election was impending and many national figures came to the town, including Christabel Pankhurst who held an eve-of-poll meeting in the Town Hall. At a meeting of the Women’s Franchise League, another campaigning group, far too many people came along, trouble broke out and the police were called. This was unusual,



however. Walking on to Imperial Square, Sue mentioned that in nearby Vittoria Walk lived the three suffragist Andrews sisters, who all taught at the Ladies’ College. Surprisingly, considering Dorothea Beale was not a strong supporter of the suffrage movement, the youngest sister Ellen was secretary of the militant WSPU in 1912. We next stopped at the corner of Cambray Place and the High Street,

where a handsome brick building is the former home of tea merchant John How. His eldest daughter Edith, better known by her married name, Edith How Martin, gave up her work as a lecturer to support suffrage but fell out with the Pankhursts. She became a national figure while her sister Florence, who married William Earengy, headed the WFL in Cheltenham. She it was who led the anti-census movement, when women refused to be included in the 1911 census. Next, at Top Shop in the High street we saw a plaque to Lillah McCarthy (1875-1960), a successful actress who wrote an autobiography recording how once, when she was a guest of Prime Minister Asquith at 10 Downing Street (he had an eye for women) she wrote ‘Votes for Women’ in grease-paint on his blotter. At the lamp on the island in Clarence street Sue said meetings were often held here, one popular speaker being Rosa Swiney of the non-militant Women’s Suffrage Society. In 1913 when the NUWSC descended on London en masse there was also a large gathering in Cheltenham. Rosa Swiney addressed the crowd but a rabble began pelting the women with fruit and vegetables, forcing them to flee. In the public mind, all suffrage-supporters were tarred with the same brush! Here the walk ended and we parted company, feeling we had learned much of interest.



*Autumn Lectures September - October 2019*

Our speaker on September 17th on **A History of Policing in Gloucestershire** was, most appropriately, **Dr Tim Brain**, Chief Constable of the county 2001-2010. Having joined the force as a history graduate, he said he had long been interested in its origins, and now knew rather more about it than when he first gave a talk on the subject some years ago. It was exactly 180 years since the day in 1839 when a cross-party group of five well-connected Gloucestershire gentlemen signed a letter supporting the adoption of the recently passed County Police Act (the result of a Royal Commission set up by Lord John Russell in 1836), which made it possible, but not mandatory, for magistrates in each county to establish police forces. Both Tories and Whigs were concerned about the many social problems of the day—slum housing and gin-drinking among them—which until then were left to the local authorities to deal with. Voluntary constables elected by the manor courts were quite unable to exercise sufficient control. An 1843 map of Cheltenham showed it as a compact town, though already spreading. In 1821 people had campaigned for a local improvement act to bring better paving, lighting and policing, and by 1839 the town did have its own police force. There were in fact several police forces at work in Gloucestershire, where there was a good deal of crime even in rural areas arising from Chartism and industrial unrest over modernisation. Several counties were quick to adopt the Act, but only Gloucestershire appointed a Chief Constable as early as November 1839. The first was Anthony Lefroy (1839-65), who had had experience in the gendarmerie system in Ireland. Tim showed pictures of the next 16 Chief Constables: some were from well known families, others ex-military. The original head office in Cheltenham was at No 1 Royal Crescent, with the divisional HQ next door. In 1918 it moved to New Court in Lansdown Road, and in 1922 to the nearby Holland House. He showed a map of the numerous areas the county force was divided into. Cheltenham had 30 officers but some places had far fewer. As for the uniform, an 1860 photo of the Northleach constabulary showed the men wearing top hats. The classic helmet (originally a fireman's helmet) was adopted by the Metropolitan force in 1863 and came here under Lefroy's successor Capt Christian, RN. By the 1860s many police stations were purpose-built, Stroud's being handily located next to the magistrates' court. The police were generally seen as a preventive force, spending much of their time patrolling, day and night. Plain clothes officers—the first detective force—were used as early as the 1850s in Gloucestershire, but the CID was really started by Stanley Clark in 1922. Cars were first used in the 1930s, without radios initially. In the blue and white panda cars of the 1970s police had hand-held radios and were thus able to respond quickly to calls from the growing suburbs. Women had been admitted to the force soon after WWI, and the first black officer joined in 1974. Nowadays there was much more technology to help detective work, notably DNA profiling. Major threats and challenges in recent years had included, besides crime, floods and terrorist attacks. He himself had overseen the move to the new headquarters at Quedgeley. Unfortunately government spending cuts had led to lower recruitment, and the future was uncertain. In response to a question at the end he said he hoped the amalgamation of forces would go no further: he thought 43, the present number, was about right.

At St Luke's on October 1st **Joanna Vials** took as her theme '**A Magnificent Edifice**': **Building the Church of St Gregory the Great, Cheltenham, 1853-1876**. Joanna began by showing an 1853 architect's drawing of the proposed new church and contrasting it with a picture of the 16th century Bonham House and Chapel in Wiltshire. The latter, built by a Catholic family on its private estate, hardly looked like a church. At that time Catholicism was repressed, and although restrictions were eased over time Catholic churches were not allowed to have spires or bells until 1829.

After 1850 the Catholic church in England was no longer administered from Rome and was therefore entitled to build churches like those of the Church of England, but there was still much anti-Catholic feeling. The 1851 religious census showed 1,000 people attending a Catholic Sunday service in Cheltenham. The majority would have been Irish immigrants, most of them very poor, and the rest, apart from a few aristocratic families, were largely professional people recently converted to Catholicism. The leader of the congregation from 1852 was Fr James Ambrose Cotham OSB, formerly a missionary in Tasmania. Larger premises were needed, and he set up a committee to consider whether to build a new church or extend the existing one. As the Old Town Survey Map of 1857 showed, there was still much vacant land near St Gregory's. Land was expensive, however, and the existing chapel, though measuring only 56 feet by 30 feet, had a 190-foot garden behind it. It was decided to build on that space. The necessary finance was not yet available, but it was possible to raise money: the Anglican church was expanding in Cheltenham, and fund-raising for church building was normal. Also, Cotham was not only energetic but also fairly well off, and could afford to match any donations. Money was sometimes given in the form of postage stamps, redeemable at the post office. The choice of architect fell on Charles Hansom, an exponent of Pugin's Gothic Revival style already favoured by the Catholic church. Three Gloucester builders tendered for building St Gregory's to Hansom's design and John Acock won with a bid of £2840. Acock was a good builder, largely self-taught, but had an up-and-down career, often running into financial difficulties. Charles Rainger, another builder, and the stonemason Richard Boulton were also involved in the project, which took 25 years to complete. The nave, aisles and transepts were built in 1854, the chancel and Lady Chapel in 1857. The roof, a scissor brace construction in red cedar, is now richly decorated but, like the rest of the interior, was very plain when the church formally opened in May 1857. In 1864 the old chapel was demolished and the spire and tower added, the spire attracting much interest because the last few feet had to be completed, precariously, from the outside. In 1876 St Benedict's chapel and baptistery were built and the tower and nave connected. By then Fr Cotham had left, and his successor Fr Wilkinson was raising funds to finish and decorate the church, employing Alfred Wall of Whaddon for stonework and William Letheren to make decorative iron gates. Joanna showed a modern colour photograph, commenting that by 1900 the interior looked almost as it does today.





On October 15th we were entertained by member and ex-soldier **Mick Kippin**, clad in the scarlet dress uniform of the RHC, with a talk entitled **'Broken by Age or War.'** - **Life at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea.** He explained that the quotation comes from the foundation charter of the Hospital, where he himself has been an In-Pensioner since 2016. It was founded by Charles II in 1682 to meet the urgent need for some means of support for old soldiers. Christopher Wren was commissioned to design the Hospital, while army paymaster Sir Stephen Fox raised the money to build it. The building was complete by 1692, many of the first intake going straight to the Infirmary. Charles II did not live to see the Hospital finished, but James II and William and Mary took it up and made further improvements. The RHC is a hospital only in the medieval sense of the word, ie a place of refuge where people in need are received hospitably. Not all the old soldiers it supports are In-Pensioners—many who do not want or need to live in are Out-Pensioners, receiving a cash pension. Mick described the admission process: applicants who have served in the army and are of pensionable age, of good character and without financial dependents are called up for a short stay to meet the Pensioners and be interviewed. Nowadays women are eligible too, and 15 of the current 310 Pensioners are women. The Hospital is organised on military lines and consists of 4 companies. All Pensioners live on one of the 15 long wards, of which 10 are for able-bodied people and 5 for those needing support, one being a specialist geriatric ward. Each ward has a long communal area and individual rooms known as 'berths' because originally the woodwork was from old ships. Each berth used to be only 6 feet square, later 9 feet square, but now each resident has an en-suite room with a study area. It cost £30 million to make these improvements: luckily the Hospital has generous sponsors. Each ward has its own kitchen and a ward maid who does the cleaning. The whole community eats together in the Great Hall, where the food is plentiful and good. Mick showed a picture of the Wren chapel, part of the original building. In the early days everyone was expected to attend services there twice a day, but now there is only a Sunday morning service and attendance is optional. The 33-bed infirmary that had been part of the original Hospital was replaced in 1816, thanks to Sir John Soane, by a new larger one, which however was bombed in World War II and is now the site of the Museum. Several men were killed in bombing raids, even though there were air raid shelters and 50 men and 9 staff were evacuated to Rudhall Manor near Ross-on-Wye, where this year a party from Chelsea went to re-enact a war-time Founder's Day. In 2008 a new hospital, the Margaret Thatcher Infirmary, was opened. Margaret and Denis Thatcher are both buried in the RHC burial ground. The small Roman Catholic chapel is much used for funerals, a frequent occurrence. Notice of a funeral is given in the form of a 'Final Posting'. Pensioners are encouraged to get involved in the life of the Hospital (he himself works in the Museum) and often go on trips and get invited to functions. In conclusion, Mick said he thought that, after providing a welcoming home for thousands over its 327-year history, the RHC still very much has its place in the 21st century.



A Pensioner in the 'Blues' worn for informal occasions

*FEATURE***The West Country Breweries Collection at Gloucestershire Archives**

‘West Country Breweries’ may not ring a bell with many Society members, but if one says ‘Brewery’ memories of potent smells hanging in the air in the vicinity of the High Street may do so. Recently Mike Bevin, assisted by Amber Patrick, has been stock checking, listing, enhancing and structuring the deposit given to the Archives by Whitbread PLC in 2001, now accessible as deposit D8947. (See the links below).



The deposit runs to many boxes, now stored in impressive order in the strong room. The boxes contain a large number of minutes, directors’ reports and accounts. Of more immediate interest is a unique collection of photographs and memorabilia. Anyone who worked for Whitbread, or who is already, or would consider, researching the more recent history of malting and brewing in Cheltenham and Gloucestershire may now look at deeds for pubs, breweries and properties. Also



of interest are photographs of some of the staff, the exterior and interior of the brewery showing the malting and brewing process, the distribution yard and the transport used to ferry beer, wines and spirits to the many inns and pubs.

It is generally believed that John Gardner, baker and later styled brewer and maltster of Cheltenham, started the concern in 1760. During the nineteenth century the properties belonging to the Cheltenham Original Brewery increased greatly and by the 20th century the Agg-Gardners had built up a vast concern reaching as far as Herefordshire and into Wales. The West Country Breweries collection at the Archives includes documents relating to the breweries of Cheltenham Original, Cheltenham Breweries Holdings, Nailsworth, Arnold & Perret, Wintle’s, Stroud and Godsell & Sons.

[http://ww3.gloucestershire.gov.uk/CalmView/Overview.aspx?](http://ww3.gloucestershire.gov.uk/CalmView/Overview.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog)

[src=CalmView.Catalog](#) and go to ‘Advanced Search’ and type ‘D8947’ into the second box.

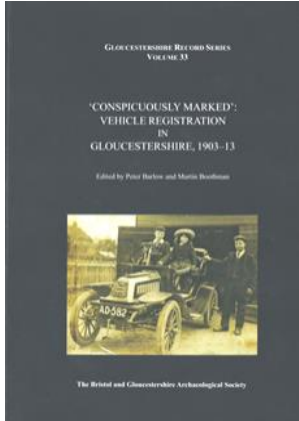
<https://gloucestershirearchives.wordpress.com/> and scroll down to ‘Controlling Archival Ferment’ 05//2019

*Sally Self*

*BOOK LAUNCH*

## ‘Conspicuously Marked’: Vehicle Registration in Gloucestershire, 1903-13

Edited by Peter Barlow and Martin Boothman



On Tuesday September 10th a new book in the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society Record Series was launched at the Heritage Hub with a presentation by the editors, who are both Society members. They explained that the book was based on a transcription, from numerous large ledgers, of the registration numbers issued to cars and motor cycles in Gloucestershire and Gloucester City from the beginning of compulsory registration to December 1913. (It was Gloucestershire County Council, as early as 1899, that called for all motor vehicles to be ‘conspicuously marked’). The work had taken several years and involved a good deal of research, mainly to find out about the people listed as vehicle

owners. It soon became evident that car and motor cycle ownership spread quickly in that first decade, and that both men and women in all walks of life saw the advantage of independent motor transport. By the eve of World War I almost 7,500 registrations had been recorded and there was at least one car or motor cycle owner in nearly every hamlet in the county. For people in rural areas owning a vehicle must have been particularly liberating, but this applied to town-dwellers too: a man with a motor cycle, for example (and second-hand vehicles were soon within reach of ordinary working people) could take a job much farther from home than had been possible before. Doctors very quickly took to motoring, Dr Grace Billings being one of Cheltenham’s early car owners.

Like others in this series the book is fully indexed: places, owners, their professions and of course the cars and motor cycles. There are over 30 excellent photos of early vehicles. A full introduction sets the scene, analyses early ownership trends and comments on the manufacturers, British, foreign and purely local. The reader interested primarily in old vehicles will marvel at the vast array of long-forgotten makes of cars and motor cycles listed and appreciate the technical data recorded about them. The local historian and the family researcher will find this compendium of information useful not only for facts and dates but for the insights it gives into the social life of the age.

Copies are available from BGAS, via their website [www.bgas.org.uk](http://www.bgas.org.uk) (or contact James Hodsdon if willing to collect in person), price £30.



Martin and Peter with ( in the centre) David Viner, this year’s President of the BGAS

## Yet another Cheltenham!



Here is the latest (perhaps the last) in our collection of namesakes. Cheltenham, Pennsylvania, one of our ‘twin’ towns, was founded in 1682 by 15 Quakers from Cheltenham. Today it is part of the city of Philadelphia and has a population of about 37,000. It shares our motto ‘Salubritas et Eruditio’. We thank Brian and Alexis Cassin for the pictures, taken on a ‘friendship link’ visit in 2000 for the centenary of this particular Cheltenham’s designation as a Township.

## Visit to Frampton on Severn, Wednesday 14th August

At 10 o’clock on a rather grey damp morning the party set off from Royal Well for Frampton on Severn where, on arrival, we went first to Frampton Court. In the panelled entrance hall we were met by guides Jean and David, who said that the 1500 acre Frampton Estate had belonged since 1066 to the Clifford family. We were then divided into two groups, one of which went with David to the dining room. He said that Richard Clutterbuck, who inherited the property in the 18th century, had demolished the pre-existing house and built the present Palladian-style Court in 1732, the centre part in stone and the wings in stucco.

The furniture was locally made to Chippendale's designs, and the china bearing the family's coat of arms would have been made in China, notably a fine porcelain tea set housed in a corner cupboard. A silver model of a hussar had been a wedding present to one Henry Clifford, killed in Palestine in 1917. His daughter Henrietta had been the last Clifford to live in the house, though her son Rollo now ran the estate. The Cliffords had never been very rich, which explained why little in the house had changed. After Henry's death his widow Hilda had managed to keep the estate going by developing gravel extraction from the lakes on the property. From the oak-panelled sitting room we went upstairs with Jean. A white-painted bedroom overlooking the grounds, where a 19th-century Henry Clifford and his wife had slept, was one



of those now used for bed and breakfast accommodation. Of their 10 children the 5 sons died young and the 5 daughters, who were skilled botanical artists, lived on for years doing good works in the village. Another bedroom had a Hepplewhite bed and a blue-patterned tapestry on the wall. Jean said that while it was away being cleaned in Belgium Grayson Perry had displayed a tapestry of his own, based on Frampton life. We then left the house (the rain had at last stopped, fortunately) to walk through the grounds, admiring the handsome crenelated orangery and its lily-strewn lake, and make our way to the Village Hall, where an excellent ploughman's lunch was served by the local W.I.

After lunch Rose Hewlett gave us an introduction to Frampton. She said it had been granted a market in 1274 and later an annual 5-day summer fair in August. It lay on an old trading route called Perry Way, used for iron ore since pre-Roman times, that led via Arlingham to the river crossing at Newnham, and had been a little tidal port. We walked up the long village green, noticing two 15th century cruck cottages, and passed through a lych gate and along an avenue of horse chestnut trees to St Mary's church, 13th century in origin, with its Jacobean pulpit and many memorials to the Cliffords. Outside, Rose said there was once a wharf here and it was a busy area. Pausing to look at the tithe barn, rebuilt in 1662, we walked past more old cottages to the former National School (1842) and the old vicarage, now a residential home, where the Clifford ladies used to teach sewing to village girls. All the houses on the Court side of the green belong to the Clifford estate. Down a footpath Rose showed us the church built in 1776 of Frampton brick by an ancestor of hers, and back at the green she pointed out one of the ponds created by Richard Clutterbuck when he drained the land. We next saw the ancient Manor Farmhouse, where Rollo Clifford lives, and finally a huge 16th century wool barn. This and the farmhouse once belonged to the Codringtons, a wealthy merchant family. Back on the coach once more, we returned home after a full and rewarding day.

## *SOCIETY NEWS*

### New Members

A warm welcome is extended to the following:

Darren Vidler  
John Woodward  
Mike Lewis  
Susan New  
Malcolm Dunning

Jean Middleton  
Brenda King  
Gillian and Keith Sexton  
Alan Bissatt  
Catherine Bell

### **Gloucestershire Archives @Heritage Hub**

Gloucestershire Archives has now fully re-opened after its restructuring with a new Reception area, Search Room and Document Handling facilities. The Search Room has new desks, comfortable office chairs and good web connection, all of which are particularly welcome. New strong rooms have been built with sufficient space for the next 50 years and temperature, humidity and fire controls to ensure the safe storage of all deposits.

The comfort of visitors has also been carefully considered with a pleasant coffee area and small kitchen with facilities for making tea and coffee. We can even keep our sandwiches fresh in hot weather with access to a fridge. The new carpark to the rear is now complete and parking is available at £3 a day. For the opening hours please see the Archives website. The research room is closed on Mondays (except for volunteers working for the Archives).



Society volunteers celebrated the opening of the new entrance to the Hub with a group photograph.

---

### *Sally Self*

#### **New Committee Secretary**

We are very pleased to report that, following our Secretary Chris Conoley's decision not to stand for office again, Committee member Alison Pascoe has volunteered to take on the role of Secretary.

#### **Meeting changes—PLEASE NOTE**

1. Due to election preparations the Council Chamber is unavailable on December 10th. Our meeting is now rescheduled for **December 17th**.
  2. Our speaker on January 21st 2020 will be Clive Montellier instead of Richard Goddard, as previously advertised. The subject is still The Battle of Tewkesbury.
-

## Scrapbooks

### A chance to view some delightful scrapbooks depicting Cheltenham society at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

The Society was recently contacted by Charles Milward, who has come across three wonderful scrapbooks created by Wynnifred Mary Ellis (pictured below), the youngest sister of his grandmother, who lived at Apsley Lodge, Pittville between about 1884 and 1916. Charlie says *“The first is all about a high-society wedding at Holy Apostles Church on 29 July 1893 between Miss Ada St-Claire Ford and Archibald Hamilton Donald. The other two contain many dance cards, Amateur Dramatics programmes, and local photos, as well as the signatures of many of her Cheltenham friends and relatives. There are family names that I recognise, but I suspect many others are of Cheltenham young people. I attach a few sample pages, and photos of Wynnifred, who I suspect was quite a character. She was married in 1909 to Ventry Guiscard Mellin; there were no children, and I believe the marriage was not a success.”*



Charlie will be visiting us at our morning meeting at St Luke's Hall on Tuesday 4th February next year, and will have the scrapbooks on display for members to look at before the main speaker (Ally McConnell on the History of the Dowty Group). We hope that many members will take the opportunity to arrive early (from 10.00 am) to see them.

*Alison Pascoe*

## STOP PRESS!

Here's a very pleasing piece of news: the Archives and Records Association (UK & Ireland) (ARA) has announced that **'Bigger, Better, Stronger: Volunteering Re-Booted'**, a project initiated by Gloucestershire Archives at Gloucestershire Heritage Hub, is the winner of this year's prestigious national Archive Volunteering Award. Sponsored by the ARA, the National Archives (UK) and sector partners, this annual award recognises outstanding work involving volunteers in an archive and records service.

Sally and Russell Self, on behalf of all GA volunteers, are to be presented with the award in a ceremony at Llanthony Secunda Priory on November 15th.



## FEATURE

## The Hall, Montpellier

Many of you will have enjoyed the recent Heritage Days, giving access to interesting buildings in the town. Among them was the New Club, Montpellier Parade, with its beautiful cantilevered staircase in the entrance hall. My interest in the building was because it was my mother's old school, The Hall, Montpellier. Now, among the well proportioned rooms only the back stairs retain an echo of a school.



Montpellier Parade was under construction in 1812 and No 2 is first shown on the 1819 Town Map within a large plot. By 1870 there were buildings to the north and west and the garden was to the front of the property. Among the occupants had been Mrs Captain Grey for some years and more recently Lady Ramsey. In the early 1880s the three Misses Whittard, Jane, Caroline and Louise opened The Hall as a school for ladies. They were joint heads, but Caroline was the principal. They had been born in Cheltenham, their grandfather being a hatter in the High Street. The family were nonconformists. Their father Thomas Whittard was a private tutor in classics and mathematics, and the family home accommodated a few of his pupils, both boys and girls, as boarders, including a family of four born in Ceylon in 1861 and a boy born in India in 1881. In the 1881 census the three sisters were living with their parents at 7 Berkeley Street. Jane is shown as having no occupation, and there is no evidence that she later taught in the school. The practical running of the school with a cook, two housemaids and non-resident staff would have been sufficient occupation for her. Caroline and Louise were governesses, as was another sister and their brother William Ward Whittard (BA London), a tutor in classics and maths like his father. There is no evidence that the sisters had any qualifications, nor is it known whether they had taken over an existing school to start their school at The Hall.

The school had a crest with a Latin motto, *labor omnia vincit*. There was a mixed kindergarten and junior and senior schools for girls up to the age of 18 or 19, of whom just over 20 were boarders. The day pupils were drawn from local well to do tradespeople and the boarders from local farming families as well as from the Midlands, London and much further afield. The censuses show pupils born in Calcutta (1891), Cape Colony (1901), Argentina and New Zealand (1911). By 1901 the school had acquired a second property of 12 rooms at 9 Montpellier Terrace. Caroline Whittard would later live there with the sisters' elderly parents, some of the boarders and staff members (including the much loved French mistress from Paris Mademoiselle Rousignol, who would remain at the school until it closed) and Hebe Drake who taught maths and was the subsequent proprietor of the school. I am indebted to the family of Nora Woodward who gave her reports



to the Archives. A bright, hardworking girl, she attended the school from 1911-1916. Her final report includes the words 'She carries with her the highest educational honours ever gained in the school, First Class London Matriculation'. Her reports show the class sizes averaging 12 in the early years but down to two in the VIth form. Caroline Whittard was the VIth form mistress, and in the upper forms William Ward Whittard taught Latin. Shorthand was also taught.

Apart from the core subjects it is interesting to see that orthography and writing were marked and examined throughout the school and that, while games and music (apart from singing) were extras, drill and gym were taught even in the VIth form. A lot of maths was taught but very little science: one term's work consisted of attending science lectures. Colonial geography was on the curriculum. The Wilson family lived next door to the school for most of its existence, and one wonders if Edward Wilson's journey to Antarctica was studied. The teachers' comments on the girls' reports are incisive and show a dedicated and hard working staff. By 1920 the Whittard sisters had retired to Park Place and the proprietors were Miss Hebe Drake and Miss Gladly Hall.

My mother entered the kindergarten, where the walls had pictures of objects with their French and English names: French was taught from the outset. The kindergarten children played happily in the garden, and there was a kindly atmosphere throughout the school. On winter evenings she walked home along St Luke's Road behind the lamplighter. At that time Sergeant Brill still taught drill, shouting parade ground style and calling the children by their surnames.

However by the 1920s Pate's Grammar School for Girls was expanding rapidly and the Hall could not compete with their graduate staff, playing fields and trips to France. Pate's fees were lower, which was a consideration if you were a war widow with three girls to educate. The local go-ahead parents transferred their girls to Pate's, among them the first Pate's girl to get to Oxford, a future accountant and at least one teacher and a nurse. The numbers plummeted in The Hall's senior school and class sizes shrank. Whether the energetic and enterprising Miss Caroline Whittard in her prime could have staunched the flow we do not know, but her successors could not and the 1920s was a period of decline for the school. One of the last pupils in the kindergarten at Easter 1930 was Anthony Drake, perhaps remembered still as the owner of Drake's the drapers in Winchcombe Street and a keen rambler. He was very good at drill! By July 1930 The Hall, after nearly 50 years, had ceased to exist as a school, although it may have continued nearby under another name and with a new owner. Planning permission was obtained in November 1931 by K J Fisher to convert The Hall into two houses, and the work was completed by July 1932. Walter Gustav Borchardt MA BSc gained planning permission to build a Motor House (ie a garage) in June 1932 and lived at The Hall for many years.

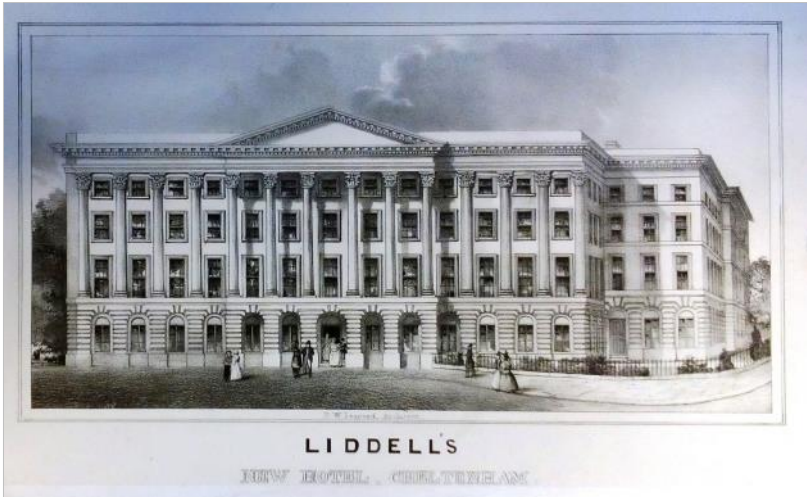
There were many private schools in Cheltenham in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, of which The Hall was one of the longer lasting. It would be sad if they were all forgotten.

*Elizabeth Bennett*



*FEATURE***The Mysterious Richard Liddell**

The name of Richard Liddell would have been a familiar one in mid-19th-century Cheltenham. He came on the scene in the 1820s as an hotelier when he renamed his lodging house the Clarence Hotel after the Duchess of Clarence stayed there in 1827. He became the first lessee of the Queen's Hotel in 1828 and went on to acquire a large portfolio of property. Yet the origins and career of this self-made man are something of an enigma.



The Queen's Hotel in an engraving by George Rowe. It was originally named after its first lessee Richard Liddell  
*(Courtesy of Gloucestershire Libraries)*

As a straightforward 'inn-keeper', Richard Liddell was involved in the running of not only the Clarence Hotel but also a boarding house in Bedford Buildings (now The Boston Tea Party). When he acquired the lease of the Queen's Hotel (at the then huge sum of £2,100 a year) he placed it in the hands of a manager, while he and his family lived in Promenade Villas, on the opposite side of Queen's Circus. He gave up the lease the following year to S Y Griffith, and by 1841 he had retired from hotel-keeping and progressed from the 'Tradesmen' list to the 'Gentry' in the *Annuaire* directories. By 1861, now styled in the Census as 'gentleman', he had moved to the Moorend Grotto in Leckhampton (see article in the next Journal), and he remained

there until his death in 1873. He, his wife and a son and daughter are all buried in Leckhampton churchyard.

Richard Liddell had amassed a considerable property portfolio. He built two large detached houses – Ravensworth Lodge and Eslington House – on land in Sandford Field (on the corner of Thirlestaine Road and Old Bath Road, abutting Whitecross Square). He offered them for sale in 1852 together with several houses in the town – 10, 11 and 12 Promenade Villas, 3 Clarence Parade, 2 Promenade Place, 4, 5 and 6 Queen’s Circus – as well as four building plots in Regent Street (today’s Ormond Terrace). In 1847 he had also been involved with a 10-year lease of an office in Rodney Road.

Documents in Gloucestershire Archives shed light on two other aspects of his life, which are markedly different. In 1825 he was named among the trustees of an intended new church in Suffolk Square – St James’s – and until at least 1860 he remained involved in the appointment of other trustees. He also owned or rented a pew in that church. By contrast one Richard Liddell a ‘licensed victualer,’ – and I know of no other person of that name in Cheltenham, apart from his son – was in 1833 convicted of the crime of keeping open his premises for the consumption of beer during the usual hours of afternoon divine service at the parish church and again in 1836 for permitting gaming in his house. Presumably these offences were committed at his boarding house, with or without his knowledge, and as the proprietor he was deemed responsible.

His estate when he died was worth less than £300 – a surprisingly small amount considering his previous business dealings. He appears to have transferred at least some of his property in advance to his son Richard, and his Will (not available at the time of going to press) may shed more light on the circumstances.

But who was Richard Liddell really? His choice of names for the two houses on Thirlestaine Road implies a connection with the baronies of Ravensworth and Eslington, held by the Liddells in Northumberland (NB with the stress on the first syllable). However, I have been unable to find any connection between Richard Liddell and that family, of which the Reverend Henry Liddell, father of ‘Alice in Wonderland’ was a member. Moreover, Richard Liddell’s certificate of baptism, from his birthplace in Oxford, shows the spelling of his parents’ surname as Liddall – with an ‘a’. Was that a clerical error or did Richard Liddell in later life make a spurious claim to aristocratic connections? He remained in Oxford at least until his marriage there in 1820. If any reader can shed more light on Richard Liddell’s provenance, I should be very interested.

*Eric Miller*

*FEATURE***1919 in Cheltenham and Nationwide**

1919 was a year of reflection. There was relief that the war was over, but also the realization of changes to many lives, not just from bereavement and horrendous injuries but also financial problems.

Women may have won the right to vote, but because of age and property qualifications many were still not enfranchised. Solicitors may have voted to allow women into the profession, recognising the work done by them in family firms while their brothers were at the front, but for many women the jobs they had enjoyed during the war were gone, either because the work itself (in munitions, for example) no longer existed or because the men were gradually returning to take back their jobs. The women lost not only their income but a life and companionship which they had become accustomed to away from the home.

Some, like Lillian Williams in Bath, knowing her husband's job as a commercial traveller in the grocery trade would not be kept open for him while he was away at the war, had taken over their husband's job. The travelling prevented her from caring for her only child who came to live with her grandfather in Cheltenham for two years. Her husband, invalided from the Somme and not fit to return to the front, was well enough to be sent to India with another regiment. It would be many months after the Armistice before he returned home. Meanwhile the great influenza epidemic reached Cheltenham and struck the grandfather's family. In fact Lillian's daughter was the only member to escape infection, but Lillian was probably closer to losing her child than her husband. With his eventual return the family was reunited, and she never worked outside the home again. An intelligent woman, one wonders how much she and many others like her missed the stimulation of employment. The decimation of a generation of men had left not only many widows but also many women who had lost any hope of being married and would need to support themselves for the rest of their lives. The government viewed this as a serious demographic problem. One such woman was Lilian Ashwin, who had grown up in Tivoli and served in the Land Army in Somerset. With the return of the men her job was gone and she emigrated to Canada in 1921, her fare paid by the Land Army.



Lilian Ashwin

Former soldiers too came back to unemployment. If they had jobs before the war their employers could not necessarily keep them open for them. Many were reduced to begging or selling from door to door, even in Cheltenham. A little girl growing up in London Road was terrified to answer the front door in case it was an old soldier so desperate that he would put his foot in the door and refuse to leave.

The terrible years of the war were over but peace brought new problems.

*Elizabeth Bennett*

## The 2020 Journal

Next year's Journal will feature another **photo competition** so now is the time to capture those images of places, features or objects that are special to you and reflect on the history of Cheltenham. Please email your image(s) to the Journal editor with a short piece of text explaining what they mean to you and their association with Cheltenham. The deadline for the competition is December 2019.



### Calling all writers!

If you are preparing an **article** for the Journal, please note that the deadline to send it to the editor is the end of November. Please contact the editor for a copy of the full guidelines to help you present your draft. The main points to bear in mind are:

- your article can be between 2 and 14 pages long, including images and end-notes
- you should try to include a few relevant, clear images and make sure you have obtained any necessary copyright permissions
- please email any images separately to the editor
- you should use endnotes (not footnotes) to refer to the sources you have used for your article

Depending on the length and balance of all the draft articles, it might not be possible to publish your article in full in the next Journal, but the editor will discuss this with you. In the meantime do get in touch if you need more information.

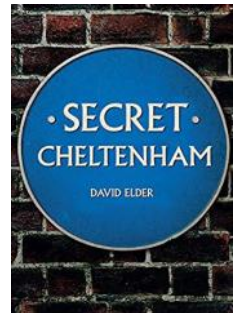
*Julie Courtenay*

### NEW PUBLICATION

#### Secret Cheltenham

by David Elder

The 'A-side' of Cheltenham's history as a fashionable Regency spa and its subsequent reinvention as a town of colleges, churches and festivals is well documented, but what about its 'flip-side'? Much of the town's remarkable history has either been overlooked or lies hidden below the surface. Local author David Elder delves into the town's lost and forgotten histories, unearthing fascinating facts and recounting some remarkable stories. Learn, for example, about some of Cheltenham's minor celebrities and local characters – from the man who sold his wife for little more than 18 pence to the concert pianist who claimed to be the reincarnation of Franz Liszt, not forgetting the person who led to the 'discovery' of Jeeves not long before perishing at the Battle of the Somme.



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



## BOOKS FOR SALE



### News from the CLHS Donated Books ‘Shop’

There was a good response to the last Newsletter booklist. All the journal bundles were sold, raising £40 for the Society. There are still a number of single copies for sale at £1 each, so let me know what you need to complete your set. There are many books on the list in new condition which would make ideal Christmas presents. If there is anything particular you want, please ring or email me and I will check the CLHS bookshelves to see if I have a copy.

- A History of Cheltenham, G Hart, (3 copies) £5
- Cheltenham, B Little, (4 copies) £3
- Cheltenham, A Biography, S Pakenham, (5 copies) £2
- Cheltenham in pictures, B Little, (3 copies) £3
- Pleasure Town, Cheltenham 1830-1860, A Bell, (3 copies) £3
- Cheltenham’s Lost Heritage, O Bradbury, (2 copies, as new) £7.50
- The Book of Cheltenham, S Blake, R Beacham, (2 copies, limited edition, signed) £7
- Cheltenham, A Pictorial History, S Blake, (2 copies, as new) £7
- Cheltenham, A History, S Rowbotham, J Waller, (2 copies, as new) £8
- Around Cheltenham, photographic memories, F Frith, (3 copies) £6
- A Century of Cheltenham, R Brooks, (2 copies, as new) £7
- Gloucestershire Worthies, A Sampson, (4 copies) £3
- A Cheltenham Companion, A Sampson, S Blake, (5 copies) £3

If you are interested in any of these items please contact me by phone on 01242 232740, or email [heatherbell71@hotmail.com](mailto:heatherbell71@hotmail.com). Books can be collected either at meetings, or from my home address at other times. Thank you for supporting the CLHS Bookshop.

*Heather Atkinson*

## CONTENTS

Lecture programme 2019-2020	2-3	Society News; Scrapbooks	14-15
For Your Diary	4-5	The 2020 Journal	21
Reviews	6– 9, 12-13	New Publication	21
Features	10, 16-20	Books for Sale	22
Book launch	11	Can You Help? Next issue	24
Yet Another Cheltenham	12		

## CLHS DISPLAYS IN THE LOCAL AND FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY

Mid-November— December Cheltenham's Hospitals before the NHS

January—February 2020 The Dowty Years : Arle Court

March—April 2020 180 Years of Policing Cheltenham

## Oops!

A story is told that in the 1930s the Bishop of Gloucester (Bishop Headlam) paid a visit to the Naunton Park Infant School. He was formally dressed in top hat and gaiters.

When he was taken into the reception class, he stood for a moment speechless before the small children. Then inspiration struck. He held out his hat and said 'Children, I am sure you have never seen a hat like this'.

A little hand went up.

'Yes, Sir. On the sweep in Sherborne Street!'

The Bishop was hastily ushered out.



As we will all know after Steven Blake's talk on November 19th, the child was referring to the Sherborne Street sweep, a tradesman's sign marking the location of a chimney sweep's business. A well-known local landmark, it hung on the wall of a house in Sherborne Street for nearly 100 years until the last sweep retired in 1950 and gave it to what is now The Wilson.

## *CAN YOU HELP?*

### **Oldacre family**

An enquirer is trying to contact anyone with links to the Oldacre family who lived in Cheltenham until about 15 years ago. In the attic of her parents' house she found a box of photos left by the previous owners, Ernest and Helen Charnock, who were a branch of that family. They were married in Bishops Cleeve in 1939 and died around 2005. She feels she cannot throw it away and is anxious to deliver it to a proper owner. Can anyone help?

### **Old postcard**

An enquirer came across this very faded old postcard, apparently of a castle or a country house. The photographer was E. M Bailey, Cheltenham, who had an address in the High Street about 1899-1920. Can anyone identify it? Could it be Rodborough Fort?



### **Ginner Mawer dance school**

During the early 1950s, until 1954, Cheltenham Rotunda was home to the Ginner Mawer School of Dance and Drama. Ruby Ginner (whose married name was Dyer) is renowned for her work in Classical Greek Dance but her business partner and friend, Irene Mawer (married name Perugini) is barely known about. An enquirer has undertaken to research Miss Mawer with a view to publishing details of her life and work. She would very much like to talk to anyone who trained at the school or had any connection with it. The enquirer can be contacted directly by email at [fizzycloud@hotmail.com](mailto:fizzycloud@hotmail.com)

*If you can help with any of these queries please contact Jill Waller on 07512318866 or e-mail [jill.waller@virginmedia.com](mailto:jill.waller@virginmedia.com)*

## NEXT ISSUE

Please forward any material for inclusion in the March 2020 issue by  
**Monday 10th February 2020**  
 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.