



# Cheltenham Local History Society

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## *EDITORIAL*

This time we have a real work of art as our cover picture. This is a detail of George Rowe's panoramic view of the Mount Alexander goldfields at Castlemaine, in the Australian state of Victoria. The painting, which was one of six shown by Rowe at the 1862 London International Exhibition, was inherited by his youngest son, James Rowe, whose grand-daughter, then living in Florida, had it photographed for inclusion in the exhibition 'George Rowe, Artist and Lithographer' which was held at Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum in 1982. The image is reproduced here by courtesy of Cheltenham Borough Council and the Cheltenham Trust. It has seldom been shown anywhere, having always been in private hands, but it deserves to be better known not least because it contains a self-portrait of the artist. Dr Steven Blake, who has done a great deal of research on George Rowe (and indeed has given talks to the Society about him and his travels in the Australian goldfields) found a letter written by Rowe in *The Wilson* that sheds an interesting light on the genesis of this painting: see his article on page 19.

*Kath Boothman*

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## *ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING*

The Society's Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday 19th 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 2020-21*

Officers and committee members (as listed in the 2019 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 Alison Pascoe (email [eliam77@btinternet.com](mailto:eliam77@btinternet.com) or phone 01242 519413) for a nomination form.

After the AGM business is concluded **Mike Bottomley** will give a talk entitled **Katherine Parr, Gloucestershire's Queen: the Life, Loves and Times of the last Wife of Henry VIII.**

## *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 11th 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 11th 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 3rd June at 6.30 pm and Wednesday 17th June at 6.30 pm*

### **Curry and Colonels—a Walk exploring Anglo-Indian Connections**

Phil Collins, who leads this walk, will provide a fascinating insight into the lives of Anglo-Indian returnees to Cheltenham by relating anecdotes and stories of the Empire. The walk will include the homes, spas, theatres, gentlemen's clubs and architecture that made Cheltenham a home from home for ex-colonials.

*Wednesday 1st July at 6.30 pm and Wednesday 22nd July at 6.30 pm*

### **Surviving and Lost Industrial Sites in Cheltenham**

This walk, led by Amber Patrick, will start at the Bayshill Inn, where the River Chelt comes out of its underground run. The walk then follows sites such as the Crescent Bakery to the location of St James's Station and on to the Gloucester Road to see the site of Cheltenham's market and the remains of the Gas Works. The walk will conclude at the site of the Cheltenham Original Brewery on the High Street.

*Wednesday 12th August leaving at 9.15am from Royal Well, returning at 4.30pm*  
**STOW-ON-THE-WOLD**



Our visit will start with a private guided tour of Chastleton House, near Stow. Chastleton is a National Trust property built in the early 17th century by a prosperous wool merchant. It is somewhat unusual in that it remained essentially unchanged for nearly 400 years while the wool trade declined and the family's fortune thereby diminished. As you can see, the house is on four floors so reasonable stair-climbing ability is useful.

In the afternoon, members of the Stow-on-the-Wold Civic Society will provide a guided walk around the town. Stow's location at the junction of main roads through the Cotswolds, including the Fosse Way, has secured its importance as a major market town for at least 700 years. Wool was, of course, a major source of wealth, with over 20,000 sheep being sold, typically, at a twice yearly market.



### **Gloucestershire Local History Association**

#### **LOCAL HISTORY DAY**

*Saturday 25th April from 10.30 am to 4.15 pm*  
*at the University of Gloucestershire Oxstalls Campus*  
**Admission £5.00 to include refreshments**

The theme of the meeting this year is  
**'The History of Education in Gloucestershire'**

As before there will be displays by various local societies and an award for the best display. The Brian Jerrard Award for the best article of the year in a local history publication will be presented, and there will be three talks.

Morning coffee, a sandwich lunch and afternoon tea will be provided.

*EVENING LECTURE PROGRAMME 2020-21*

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

*Tuesday 22nd September:*

**Martin Boothman and Peter Barlow—Early Gloucestershire Vehicle Registrations**

*Tuesday 20th October:*

**Mark Davies—‘Young Zamiel Gripeall’: Cheltenham’s ‘crafty, crabbed, selfish’ (and libelled) newspaper proprietor and hotelier, S Y Griffith**

*Tuesday 17th November:*

**Professor Philip Dixon—Fifty Years at Crickley Hill**

*Tuesday 8th December:*

**Paul Barnett—The Cotswolds Navy: What’s in a Name?**

*Tuesday 19th January 2021:*

**Research and Display Evening**

*Tuesday 16th February 2021:*

**Steven Blake—The Perils of Speculation in Regency Cheltenham: the Rise and Fall of the Hon Miss Monson**

*Tuesday 16th March 2021:*

**Alan Pilbeam—The Royal Progress through Gloucestershire 1535**

*Tuesday 20th April 2021:*

**Neela Mann—Spas, Squabbles and Slave-owners: a Short History of Lansdown**

*Tuesday 18th May 2021:*

**AGM followed by Geoff North—Marianne North, Victorian Artist and Traveller**

*MORNING LECTURES 2020-21*

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 Alison Pascoe (01242 519413) if you wish to reserve a space.

*Tuesday 6th October:*

**Jim Markland—Oriental Navigators and Unlikely Residents of Cheltenham**

*Tuesday 2nd February 2021:*

**Joan Hughes—Churchdown Then & Now: a Personal View**

*Tuesday 6th April 2021:*

**Judith Ellis—George Towns-  
end, Benefactor of Boys in  
Cheltenham and Campden**

*Reminder...*

**MORNING LECTURE**

*Tuesday 7th April, 10.00 am for 10.30 am  
at St Luke’s Hall, Cheltenham*

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

*The 2020 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 24th March:* **AGM** followed by **David Aldred—The History of Cleeve Hill**

*Tuesday 28th April:*

**Sue Jones—Cheltenham's Suffragettes**

*Tuesday 19th May:*

**Sue Webb—The Gloucestershire Police Archive**

### **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 23rd March:*

**Nicholas Herbert—Travel in the Coaching Era**

*Monday 27th April:*

**Norman Baker—Prestbury in the 18th Century**

*Monday 18th May:*

**Rebecca Sillence—Prestbury Trams**

*Monday 22nd June:*

**Peter McNeil—A Day at the Races**

### **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 8th April:*

**Geoff North—Decorative Ironworks in Cheltenham**

*Wednesday 13th May:*

**AGM** followed by **Neela Mann—A Little History of Cheltenham and its Quakers 1650-1850**

### **Gotherington Local History Society**

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

*Tuesday 24th March :*

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

*Tuesday 28th April:*

**AGM** followed by **David Aldred—Hailes Abbey: Holy Monks and Holy Blood?**

### 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 23rd March 2020 in Cheltenham:*

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

*Monday 20th April in Gloucester:*

**Dr Tim Mason (University of Portsmouth) - The History of the Plague**

*Monday 18th May in Cheltenham:*

**Dr Gillian Spragg— ‘The Highwaymen’s Lawsuit’: Criminal Networks in London between 1720 and 1735**

### Swindon Village Society

Meetings are held at Swindon Village Hall at 7.30 pm unless stated otherwise. Guests are charged £2. (Single membership is £7, family membership £14.)

*Wednesday 18th March:*

**Andrew Meller—The Glosters at Waterloo**

*Saturday 16th May, starting at 9.30 am by car from Swindon Village Hall:*

**Guided Walk on Crickley Hill led by John Heathcott**

*Wednesday 17th June:*

**Judie Hodsdon—the History of Pittville Park and what the Friends of Pittville Park do**



### **The Deerhurst Lecture 2020**

**‘The cathedral community at Worcester,  
Odda of Deerhurst  
and his contemporaries’**

Professor Francesca Tinti

*Saturday 12th 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>.

## REVIEWS

Steven Blake's talk On Tuesday 19th November was entitled **Researching 'the Old Man': the story of Cheltenham's Sherborne Street Sweeps**. He said he wanted to unravel the story behind the well-known tradesman's sign that once hung on the wall in Sherborne Street but was sold to the Museum in 1950 by 80-year-old Fred Field, the last of the sweeps. In the Museum the figure was accompanied by photographs. In one picture Fred was sitting on the step of the building, and in another his wife was with him. Sherborne Street is a more salubrious area now than in the early 19th century when it was laid out. The town was expanding rapidly at that time, and a report of 1849 noted that there was no sewerage or proper water supply in the street, so that sanitary conditions were poor. The first sweep to set up a business in Sherborne Street was probably John Russell, who died in 1843 aged 38 and was buried in the new burial ground off the Lower High Street, now Winston Churchill Gardens. His widow Ann put a notice in the paper in 1844 thanking the public for their custom and announcing that the business would henceforth be supervised by a new sweep, James Short from Bristol. Ann and James very soon married, and they ran the business together until James died, aged 47, in 1869. (The cause of death was given as 'decline', which meant tuberculosis.) At some point in those years they moved the business across the street from no. 15 to no. 39, its final position. Their next-door neighbours at no. 15 were the Fields, and it was their youngest son William Field who was to take over the business. By 1861 he was living with the Shorts. His own family apparently broke up and his father died in the workhouse in 1864. Ann Short, having been widowed again, carried on the business with the aid of assistants including William, who by then had married and had a family. When Ann died she left him the business together with the lease of her house and its furnishings and a lamp—probably a large one that hung on the outside wall—but there is no mention of the sweep sign. Was it there then? Its origin is a mystery. It may well have been modelled on James Short, who had referred to himself as a 'dandy sweep' and was described at one court appearance as 'dapper'. There were three or four rival sweeps' businesses in Sherborne Street, so the figure was perhaps signalling that Short's was the oldest and best. A photograph of William and Ellen Field in the 1880s shows them with 9 of their 14 children, including Fred, the eldest, who was to take over the business when William died of alcoholism in 1901. He ran it, as the last sweep, for 50 years. Steven showed photos of him late in life with his bike and brushes. As his sons did not wish to take on the business when he retired he decided to let the Museum have the sign. It was then cleaned: layers of paint were removed and it proved to be made mostly of zinc, with bristle for the hair. Fred Field died in 1955 and the house was sold in 1960. Having used many different sources (among which newspapers and court reports proved particularly interesting) Steven felt there was much more to be found out about Cheltenham's sweeps and their families. There seemed to be several dynasties of them in the 19th century. It was a rich field to explore!



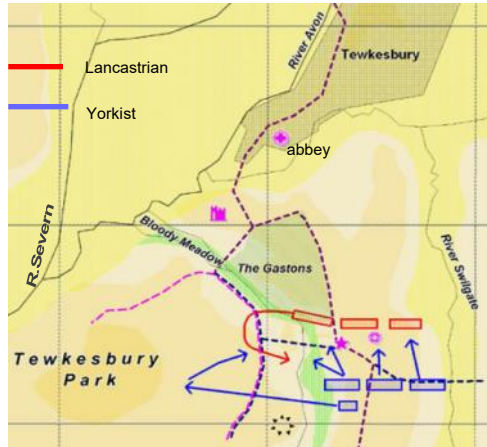
Our speaker on Tuesday 17th December, **Jonathan Briggs**, took as his theme **Mistletoe: History, Legend, Myth and Harvesting**. Beginning with the biology of the plant, he said its Latin name, *viscum album*, referred to its berries, which are sticky and white. It is the only native white-berried plant in northern Europe, and like ivy and holly which are also used at Christmas it is evergreen. Mistletoe is hemiparasitic, which means that although it photosynthesises, thus feeding itself, it needs to be rooted in a branch of a tree and cannot grow out of the ground. It is a woody shrub forming rounded growths on deciduous trees, the balls growing larger as every branch of the mistletoe bifurcates each year. There



are 1500 varieties adapted to grow in different environments around the world. In the UK it is particularly prevalent in this part of the country, as Jonathan showed on a distribution map, and 40% of it grows on apple trees. It favours cultivated places such as orchards and gardens where trees are spaced out. The many myths and legends about it derive largely from its appearance and growth habit and the fact that it is particularly visible in winter, when the ripe berries are almost translucent. In Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough: a Study in Magic and Religion* (1890) mistletoe often features as a talisman that will help the bearer to enter forbidden places, or protect him from harm. According to the Roman historian Pliny, druids in Britain worshipped mistletoe, cutting it with a golden sickle and catching it before it hit the ground and lost its power. Modern druids include the same ritual in their midwinter celebrations. Like many other odd-looking plants mistletoe was assumed to have medicinal properties; although it is in fact poisonous, mistletoe tea is sold in Europe as a soother, and there is a veterinary product designed to calm cats and dogs. There is even a range of anti-cancer medicines made from mistletoes growing on different trees, each believed to have distinct properties. The tradition of kissing under the mistletoe seems to date from the 18th century, perhaps originally as an expression of simple family affection rather than romantic attraction. Jonathan showed a picture of a mother and child from an old magazine, but also a Victorian Christmas card featuring a young couple. It was for a long time a good luck symbol: Jonathan had brought with him a number of items decorated with a mistletoe motif, and showed pictures of many more. As it was common only in certain areas, mistletoe became a useful secondary crop, sold in many local markets at Christmas. In 1938 a Mr Johnson of Cheltenham was the 'mistletoe king' who bought mistletoe harvested by farmers and sent it to London for shipping to South Africa and Australia in November. In areas where mistletoe was scarce it was valuable enough to be worth stealing, and many thefts were reported in the 19th century. The trade is much reduced now, partly because modern orchards do not keep the old trees on which it grows best, but in some areas it is spreading, perhaps in response to climate change. Mistletoe is dispersed by birds that eat the ripe berries in winter. Mistlethrushes excrete the seeds, while blackcaps wipe them off their beaks on to branches where they may germinate. It will survive and remain popular, Jonathan said, but needs to be looked after as in the past.



On Tuesday 21st January **Clive Montellier**, secretary of the Tewkesbury Battlefield Society, gave us a vivid account of **The Battle of Tewkesbury, 1471**. It took place during the Wars of the Roses (a term coined by Sir Walter Scott) which at the time were seen rather as wars between cousins. Clive showed the Lancastrian family tree, from Edward III down to Henry VI, a weak king who lost nearly all England's French possessions and had a teenaged son, Prince Edward. On the Yorkist side was another Edward, son of Richard Duke of York, also descended from Edward III. The conflict between them lasted for many years: Clive showed a long list of battles from 1455 to 1487. In 1461 the Yorkist Edward became Edward IV and Henry VI was imprisoned. His wife Margaret of Anjou fled to France, but she



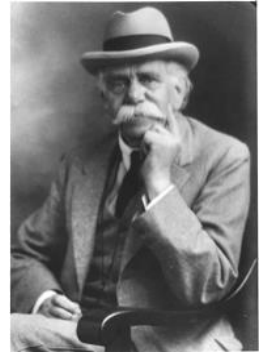
remained determined to restore her family's fortunes. In April 1471 she landed at Weymouth with Prince Edward and was joined by Lancastrian supporters under the Duke of Somerset. Having just been defeated at the Battle of Barnet and needing reinforcements, Margaret's forces headed for Wales to seek the support of Jasper Tudor. King Edward set out to intercept them. Margaret hoped to meet Jasper in Gloucester, but Edward forestalled her and she found the city closed to her. She then made a forced march north to Tewkesbury, where Somerset decided they should stand and fight rather than attempt the difficult Severn river crossing. They camped in a pasture now called The Gastons to the south of the abbey and deployed their troops east towards the River Swilgate. King Edward approached up the main road from the south and positioned his army of about 5000 men opposite Margaret's near a wooded hill called Tewkesbury Park. Each army formed three 'wards': vanguard, main and rear. Somerset commanded the van of Margaret's army, while Edward's brother the Duke of Gloucester (the future Richard III) commanded the Yorkist van. He fired an artillery barrage at the Lancastrians, chiefly to frighten them, since the guns were too inaccurate to do much harm. Somerset then led a party of men on a sunken path round Gloucester's left flank, hoping to reach a small hill, but he was seen and intercepted. When Edward attacked Margaret's main army a battle ensued on The Gastons. Clive said the nature of the fighting interested him. Even the armoured knights fought mostly on foot, while men at arms had pikes and halberds but little protective clothing. Archers were useful but not a deciding factor. The Lancastrians, fleeing westward from The Gastons into the Bloody Meadow, found themselves trapped against the river where many, including Prince Edward, were killed and others drowned. The victorious King Edward showed little mercy to his defeated enemies, but he did allow the Prince and many nobles to be buried in the abbey. Margaret escaped but was recaptured. Ransomed in 1475, she died impoverished in France aged 52.

At St Luke's on Tuesday 4th February we had a talk by **Ally McConnell** entitled **The Dowty Group: a History of the Company and an Introduction to the Archive**. Ally said the Gloucestershire Heritage Hub received a vast quantity of Dowty Group records after the Group was sold in 1992. She began working on the collection about two years ago and is employed basically to organise it and make it accessible to researchers, much of the cataloguing being done by volunteers. LT C Rolt's book *The Dowty Story* (1961) and its sequel published in 1971 are among the principal sources for the history of the company, but there is also the Dowty Heritage website, set up as part of the 'For the Record' project and containing much information about people, places and companies associated with Dowty. A recent acquisition is Sir George Dowty's unpublished autobiography, presented by his son. The Hub hopes to publish it soon. The collection at the Hub includes huge numbers of patent records, minutes of meetings, annual reports, accounts, site plans, photographs and personnel files, notably apprentice files. Dowty's own private papers however remain with his family. Born in 1901 in Worcester, by 1924 he had settled in Cheltenham, where he was employed at the Sunningend



Works. He took out some patents and tried with little success to interest Gloucestershire Aircraft and other companies in his ideas, which were mainly to do with undercarriage and landing gear designs. Then in 1931 he set up his own company, initially with no premises. He and his twin brother Edward produced a brochure advertising his new aircraft shock absorber strut, won some orders and managed to fill them. A later invention, the internally sprung wheel, attracted orders from the Kawasaki Company of Japan. Dowty asked the Gloster Aircraft Company to manufacture them, but this proved uneconomic so he decided to make them himself. Renting a mews loft at 10 Lansdown Terrace, he succeeded with minimal equipment in producing and shipping the goods within nine weeks. In November 1931 Dowty took on two former employees of the Gloster Aircraft Company. In 1932 there were five employees. A year later Aircraft Components Ltd, as his company was now called, had a turnover of £5,000 and 11 employees. It needed a new factory, and in 1935, with financial backing from Alfred Martyn, Dowty paid £6,500 for Arle Court, a mansion with 80 acres, 8 cottages and sundry outbuildings, which was to remain the Group's headquarters until 1992 (though by then the land around the mansion had been redeveloped for housing). A notebook written by Dowty himself reveals how the war affected the company: how sales and expenditure increased in the late 1930s, spiked in the early 1940s and diminished afterwards. The war allowed Dowty to make a name for himself in aviation and defence. He set up and purchased other companies as years went by, one of the most important being Rotol Airscrews at Staverton, which was jointly owned by Rolls Royce and the Bristol Aeroplane Company. When Dowty took it over in 1959 he gained 4,000 more employees and Rotol Airscrews became Dowty Rotol. Besides various factories in the UK the Group also had sites abroad, notably in Canada from the 1930s. Sir George Dowty (he was knighted in 1956) died of cancer in 1975. Cheltenham owes him much gratitude for the thousands of jobs he provided over many years, and he will not be forgotten here.

**Paul Drinkwater's** subject on Tuesday February 18th was **Dr Walter Hadwen: Hero or Charlatan?** He said Dr Hadwen, who ran a medical practice in Gloucester from 1896 until he died in 1932, was both an influential and a controversial figure. His anti-vaccination stance, vegetarianism and keen support for the anti-vivisection movement made him a hero to some but a thorn in the flesh to many other doctors. He was born in Woolwich in 1854, the second of three sons. (Paul said in researching Hadwen's life he had found many parallels to his own, which he mentioned at intervals as he told the story.) Well educated and bright, he left school at 13 having already passed the preliminary examination for entrance to the Pharmaceutical Society. He was articled to a pharmacist in London, where he was confirmed in the Anglican church but developed an interest in the Plymouth Brethren, a low church evangelical movement originating in Ireland. He became a member of the Brethren in 1870, by which time he was living in Reading and working for a chemist who encouraged him to study for the final pharmacy examinations. He turned vegetarian, having already committed himself to be teetotal because his father drank too much. In 1878 he married Alice Herral, a doctor's daughter, and moved to Highbridge in Somerset where he had bought a pharmacy business. There he prospered, and also started a Christian mission and became well known as a speaker. Turning to the question of vaccination, Paul related Jenner's discovery of the link between smallpox and cowpox in the 1790s and the general adoption of his method in the 19th century when vaccination was made compulsory by a series of Acts from the 1840s onwards. Hadwen and his wife had a daughter, Una, in 1881 followed by two more children. Hearing of cases where people had died after being vaccinated he became firmly opposed to it, even though non-compliance meant being fined, and lectured around the country protesting that parents should have a choice. After 10 years in Highbridge he decided to train as a doctor. He did so at Bristol, afterwards studying surgery and midwifery at other hospitals. He set up a practice in Highbridge before moving to Gloucester in 1896 and opening a surgery in Barton Street. That year the city had a smallpox epidemic, the last major outbreak in this country, aggravated by the fact that through fear and ignorance 85% of the population had not accepted vaccination. Hadwen, sticking to his principles, claimed that poor housing and sanitation were mainly to blame for the epidemic and worked to have improvements made. Well-known and widely respected, he was elected councillor for Barton ward in 1898. He also preached regularly at the Southgate Street mission hall. As an animal lover Hadwen objected to the growing use of animals in medical experiments, and he lectured far and wide in support of the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection. In 1924 he faced a charge of manslaughter over the death of a child he had treated for pneumonia: another doctor claimed she had really had diphtheria, but nothing could be proved and Hadwen was cleared. When he died of a heart attack in December 1932 tributes to him came in from all over the world. His name lives on: there is still a Hadwen Medical Centre in Gloucester.



## FEATURE

## Rock House Revisited

I recently purchased on eBay a seemingly ordinary 1970s postcard ('Imperial Gardens from Eagle Star House, Cheltenham'), prompted by a rare detail that caught my eye immediately. In the right hand bottom corner is a chocolate-coloured building that had rather fascinated me back in the late 1990s: The Rock House, Trafalgar Street. Having written quite extensively about what was



Cheltenham's most eccentric building ('The Follies of Cheltenham' (part I), *CLHS Journal* 14, 1998, p.14-16; 'Rock House, Vittoria Walk, Cheltenham' in *Follies - The International Magazine for Follies, Grottoes & Landscape Buildings*, Spring 1998; and *Cheltenham's Lost Heritage* (Sutton Publishing, 2004, pp. 106-07)) there is no need to repeat here my earlier findings, though the postcard has prompted another 'probe', so to speak, and two things have since emerged:

I stated then that it became 'Rockville' in 1841-42, having been acquired by a Captain W H Dwarris in 1840. The house was first built in about 1820 as 'Waterloo Cottage' and then remodelled by Dwarris. What I did not know back in 1998 is that the house features in the 1841 Census. There it is called 'Rockville', so we now know Dwarris wasted no time in remodelling Waterloo Cottage into a grotto house. In 1841 the dwelling contained six residents, the Dwarris family of four, one female servant and her husband or brother of independent means. Now what is interesting is William Dwarris's occupation, for this might resolve a lingering mystery... In 1841 it was described as 'Navy H-P'; in other words navy half-pay. The 'mystery' being that, according to a

note on the back of an October 1919 postcard, ‘This conservatory is lined with tuffa [*sic*] rock brought back as balast [*sic*] by Capt Hardie [*sic*] on his last voyage.’ In 1998 I explained that this was unlikely, though the fact that Dwarris was a naval man, as we now know, would help to explain the naval ballast association and singular material for Rockville.

What do we know of Dwarris? He was born in 1796 and was 45 in 1841. It could be that he entered the navy at the tender age of 12 in 1808. This was not unusual for those days – British Admiral Sir William Parker joined the British Navy aged eleven. So is Rockville’s Captain Dwarris the following Dwarris? In William R O’Byrne’s *A Naval Biographical Dictionary* of 1849 we read:

‘DWARRIS. (LIEUT., 1817. F-P., 9; H-P., 30.)

*WILLIAM HENRY DWARRIS entered the Navy, 16 Dec. 1808, as Fst.-cl. Vol., on board the LOIRE 38, Capts. Alex. Wilmot Schomberg and Thos. Brown; under the former of whom he assisted, as Midshipman, at the capture, 5 Jan. 1809, of the Hébè French corvette of 20 guns, and, afterwards, of the islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe. We are informed that he was also for some time very actively employed in co-operation with the patriots on the coast of Galicia. In Nov. 1812 this officer joined the SALSETTE 36, Capts. Henry Hope and John Bowen. After an intermediate servitude in the East Indies he returned to England, in 1814, on board the CORNWALLIS 50, Capt. Stephen Thos. Digby. Towards the close of 1815 he became Admiralty Midshipman of the ALCESTE 38, Capt. Murray Maxwell, in which frigate we soon afterwards find him accompanying Lord Amherst in his embassy to China. He there removed, in July, 1816, to the LYRA brig, Capt. Basil Hall. Since his official promotion, which took place 5 Nov. 1817, Lieut. Dwarris, we believe, has been on half-pay.’*

So did *this* Dwarris bring back ballast from his last voyage? Mystery now semi-solved?

Finally, my 1998 articles refer to the house being derelict by the 1970s and therefore, knowing the building was demolished in spring 1978, the postcard can be dated to pre-1978. In fact, if one looks closely it seems there are holes in the roof of The Rock House. The postcard also shows, bottom left, what had once been the Broad Walk, south side of Imperial Square. Between the date of the postcard and 1995 what had been Queen’s Hotel stables had been demolished, and the Broad Walk in front of these remained a strip of derelict land until 1995 when the neo-Regency Montpellier Apartments terrace was built on the south side of Imperial Square.



*Oliver Bradbury*

## SOCIETY NEWS

### New Members

A warm welcome is extended to the following:

Peter and Denise Brookes          Ann Adelman  
Keith and Maureen Jones

### VCH News

As we emerge from the dreary days of winter, there are several green shoots to report. On **Cheltenham** itself, Jan Broadway has been steadily working away at the 20th century coverage of the town, and all drafts are available for comment (and for any improvements you can suggest) at [www.vchglosacademy.org/vol15.html](http://www.vchglosacademy.org/vol15.html)

Between now and the end of the year, Jan plans to produce 20,000 words on the period since 1945. This may not be enough space to do justice to 75 years of history in an expanding town, and we'll have to see how it goes. Obviously we'd prefer to be complete rather than stick rigidly to an arbitrary word limit.

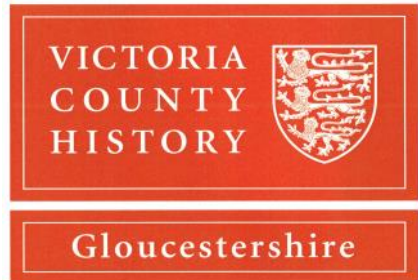
Meanwhile, the Bedlam project – looking at the industrial and trading history of the Kingsditch Lane area, technically in **Swindon village** - is going forward under the leadership of Sally Self and Eileen Allen. I was always intrigued that for very many years, all Weetabix packets were printed at the Vibixa works (near the double roundabout in Kingsditch Lane) – a faint echo of the fact that according to Domesday, Cheltenham was once obliged to supply 3000 biscuits (or loaves) for the king's dogs. Were they neatly packed in cheerful yellow boxes, I wonder?

We're closer to making a start on **Leckhampton**. While Terry Moore-Scott and others over the years have shed much useful light on aspects of the parish's early history, there are still several puzzles to be solved. In short, we've decided that the medieval aspects of the parish need some professional unravelling, and we are in the early stages of talking to a qualified medievalist who might be able to take this on later in the year.



St Mary's , Cheltenham

The **Latin group** continues its steady march through Elizabethan court records, trying to extract the last nuggets (possible additions to the *Cheltenham before the Spa* story). In the 1570s, we've found several examples of people taking out short-term loans, secured on land or property. The repayment arrangements are very precise: X must pay Y 'at the feast of St Andrew the Apostle next in the church porch of Cheltenham, on



the north side of the parish church there, between 10 in the morning and 2 in the afternoon' (proof incidentally that the porch was once on the north side, rather than the south as now). Sometimes payment was to be made on the font itself.

*James Hodsdon*

### 'Use it or lose it' - Local Studies Library at risk!

We have received a particular request from Christopher Rainey at Cheltenham Local Studies Library. He has alerted us to a situation that may develop with local government becoming ever shorter of funds. It's a case of 'use it or we may lose it'. Christopher and his colleagues have to log every enquiry that is made. Unfortunately, popping in to check a fact in a book on the open shelves or to read a newspaper does not count – you need to have a question to ask one of the librarians. So please drop in with a query when you are passing close by.

By the time you read this, the Society's volunteers will have reached the end of the long road of cataloguing the 6,000+ pages which make up the Miles Scrap-books. The spreadsheets now need to be thoroughly checked and readied for digital publication – another long process, that I for one will be very pleased to see completed.

The attendance at the Heritage Hub every Monday continues unabated, with one new member joining us and enjoying the task of cataloguing documents. We have nearly completed the cataloguing of three more accessions – D2010, D1276 and D1292 – another 30 boxes ticked off. We have rapidly moved on into the late 20th and early 21st centuries with collection DC 148 deposited recently by Cheltenham Borough Council. After collections of earlier documents, handling neatly stapled A4 pages and other ephemera comes as a welcome relief – no more dirty fingers! The cataloguing of the Charlton Kings collection for the Russell, Hunt and Prinn families continues, with my ability to read manor court rolls in Latin slowly improving! The boxes are tightly packed and rather dirty. Other individual contributions come from volunteers at the Archives and Local Studies Library. In all we have around 20 volunteers helping VCH Cheltenham's Big Red Book and the Heritage Hub.

*Sally Self*

**Correction:** on p10 of the last issue, in the article on The West Country Breweries Collection, Mike Bevan's name was wrongly given as Mike Bevin.

#### DO WE HAVE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS?

We send out emails on a regular basis to keep members informed about meetings, events and other items of interest. If you DON'T receive these, but would like to, then please email [cheltlocalhistory@btinternet.com](mailto:cheltlocalhistory@btinternet.com) and we will add you to our mailing list. There's no need to contact us if you already receive our emails.

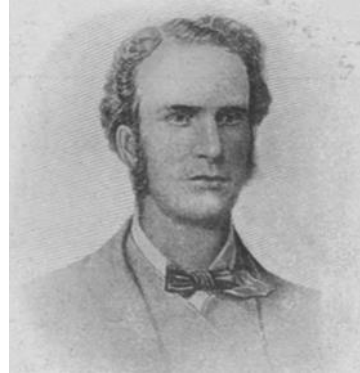
## FEATURE

## ADAM LINDSAY GORDON ATE MY HAMSTER!?<sup>1</sup> NOW FOR THE TRUE STORY

### The accepted biography – fake news?

Biographies of Adam Lindsay Gordon, the national poet of Australia, claim that:

- Lindsay, as he is known in Australia, was born in Fayal, in the Azores, on 19 Oct 1833, son of Adam Durnford Gordon and his wife Harriet.
- Lindsay lived in England 1840-1853. He spent his boyhood in Cheltenham, where his father was a teacher of Hindustani at Cheltenham College. He was enrolled as one of the first pupils at the College in 1841, leaving a year later. In 1848 he joined the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich; he left in 1851 before receiving his commission.
- Lindsay re-entered Cheltenham College in August 1851 but left early in 1852 to attend Worcester Grammar School. On 7 August 1853 Lindsay sailed for Australia.



Adam Lindsay Gordon, 1833-70, from  
*Illustrated Sporting & Dramatic  
News*, 31 December 1910

### The truth uncovered:

I was contacted recently by Australian author Lindsay Smelt, who was working on a new biography of Adam Lindsay Gordon to be published in 2020; he was asking for further background on the poet's time in Cheltenham. On searching the online British Newspaper Archive, expecting to confirm the accepted history of Lindsay's early life, I discovered a birth announcement in the *Bath Chronicle & Weekly Gazette*, 31 Oct 1833 – 'At Charlton Kings, near Cheltenham, the lady of A D Gordon Esq, formerly of the Bengal Army, a son.' The Charlton Kings parish register confirmed that Lindsay was baptised on 3 Dec 1833 (with his date of birth written in the margin)<sup>2</sup>. The 1851 Census supplied further evidence – Lindsay was a cadet at the Woolwich Academy at this time and his place of birth is clearly given as Charlton Kings. It seems that Cheltenham, although aware that the famous poet grew up in the town, has not recognised that he was actually born in Cheltenham.

Further searches of the British Newspaper Archive revealed that the Gordon

<sup>1</sup> Reference to a notorious tabloid headline, (*The Sun*, 13 Mar 1986), about the comedian Freddie Starr; he was a vegetarian.

<sup>2</sup> www.ancestry.co.uk in association with Gloucestershire Archives – Charlton Kings parish records. Roger Beacham has also noted this parish record.

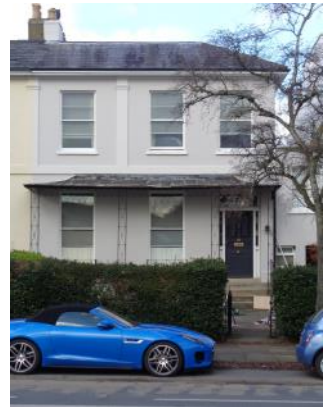


family were far more closely connected with Cheltenham, and from an earlier date, than the biographies have claimed. Lindsay's parents were in Cheltenham as early as 1829, witnesses to the marriage of his uncle, Thomas Rowley Gordon, who had retired here to live.<sup>3</sup> Although the Gordon family did spend time at their estate in the Azores during the 1830s, two of Lindsay's sisters were born in or near Cheltenham – Amy Christian, born July 1830 at Malvern Wells,<sup>4</sup> and Ada Mary, born March 1832 at Cheltenham.<sup>5</sup> The Pittville Spa subscription books<sup>6</sup> reveal that A D Gordon was living at 5 Columbia Place (part of Winchcombe Street) on 30 Sep 1831 when he paid for two persons to take the waters for the season. These books show several addresses before confirming that the family settled at 4 Pittville Villas from 1840-1845, after which they moved to 25 Priory Street (now no.28), making seasonal payments for the rides, drives and walks and for the spa waters.

#### Further fictions revealed:

Many newspapers stated that Adam Lindsay Gordon was born at Fayal in the Azores, including the *Glasgow Herald*, 20 Feb 1884 (quoting Moncure D Conway)<sup>7</sup>, the *Cheltenham Examiner*, 12 Sep 1912, the *Gloucestershire Echo*, 19 October 1933 (quoting the authority Douglas Sladen), and the *Daily Mirror*, 12 Nov 1964. A range of other birthplaces also appear. Author Anthony Trollope, in his *Australia and New Zealand*, published 1873, refers to Adam Lindsay Gordon as a 'young Scotch gentleman', and his birthplace is confirmed to be Scotland in the *Leeds Mercury*, 31 Dec 1884. (To be fair, Lindsay was of Scottish descent, the Gordons of Hallhead and Esselmont.) According to the *Daily Herald* of 24 Jul 1954, Lindsay was born in Bristol. The only correct information found in the press was given by Henri Ratti, Lindsay's nephew who was born in 1854, the year after Lindsay had left for Australia, quoted in the *Norwood News*, 26 Dec 1913, who stated that his uncle was born in Cheltenham. Sadly this fact was overlooked by later biographers.

Several sources had difficulty with Lindsay's name, including the *Cheltenham*



4 Pittville Villas  
(now 60 Prestbury Road)

<sup>3</sup> www.ancestry.co.uk in association with Gloucestershire Archives – St Mary's Cheltenham parish records.

<sup>4</sup> *Worcester Journal*, 29 Jul 1830.

<sup>5</sup> *Bath Chronicle & Weekly Gazette*, 22 Mar 1832.

<sup>6</sup> Gloucestershire Archives D11564/1; digital copy, Cheltenham Local History Society, 2014.

<sup>7</sup> A series of letters from Moncure D Conway, entitled *A Tour Round the World*, were published in the *Glasgow Herald* between Nov 1883 and April 1884.

*Examiner*, 19 Mar 1884, who called him ‘David’ Lindsay Gordon, and the *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 1 Nov 1890, quoting an acknowledged authority on his life, H MacKinnon Walbrook,<sup>8</sup> who referred to him as Adam ‘Lindsey’ Gordon.

Lindsay’s educational and career history also showed a surprising range in the press. According to the *Glasgow Herald*, 5 Sep 1870, printed shortly after Lindsay’s suicide in Australia on 23 June 1870, Adam Lindsay Gordon had been a student ‘both in one of the English Universities, and that of Glasgow; his father was Professor Gordon of a British University’. (Adam Durnford Gordon had been one of the examiners at the College of Calcutta, Fort William.) Lindsay was educated at Merton College Oxford, according to the *Glasgow Herald*, 20 Feb 1884, and the *Daily Mirror*, 12 Nov 1964. Astonishingly *Bell’s Life in London & Sporting Chronicle*, 23 Dec 1871, stated that ‘Lindsey’ Gordon enlisted, and fought in the Crimea, going through the charge of Balaclava’.

Edith Humphris, one of the most respected biographers of Adam Lindsay Gordon, in an appreciation published in the *Illustrated Sporting & Dramatic News*, 31 Dec 1910, stated that Lindsay’s uncle, Thomas Rowley Gordon, lived with the family at Priory Street. This is impossible, as Thomas Rowley Gordon died in 1837 and Lindsay’s family did not move to Priory Street until 1846. Humphris also claimed, in the same article, that Lindsay’s younger sister Ines died before he left Cheltenham in 1853; Ines married Chevalier Ratti in 1854 and it was their son Henri who recalled that Lindsay had been born in Cheltenham.

With online access to so many records, primary sources of information are now readily available to researchers, making it practicable to check ‘accepted’ histories. The Adam Lindsay Gordon Commemorative Committee Inc. of Australia<sup>9</sup>, which aims to ‘collate material on Adam Lindsay Gordon’s life and works and make it available to researchers and admirers alike’, has now been able to accept that the poet was Cheltenham-born. It is to be hoped that Lindsay Smelt’s new biography will be accepted as a definitive work, 150 years after Adam Lindsay Gordon’s death.



25 (now 28) Priory Street

*Jill Waller*

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<sup>8</sup> Walbrook, H MacKinnon, *The Life and Writings of Adam Lindsay Gordon: the Australian Poet*, (1891).

<sup>9</sup> <https://adamlindsaygordon.org/>

## FEATURE

## What's in a name? The location of a George Rowe painting revealed....

Many Local History Society members will know of the artist George Rowe (1796-1864), who lived in Cheltenham from 1832 to 1852, and who is best remembered for his topographical prints of the town and for his *Illustrated Cheltenham Guide* of 1845.

Many Society members will also know that in 1852 Rowe joined the 'gold rush' to Australia, but, failing as a 'digger' he turned once again to his art, producing – and selling – large numbers of watercolours of the goldfields, before returning to England in 1859, and settling in his native Exeter. Once there, he worked on a series of panoramic views of the goldfields, six of which were exhibited, and won him a gold medal, at the 1862 London International Exhibition.

In 1982, Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum held an exhibition of Rowe's works, including reproductions of many of his Australian paintings. Among these was a photo of a painting belonging to one of Rowe's descendants, then living in Florida, which was believed to show 'George Rowe on the Bendigo diggings', Bendigo being the town in the state of Victoria in which Rowe spent most of his Australian years. It shows a bearded man sketching on a ridge overlooking a broad plain, accompanied by a young man firing a gun, a dog, and four aboriginals.

Since 1982, however, two other pieces of evidence have emerged to enable the scene to be more accurately identified. During 1865, the *Illustrated Times* published three articles about the goldfields, each illustrated by a wood engraving based on one of Rowe's paintings, including this very view, which is described as the Mount Alexander goldfields at Castlemaine, 24 miles south of Bendigo. More recently, in 2017, a previously unknown letter written in 1862 by Rowe to his 22 year old son Sanford, who had joined him in Australia and had since moved on to New Zealand, seems to confirm the location as Castlemaine. The letter was donated to The Wilson Art Gallery & Museum by a lady in New Zealand, whose ancestors had been friends with Sanford. As well as a great deal of family news, it contains a remarkable section in which Rowe writes that –

*"I am busy just now in painting on the view of Castlemaine. You will recollect the scene from the [mound?]. I had completed and framed the picture but on Sunday, contemplating it in my quiet moments by the fire side, I saw that I could make it more effective by making a shadow across the ridge on which we were standing to take the sketch. I had painted it light and it interfered with more important parts of the picture. A few days work on it will do and Phippy is going to strengthen the figures in the foreground, which is capital portrait of me sketching, you shooting a cockatoo, and four Aborigines with Chum our dog, our blanket, pots, paper case and provisions" – 'Phippy' being his eldest daughter, Philippa, who was also an artist.*

I am convinced that the letter refers to this very painting – which just goes to show that there is always something new to discover, and to either refute or confirm what we think we know!

*Steven Blake*

## FEATURE

## Remembrance of Things Past...

We recently had an enquiry from Linda Morrison, who lives in Bristol, asking whether anyone remembers two institutions that flourished in Cheltenham when she was a child here: the Chain Library and the Milk Bar.

These are her memories of the Chain Library :



Aunt Audrey in the Chain Library

‘In the 1950s my Aunt, Miss Audrey Lander, managed a small fee-paying Library, the Chain Library, in Winchcombe Street. People paid a few pennies to borrow books. Loyal customers preferred going there to using the central library— I have no idea why— and there was always a steady trickle of customers. Also some children's books were sold, annuals and ‘magic’ painting books where you painted with water. My aunt used to let me date stamp the books when I was 5 or 6

years old. Her mother, my Gran, Edith Lander, also worked there part-time. I can't remember the shop number but if you walked from the High Street it was about 7-8 buildings down on the right. Around the early '60s the Chain Library moved to premises on The Promenade, quite close to the High Street on the right hand side. It had several stone steps which I loved to jump down and I remember royal blue paint on the door and window. Eventually that closed too. A relative of mine remembers that a regional manager used to come to the Library to see Aunt Audrey, which leads me to suppose that there were other branches in other towns. My own online research tells me that from the 1700's onwards there were things called ‘circulating libraries’ which charged a small fee for lending books. This suggests that ‘The Chain Library’ was probably the company name of a small chain of circulating libraries, possibly the last of its ilk in the UK when it finally went out of business.’

Linda is of course right about the one-time prevalence of circulating libraries, where subscribers could usually read newspapers in a comfortable reading room as well as borrow books. Mudie's was the best known name, while Cheltenham had Williams's. To find out more about our local Chain Library we consulted our expert researcher Jill Waller, who answers the queries on the back cover. She soon discovered that there was another branch of this Library in Gloucester, where they were evidently rather particular about their choice of staff.

*Gloucester Citizen*, 8 Nov 1939 –  
**SITUATIONS VACANT (*Gloucester*)**  
 INTELLIGENT Young Girl required  
 for **Chain Library**, King's Square, age  
 16-18 years.

According to the records, the Cheltenham branch of The Chain Library Ltd (it was indeed a company name) opened in the 1930s at 386 High Street, a site which is now under the Regent Arcade, and moved to 7a Winchcombe Street in the early '50s. If it moved to the Promenade around 1960, as Linda remembers, it must have closed soon afterwards, since it does not appear in the 1961 directory.

Linda's other enquiry, about the Milk Bar, was also passed on to Jill, and with equally fruitful results. She found that, like the Chain Library, it first opened in the 1930s, as pictured and described in the *Echo* of December 5th 1936:

'Mrs W S Morrison, wife of the Minister of Agriculture, today opened Cheltenham's Milk Bar in the new block in the Colonnade. Mrs Morrison said at one time it was a great pleasure to go into the country and drink a glass of milk in old fashioned surroundings. Now people had just as much pleasure, but a modern pleasure, in drinking their milk in surroundings of "elegant sophistication which are entirely in keeping with the best traditions of our modern town life." Afterwards Mrs Morrison received the first milk shake from Miss Mary Major, winner of the West Midland Region Dairymaid Charm Contest.'



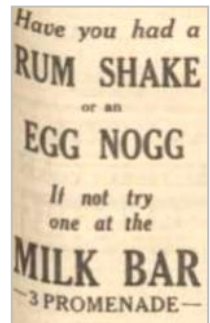
**Gloucestershire Echo, Wed 27 Apr 1938**  
 SITUATIONS VACANT  
 A Tall refined young lady required for **Milk Bar**. Write **The Milk Bar, 3 The Promenade**

Here too it seems that applicants for jobs were expected to be of a certain calibre.

Linda remembers the Milk Bar as being 'more like a bakery with tea and milk shakes' but its main mission was to promote milk as a drink. It stayed open until 11.00 pm, and adverts urged people to 'Meet at the Milk Bar', so it was clearly intended to be a popular venue for people of all ages, not just somewhere to take children for a treat – though it was certainly that too.



The Milk Bar closed in the early 1970s and the Chain Library even longer ago, but Linda would be very interested to hear from anyone who still remembers either of them, especially the Library. So would we! Do send us your reminiscences of these or any other fondly-remembered places in Cheltenham that have since disappeared.





## BOOKS FOR SALE



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

I’m sorry that I have been unable to attend many of the meetings so far this season, but the Bookshop is always open, so please contact me via my details below with any special requests. Thank you to everyone who has given me books they no longer need, they are much appreciated. Special thanks to Aylwin Sampson, who has donated a number of his own publications - books, booklets and pamphlets, all beautifully illustrated in his inimitable style, and listed below.

Gloucestershire Worthies, A Sampson, (£3)  
 A Cheltenham Companion, A Sampson, S Blake, (£3)  
 Cheltenham Outlined, A Sampson, (£3)  
 Town Walks in the Cotswolds, (£3)  
 The Story of the Queen’s Hotel, A Sampson, (£3)  
 They lived here in Cheltenham, (£3)  
 Pamphlets (£1 per set or one set free with books purchased above)  
 Composers of the Three Choirs Counties  
 Holst’s County  
 A Cheltenham Sculpture Trail  
 North and South Cheltenham Town Trail

Having sold all the bundles of 10 CLHS Journals, I still have various single copies at £1 each – let me know what you need to complete your set. 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) I am happy to deliver any books locally, or they may be collected from my home address. Thank you for supporting the CLHS Bookshop.

*Heather Atkinson*

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### *CAN YOU HELP?*

(This is probably a ‘first’ - a request for help sent via our Facebook page.)

**Mary Bulla Sanchez** writes: Many years ago my family lived in the Cheltenham area. We were friends with Greta and Norman Fisher who, I believe, lived on Tobyfield Road. Does/did anyone know them? My parents recently died and as I went through their belongings I found a number of things that Mrs Fisher created (dolls, etc) and have been wondering what happened to her. I’d be happy to share pictures of my finds if anyone who knows the Fishers reads this.

If you think you can help but don’t use Facebook, please contact Alison Pascoe: [eliam77@btinternet.com](mailto:eliam77@btinternet.com) or 01242 519413

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## CLHS DISPLAYS IN THE LOCAL AND FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY

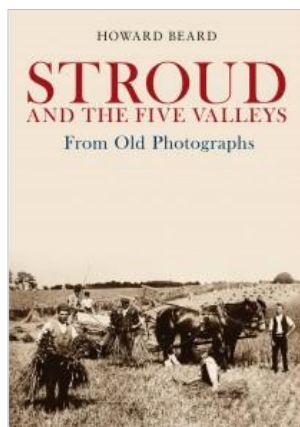
March—April	180 Years of Policing Cheltenham
May— June	The West Country Breweries: the Whitbread Archive
July—August	Teacher Training in Cheltenham

## NEW PUBLICATION

### **Stroud and the Five Valleys from Old Photographs** by Howard Beard

Stroud is a delightful Cotswold market town built on a hillside at the convergence of five valleys. Into its rich history are woven many strands: the story of the wool trade, the arrival of canals and railways, the construction of fine public buildings and the development of streets, parks and shops.

In this book local author and historian Howard Beard sheds much light on the history of the town and surrounding area and provides a visual representation of how it looked over the last hundred years or more. This fully illustrated book will appeal to visitors as well as to residents who have fond memories of a time gone by.



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

## *CAN YOU HELP?*

### **Cheltenham in World War II**

An enquirer who is on the committee of Cheltenham Twinning says that they are seeing a growing interest in activity with our Russian Twin town, Sochi. With this year being the 75th anniversary of the end of WW2, the Sochi people are mounting an exhibition in their city museum about how the war affected Sochi's twin towns and what, if anything, each was able to contribute to the war effort. The exhibit will be a digital media one, and the enquirer would be very interested to hear from anyone with a particular interest in and knowledge of this period who might be able to advise. The exhibit needs to be completed by August, so there is time enough to put something interesting together.

### **History of the George Hotel**

The Grade II listed George Hotel in Bayshill Parade opened around 1958 and was sold to the Lucky Onion in 2018 to undergo restoration and redevelopment. An enquirer would like to hear from anyone who knows anything about its history over the past 60 -70 years or has any interesting memories of it.

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

### **Theodora Mills**

Does any member have any knowledge of or past acquaintance with a Miss Theodora Mills, who lived at Lowmandale (now Vine Court), Leckhampton Road, and who died in 1958? We are particularly interested in her life and work after the women's suffrage vote was won. If you have any information please contact the Journal editor Julie Courtenay [editor.clhs@gmail.com](mailto:editor.clhs@gmail.com)

## NEXT ISSUE

Please forward any material for inclusion in the July 2020 issue by  
**Monday 8th June 2020**  
to the Editor: Kath Boothman, 3 Taylor's End, Cheltenham GL50 2QA  
Tel: 01242 230125 e-mail: [kboothman3@gmail.com](mailto:kboothman3@gmail.com)

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