



Cheltenham Local History Society

Newsletter No. 73

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EDITORIAL

As Sue Rowbotham's book *Commemorative Plaques of Cheltenham* amply demonstrates, Cheltenham is already rich in blue plaques marking the former homes of notable people. On Friday 29th June another was added to their number with the unveiling of a plaque at The Grange, Malvern Road, where the Revd Francis Close once lived. The Right Revd John Went, Bishop of Tewkesbury, Dame Janet Trotter and the Mayor Councillor Colin Hay (who performed the unveiling) each spoke briefly about Close's life and work. He was shown to have been an immensely charismatic figure, influential to the point of domination in the religious and social life of the town and keenly interested in education. Perhaps his greatest legacy to Cheltenham was the founding in 1847 of St Paul's and St Mary's teacher training colleges, highly innovative institutions in their day. After the ceremony tea was served in the Christ Church Parish Centre, where there was more to learn about this redoubtable Victorian in an exhibition set up by Geoff and Elaine North.

Kath Boothman

EVENING LECTURE PROGRAMME 2012-13

Tuesday 18th September:

Mrs Sue Rowbotham—Commemorative Plaques in Cheltenham: Celebrating People, Places and Events

In 2009 Cheltenham Local History Society member Sue Rowbotham published *Commemorative Plaques of Cheltenham*, co-written by the late Peter Smith. She will describe the history of commemorative plaques and then go on to tell the stories behind some of the blue and green plaques affixed by the Civic Society since 1982 and a number of other earlier plaques. These plaques celebrate notable people and events associated with Cheltenham, and throw light on the broader history of the town.

It is hoped that both residents and visitors to Cheltenham will find something to capture their interest and imagination, and will see the town in a fresh light, through the plaques and the stories that they tell.

Tuesday 16th October:

Dr Simon Draper—Anglo-Saxon Gloucestershire

This talk will focus on the landscape, settlement and society of the county from the end of the Roman period to the Norman Conquest, looking into the origins of its towns, villages, churches and parishes. Particular attention will be devoted to place-names and their ability to inform archaeological and historical research.

Tuesday 20th November:

Mr Philip Moss—The Spas of Gloucester

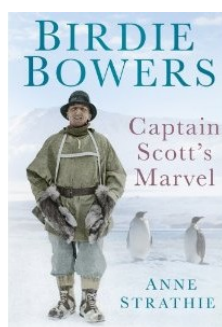
The first of the two spas at Gloucester was developed in 1787 by Thomas Lewis, a grain merchant, in the extensive gardens belonging to his grand Palladian-style house in Westgate Street. Although the enterprise enjoyed considerable patronage for a few years, the spa was closed following the sale of the house to a notable local aristocrat.

The later and much larger spa was established in 1814 by Sir James Jelf, a partner in a local bank, following the discovery of saline springs in the grounds of his Rigney Stile estate just to the south of the city centre.

Tuesday 18th December:

Anne Strathie—Henry ‘Birdie’ Bowers: Another Antarctic Explorer with Cheltenham Connections

Anne Strathie’s new biography, *Birdie Bowers: Captain Scott’s Marvel*, is the story of an intrepid young man who died in 1912 in Antarctica, alongside his friend, Cheltonian Edward Wilson, and Captain Scott. During her research Anne uncovered unexpected and hitherto unknown connections between Bowers and Cheltenham. Bowers was born in Scotland in 1883 but his mother, Emily Webb, was a tailor’s daughter from Cheltenham, who attended educational establishments founded by Francis Close before leaving to teach in Sidmouth and the Far East. Although it is unclear whether Bowers ever visited Cheltenham, the town made a considerable impact on his life and beliefs.



Tuesday 15th January 2013:

Research and Display Evening

Tuesday 19th February 2013:

Dr Frances Wilson-Copp—A History of Architectural Styles based on Cheltenham Buildings

The talk will be on the history of architectural style and will use buildings in Cheltenham and Gloucester as examples. We will see slides of Classical buildings and analyse what identifying features make up the style, and see how this is reflected in buildings such as the Queens Hotel and other buildings on the Promenade. Following this we will look at the characteristics of Gothic, with an eye on Gloucester Cathedral, and will examine the decoration of the Ladies’ College and other similar edifices. Hopefully if there is time we might also deal with Modernism with reference to the Cheltenham and Gloucester Building Society.

Tuesday 19th March 2013:

Mr Alan Pilbeam—Gloucestershire 300 years ago

The first history of the county - Sir Robert Atkyns’ *Ancient and Present State of Glostershire* - was published in 1712. In this illustrated talk we will consider the man, his sources of information and the usefulness of his book to a geographer attempting to reconstruct the appearance of the county’s landscape in the early eighteenth century. This was at a time before Parliamentary Enclosure, the canal age and coal powered industry, and when Cheltenham was little more than a single street. (Mr Pilbeam’s book *Gloucestershire 300 Years Ago* was recently published by the History Press.)

Tuesday 16th April 2013:

Mr Barry Simon—the History of Aviation in Gloucestershire

From 1784 to modern times Gloucestershire has had a deep involvement in aviation. This talk by retired Wing Commander Barry Simon takes us through these years with a Cheltenham-centric point of view. From the first balloon in the county, the first parachute descent, through Gloster Aircraft Company and air raids on Cheltenham to early jets, the talk provides an overview of the area’s considerable involvement with flying.

Tuesday 21st May 2013:

AGM followed by Dr Steven Blake—Cheltenham and the Glorious Cotswolds: The Carlsbad of England

In 1920, the Cheltenham Chamber of Commerce commissioned the Gaumont Company Ltd to make a promotional film of Cheltenham, which was eventually shown in such venues as London cinemas and ocean liners. Having lain forgotten for several decades, the film was ‘rediscovered’ and transferred to modern film stock, probably sometime in the 1960s or 1970s, and has since been transferred, once more, to DVD. The film, which lasts around 40 minutes, gives a marvellous insight into Cheltenham and the Cotswolds during the early 1920s, its title frame noting that the town “stands in the midst of the beautiful hill scenery of the Cotswolds. It is the most Continental of British towns and a curative spa of national importance – it is also one of the greatest educational centres of the Empire”.

MORNING LECTURES 2012-13

Morning lectures take place at St Luke's Hall, St Luke's Place, Cheltenham. A donation of £1.00 from all those 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 Heather Atkinson (01242 232740) beforehand if you wish to reserve a space.

Tuesday 23rd October:

Mr Aylwin Sampson—Città Italiana: Cheltenham?

Cheltenham is frequently described as a Regency town, though a case might be made for Neo-Grecian or even Early Victorian. This talk, however, considers its claim to be Italianate, advancing aspects of the town that support this view.

Like the lecture recently organised by Cheltenham Italian Society (see p.9) this talk is a tribute to our late Chairman Sue Newton. Members of the Italian Society will be invited to attend.

Tuesday 23rd April 2013:

Mr Michael Cole—Prestbury's Lost buildings and their Legacy

When, in 1803, visitors to Cheltenham read Ruff's newly published guide to the town they were recommended to take as their first excursion a carriage ride to the nearby village of Prestbury. In this talk we follow the route taken by nineteenth-century visitors and highlight many of the interesting buildings, great and small, that have since been demolished, and remark on the lives of many of the people who lived in them. Our tour finishes at Prestbury Court, the largest and most impressive residence the village ever had, and the surprising consequences of a legal contract made by its last resident.

FOR YOUR DIARY

Leckhampton Local History Society

www.llhs.org.uk

Meetings are held at St Philip's & St James' Church House, Painswick Road, Cheltenham at 8.00 pm.

Thursday 20th September:

Dr Ray Wilson—Leckhampton Quarries and Tramroads

Wednesday 15th November:

Eric Miller—Liddington Lake and Potteries

Gotherington Local History Society

Meetings are held at Gotherington Village Hall starting at 8.00 pm. Visitors £1.00.

Tuesday 25th September:

Alan Pilbeam—Gloucestershire 300 Years Ago

Sunday 30th September, 2-5 pm:

Book launch: 'A History of Gotherington', now re-issued with a new photographic survey

Tuesday 23rd October:

Professor Chris Dyer—John Heritage, Gloucestershire Woolman and Farmer: a New Light in a Dark Age

Tuesday 27th November:

Steve Goodchild—The Battle of Tewkesbury

Swindon Village Local History Society

Meetings are held at Swindon Village Hall at 7.45 pm. Non-members pay £1.

Wednesday 19th September:

Alan Pilbeam—Frost and Floods

Wednesday 17th October:

Geoff Miller—The Only Way to Cross: What it was like working on the Cunard liner Queen Mary

Wednesday 21st November:

Angela Panrucker—Pub Signs of Gloucestershire

Charlton Kings Local History Society

Meetings take place in the Baptist Church, Church Street, Charlton Kings, starting at 7.30 pm.

Guests welcome, £2.

Tuesday 25th September:

Aylwin Sampson—Cotswold Enigmas

Tuesday 23rd October:

Tim Porter—New Ways of Looking at Old Churches

Tuesday 27th November:

Mrs Sue Rowbotham—Commemorative Plaques of Cheltenham: Celebrating People, Places and Events

Holst Birthplace Museum

www.holstmuseum.org.uk

4 Clarence Road, Cheltenham

Thursday 26th July at 7.30 pm in the Museum:

Talk by Raymond Head—Holst and the Exotic

Tickets available in advance only from the Museum.

Members £8, non-members £10.

Friday 7th September at 7.30 pm in the Museum:

Talk by Michael Short—The Making of the Planets

Tickets available in advance only from the Museum.

Members £8, non-members £10.

Sunday 4th November at 3.00 pm in St Andrew's church:

Concert by Classic Wind

A concert of French and English music to include Holst's Wind Quintet

Tickets £12 from Museum or Tourist Information Centre

Prestbury Local History Society

All meetings are held at the Library in the Burgage, Prestbury, starting at 7.30 pm. Non-members pay £2.50.

Monday 24th September:

John Loosley—The history of Gloucestershire

Allotments with reference to Prestbury

Monday 22nd October:

A visit to Gloucester Archives

Numbers are limited. To reserve a place ring Norman Baker on 01242 583187.

Cheltenham Civic Society

Meetings are held at Parmoor House, Lypiatt Terrace, starting at 7.30 pm. Members £1, visitors £2.50 including refreshments.

Tuesday 11th September:

Simon Pressdee (Institute of Historic Building Conservation)—Conservation and Planning

Tuesday 16th October:

Dr Roger Woodley (UK Jury Member)—Europa Nostra

MORE FOR YOUR DIARY

Exhibitions

Holst Birthplace Museum

To run from 4th July to 1st September:

Gustav Holst: an Englishman Abroad—how foreign cultures influenced the composer

To run from 8th September to 8th December:

The Humorous Side of Holst



HERITAGE OPEN DAYS September 6th to 9th 2012

This year there are 22 venues of historical or architectural interest, some offering guided tours, and 8 guided walks over the 4-day period. In addition there are 15 'Eco Homes' demonstrating sustainable living. Many of these venues are open only for these four days per year. The walks include 'Spas of Cheltenham' by Roger Woodley of the Civic Society and 'Medical History in Cheltenham' by Heather Atkinson and 'Cheltenham's Ornamental Ironwork' by Geoff and Elaine North, all of whom are members of our Society. Pick up a leaflet from the Tourist Information Office from 3rd August or visit the stand in Cavendish House.

The 2012 Deerhurst Lecture

Saturday 8th September at 7.30 pm
in St Mary's Church, Deerhurst

Professor Nicholas Brooks — St Ælfheah (Alphege) from Deerhurst to Martyrdom (1012): some millennial reflections on religious ideals

The lecture will commemorate the millennium of the martyrdom in 1012 of St Alphege, Archbishop of Canterbury, who began his career at Deerhurst.

Tickets at the door, price £5 (students £3). Further details are available at <http://deerhurstfriends.co.uk>

The illustration, from a window in Canterbury cathedral, shows the citizens being slaughtered by the Danes while St Alphege prays for divine aid.



REVIEWS

Our speaker on February 21st was **David Elder** on **The life of Edward Thomas Wilson**, father of Edward Wilson of Antarctic fame. He was, as David said, 'Cheltenham's good doctor', who in his long career as a medical practitioner contributed hugely to the health and wellbeing of the people. Born in Liverpool in 1832, he read medicine at Oxford and in 1859 took up his first job (in a dispensary) in Cheltenham, where he met his wife-to-be, Mary Whishaw. The couple married in 1865 and had 9 children, living first in Montpellier Terrace, then in a 10-bedroom house called Westall in Montpellier Parade. Meanwhile Dr Wilson had opened his own surgery in Cambray and become a popular GP. He took on various good causes, beginning with the urgent need for a reliable clean water supply for the town. This issue had been mired in controversy for years, but was eventually resolved when a scheme to bring water from the Severn was adopted. Dr Wilson became an authority on hygiene: he gave lectures to working men's clubs, collected statistics to demonstrate the link between contaminated water and disease, and founded the Gloucester Sanitary Association before the Public Health Act had been passed. He was instrumental in the creation and running of the Delancey Hospital, which was generously financed by Miss Delancey, a visitor to the town. Run as an isolation hospital, it was very successful in protecting the town from smallpox and preventing the spread of infections such as scarlet fever. In 1867 he founded a nursing home in St James' Square where cases unsuitable for the General Hospital or the Delancey—cancer, TB, paralysis—could be treated. His daughter Nellie was a nurse and he took a keen interest in the welfare of nurses, helping to run the Nursing Association and fund-raising for it. His interests extended well beyond medicine, however. He was Honorary Secretary of Cheltenham's subscription

library and was in favour of public libraries for all. He lobbied for a museum for Cheltenham, with an art gallery and school of art attached, and in 1907 when his efforts were crowned with success he had the honour of declaring it open. For 45 years he was a keen member of the 'Friends in Council', an exclusive literary club to which he gave many lectures, and he helped set up other clubs too, including a Photographic Society in 1855 and a Naturalists' Society in 1861. He was himself a good amateur photographer and even experimented successfully with photomicrography. He worked as a doctor to the age of 73 but remained very active in retirement, becoming interested in archaeology and doing much careful and useful work on long barrows. Hearing of the death of his son Edward Adrian in Antarctica in 1913 was a shattering blow. He lived only another 5 years and was buried at St Peter's, Leckhampton, where his wife Mary joined him two years later. A listener suggested that a blue plaque should be put up in his memory. David said yes, probably at the Delancey. Everyone who heard his extremely interesting talk would surely agree that this remarkable man deserves that honour.

On March 20th **James Hodsdon** took the theme of **Cheltenham Manor Court records, 1692-1803**. He outlined the process that led to the publication of his book on the subject in the Gloucestershire Record Series: over 12 years he had studied about 6000 pages of original documents. The series of manor court records that runs from 1692 to 1803 is particularly interesting because it is almost the only source of information about Cheltenham year-on-year for the 18th century, when the town was developing from a market town into a resort. He explained, with the aid of a map, how the hundred of Cheltenham was divided into parishes; the manor of Cheltenham comprised the whole of Cheltenham parish and half of Charlton Kings parish. Any legal business to do with landholding within the manor was dealt with by the court baron, which could meet at any

time of year. Another court, the court leet, met only twice a year and was concerned with justice within the whole hundred of Cheltenham. A few old court buildings survive, for example at Henley-in-Arden where the court leet



The Guild Hall,
Henley-in-Arden,
Warwickshire

still meets in the Guild Hall. In Cheltenham the courts were held in various buildings near the High Street. James showed the title page of a handbook of 1650 used by the stewards who conducted the courts on behalf of the big landowners. A set procedure was followed: the steward first summoned the bailiff, who summoned the people who were due to appear before the court. There were standard penalties for non-attendance, and various formalities were carried out before the session began. Court baron records are much more plentiful than those of the court leet, partly because it was essential to have an official record made of any property transaction. The business of each court was written up in the steward's office afterwards. The manor of Cheltenham belonged at that time to the Dutton family of Sherborne, whose steward John Prinn was particularly conscientious. James showed examples of his work, all neatly written in Latin.

Court records are very useful for tracing the history of a property; St George's Square, for example, stands on a piece of land once called Rack Close which passed through the hands of the Packer, Hayward, Wells and Williams families in the 18th century before it was sold off bit by bit to speculative builders in the early 19th century. Merrett's map of 1834 shows the land all built up. The histories of certain buildings, such as the Plough Hotel, are well documented through the court records. Often the death of a tenant is mentioned, so that there is scope for correlating these court records with the Cheltenham parish records in due course. Interesting place names turn up—some, such as The Citons and Berehole, can be puzzling, while others are easily misinterpreted: Hester's Way should probably be Haysters' Way, a road used by haymakers. There is a great deal more to be found out from these records. As the Chairman commented at the end, we were left with plenty of ideas for further study.

Our speaker for the meeting at St Luke's on April 10th was **Revd Dr Christina Beardsley**, whose subject was **Unutterable love: the Passionate Life and Preaching of F W Robertson**. Born in 1816, Frederick Robertson was the eldest of seven children of an army captain, and grew up assuming that he too would be a soldier. The family was Scottish, but settled in Cheltenham in 1830. Young Frederick became a committed Christian while he was articled to a solicitor in Bury St Edmunds. He still thought of a military career, but was eventually persuaded by his friends to go into the church, a decision he regretted ever afterwards. Studying at Oxford he encountered the Tractarians (Newman, Keble and others) whom he admired

without sharing their views. Then he became a hard-working curate and not long afterwards got married, not entirely of his own volition; it seems he was manipulated into marriage, but as his wife Ellen had £250 a year it was an advantageous match. Returning to Cheltenham, he became curate of Christ Church. He developed both intellectually and spiritually in the following years and was open to many influences, literary and philosophical. His faith however was shaky and he suffered much uncertainty. He went walking in the Tyrol, feeling that the wild landscape reflected his own inner turmoil. Preaching for a while in Heidelberg, where he acquired more liberal views, seemed to help, but on returning to England he decided that with his change of outlook he could not stay in Cheltenham. He moved to Brighton, where he wrote and preached the sermons on which his reputation is based. In 1848 he met Augusta Wilson Fitzpatrick, later Baroness Castletown, and they had an affair. Towards the end of his short life his religious views were more settled but his marriage was breaking up, no doubt owing to his continuing liaison with Augusta. He was much influenced by her, and also read much feminist literature, yet his attitude to women was always ambivalent. Although he was angry about male exploitation of them, he still felt that women belonged at home. To his regret, although he believed in the unity of opposites, which he thought was the essential nature of Christ, he could never harmonise his own conflicting views. Poetry was an aid to understanding. The phrase 'unutterable love', with which he described his feeling for Augusta, is from Wordsworth's 'Tintern Abbey', but there it refers to love for a sister. This was in fact Robertson's preferred relationship with women, and it was how he saw Augusta particularly towards the end. When he died in 1853 of a brain tumour, aged only 37, there was a surprisingly strong reaction: his work was translated into other languages, memorials were put up and a two-volume 'life and letters' was published. Dickens referred to him as a great speaker. Revd Beardsley agreed with a member of the audience that he had also been a dutiful vicar with a strong sense of social duty, concerned about inequalities and always hoping for a better age to come.

Kath Boothman

After the AGM on April 24th, as the advertised speaker was unable to be present, **Tim Porter** kindly stepped into the breach, taking as his theme **The History and Origins of the Three Choirs Festival**. Tim took us through the background to the festival, starting in the Middle Ages when Gloucester, Worcester and Hereford were all shire towns. Each had a religious foundation—an abbey, a monastery and a cathedral respectively—but they otherwise had little in common. Nevertheless they came together to found what is now the oldest surviving non-competitive music festival in the world. There is much debate as to the year in which the festival was founded. A likely contender is 1662. Prior to the Civil War there had been a great tradition of choral music in churches, but then for sixteen years, until the Restoration, there was no music in church at all. The tradition therefore had to be recreated from scratch. A link developed between Worcester and Gloucester through the family of the composer Thomas Tomkins. Thomas, whose father was a canon at Gloucester cathedral, was appointed organist at Worcester

Cathedral in 1596, where his nephew Giles followed him in 1661. Giles approached the Dean and Chapter at Gloucester in 1661 about the choirs working together. It has been suggested that the first 'festival' took place in the following year. Hereford applied to join in a few years later. The first formal concert for which any evidence survives was in 1709 and the first three-year cycle took place in 1719 at Worcester, 1720 at Hereford and 1721 at Gloucester. Secular singing was not permitted in the cathedrals and therefore other venues had to be found to perform such favourites as Handel's *Alexander's Feast*, which was performed in the Booth Hall in Gloucester in 1739. Even Handel's *Messiah* was considered too secular for a cathedral. In the year of his death, however (1759), the Dean and Chapter of Hereford were prevailed upon to let it be performed in the cathedral there, because the Guildhall in Hereford was in a ruinous state and could not be used. It was such a success that it remained in the programme every year until 1963. The Festival grew from strength to strength until around 1800, and many notable musicians came to perform. It even attracted George III, who attended with Fanny Burney in 1788. The event had grown so much by the end of the eighteenth century that 'fringe' events were also being staged. In the nineteenth century there was a decline, and evangelicals such as Francis Close attacked the Festival as being sacrilegious. However, its fortunes recovered towards the end of the century.

Tim illustrated his talk with extracts from favourite music performed at the early Festivals, such as Purcell's *Te Deum* and Handel's *Dettingen Te Deum*. Tim's fascinating talk whetted our appetite, and many of us will be making our way to Hereford from 21st to 28th July. Is this the 350th Festival? If 1662 was the starting date, it might be!

Sue Brown

Summer Visit

Visit to the Everyman Theatre, 23rd June

At last, I have appeared on the stage of the Everyman theatre. Not to mention in the orchestra pit, the green room, the changing rooms and the workshops. Our fluent and knowledgeable guide, John Whitehead, took us on a comprehensive tour and Millie Krstic-Howe ensured that none of us got lost in the maze of passages and stairs.

First some history. The Everyman is the oldest working auditorium designed by the Victorian theatre architect, Frank Matcham. Known as the Opera House, it was built in 1891 and opened with Lily Langtry in *Lady Clancarty*. In the 1930s it briefly became a cinema but faced too much competition. By the 1950s the theatre was threatened with closure. It was bought by Cheltenham Borough Council and the Cheltenham Theatre Association was formed to save it. The renamed Everyman Theatre reopened in 1960. It closed again between 1982 and 1986 during the building of the Regent Arcade

and in 2011 underwent a £3.2 million refurbishment. The pink paint we remember has been replaced by cream and gold; details have been added to plain areas in the decoration; cherubs have had their missing arms replaced and with the restoration of Matcham's pillars the boxes have come back into use. The sophisticated lighting rigs jar rather with the exuberant rococo plasterwork, but a modern audience is unlikely to tolerate the dimness of the original gas lighting. Nor would they appreciate being among the 1500 people said to have squeezed into the space which now seats 680.

We visited the intimate Studio Theatre which was originally a rehearsal space when the theatre housed a repertory company. The fly tower where the scenery is raised and lowered by an immensely complicated arrangement of weights and winches is definitely not a place for vertigo sufferers. We progressed through the green room, the wardrobe department, the workshop, the scene dock – surely the tallest door in town – and eventually on to the stage and the set of *Oliver*. Some of us then even went under the stage where musicians are kept out of sight during the performance of musicals.

A comprehensive and fascinating tour which will give me a different perspective on the next play I go to see. Many thanks to all concerned with the organisation and particularly to our guide.

Jill Barlow



CLHS members on the set of *Oliver*

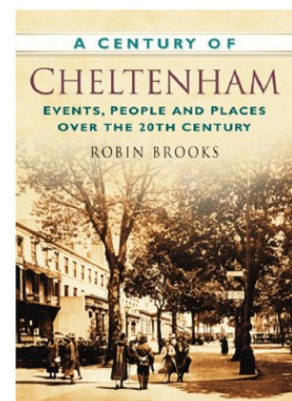
NEW PUBLICATION

A CENTURY OF CHELTENHAM

***Events, People and Places over the 20th Century* by Robin Brooks**

This nostalgic pictorial history offers an insight into the daily lives of Cheltenham's residents throughout a century of unprecedented change, demonstrating the impact of national and international events from the world wars to 'Beatlemania', as witnessed by Cheltonians. The 200 stunning black and white photos, in which many scenes are instantly recognisable, are accompanied by informative captions from a prolific local author.

Robin Brooks is a freelance writer who lives in Cheltenham and writes regularly on local interest and historical subjects for the *Gloucestershire Echo* and the *Gloucester Citizen*.



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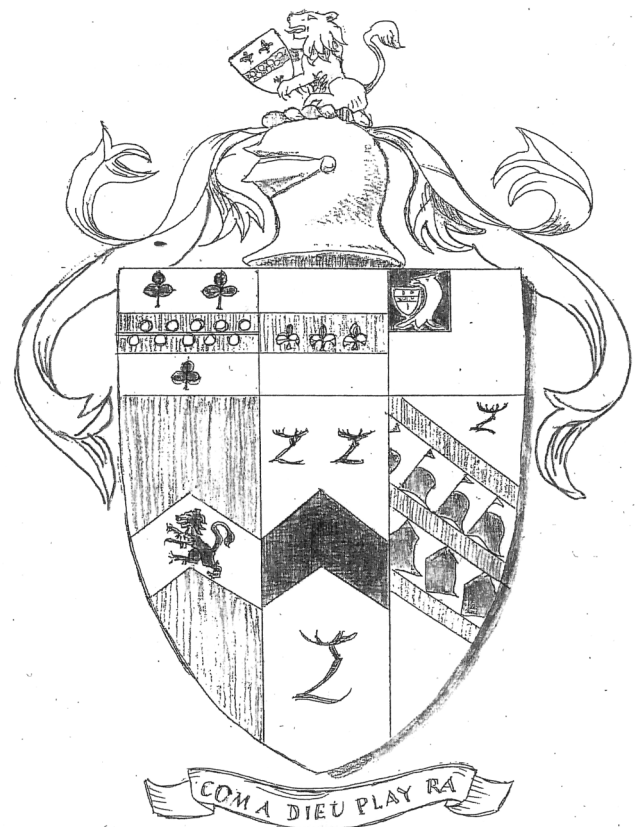
FEATURE

Armorial shield on the chancel
screen of SS Philip & James
Leckhampton

Mrs Disney Thorp 'resident in
the town for 40 years'
was the donor in 1902
*

Identification of the arms
has v. proved elusive
so any ideas will be welcome
*

Aylwin Sampson
tel 237302



A MYSTERY SOLVED

Some time ago Aylwin Sampson asked if anyone could help identify the arms attached to the chancel screen of Ss Philip and James's Church, Leckhampton (see above). As he indicates, the screen was given by Mrs Disney Thorp. It was while doing some research on the stained glass windows at St Peter's, Leckhampton, which include two in memory of Mrs Thorp's husband, Dr Disney Laundry Thorp, that I was reminded of his plea.

Mrs Eleanor Thorp was a generous benefactor to Cheltenham at large as well as to its churches. Quite apart from setting up funds to provide coal and other goods for the sick and needy, she paid for the repair and illumination of the Town Clock in the High Street in 1871 and for electric lighting on the Gordon Lamp in 1899. She also provided the stained glass in the rose window of St Mary's Parish Church in 1876 and four windows in the clerestory of St Matthew's in 1883.

Dr Thorp, of Lyppiatt Lodge, died without issue in December 1888, aged 83. In the 1851 Census he had been listed as 'M.D. not practising' and at that time was living at The Hayes, in Prestbury (now a Grade II listed building). His obituary in the *Examiner* gives a clue to the mystery of the coat of arms. It states that on the death of his last brother in 1877 (the Venerable Thomas Thorp, Archdeacon of Bristol and Rector of Kemerton) he was 'entitled to the ancient peerages of de Burgh and de Braye, had he cared to assert his claim'. Fox-Davies's *Armorial Families* gives a description of the coat of arms of Thorp of Headingley which closely corresponds with the shield on the chancel screen. Dr Thorp's original home was the Old Manor at Headingley, a suburb of Leeds where his father was at one time mayor. Several other genealogical sources also quote the Thorp motto *Com(me) a Dieu Playra*, evident in the above drawing.

The complete arms comprise twelve quarterings, of which the shield on the chancel screen displays the first six: Thorp, Disney, Boothby, Brooke, and Bray (which occupies two quarterings). Burgh of Gainsborough is omitted, though it was included by Fox-Davies in the full list. Above the arms, a demi-lion rests its sinister paw on the Boothby escutcheon also seen in the third quartering.

The screen was executed by R E & C Marshall to a design by Prothero and Phillott, and Martyns supplied the low alabaster wall on which it stands. Some correspondence relating to its installation is held in the Gloucestershire Archives, but no preparatory drawing or explanation of the shield appears to survive, and Aylwin's version is therefore a helpful substitute. He can't have found it easy to copy the details, as the shield is small, ill-lit and positioned high up on the screen.

Eric Miller

For those members who were unable to attend the AGM on 24th April 2012, summarised reports are printed below. Full Minutes of the Meeting will be circulated prior to next year's AGM. If you did not have a copy of the accounts and would like one posted to you, please telephone the Treasurer Sue Brown on 01242 231837 or e-mail suebrown@waitrose.com

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 24TH APRIL 2012

The President of CLHS, the Mayor Councillor Barbara Driver, chaired the Meeting.

Election of Officers and Committee

The following were elected:

Chairman: David Scriven **Treasurer:** Sue Brown **Secretary:** Heather Atkinson

Committee: Jill Barlow, Kath Boothman, Joyce Cummings, Neela Mann, Gwyneth Rattle, Susan Robbins, Sally Self

Chairman's Report (*summarised*) David Scriven highlighted the continuing success of the Society in attracting new members, increasing public awareness of the town's history and making local historical information more accessible. While membership of the Society had fallen slightly to 344, it was encouraging that 23 new members had joined in 2011-12. David paid tribute to several longstanding members who had died during the year, particularly former chairman Sue Newton. A collection made in her memory had raised £225 for her favourite charities. Summer visits this year had focused on properties of historical interest in Cheltenham which, coincidentally, all had an educational connection: Cheltenham Ladies' College, Charlton Park and Francis Close Hall. The lecture programme, covering a wide range of topics from prominent townfolk to lost villages and railways, generated much interest and meetings were well attended. At the Research and Display Evening in January members celebrated the Society's 30th anniversary. Excellent displays reflected members' interests and research, commemorated the centenary of Scott's ill-fated expedition to the South Pole and celebrated the Society's members and memorable events over the last 30 years. The raffle raised £150 for the Mayor's charities. The Society had been very active promoting local history. Impressive displays covering various aspects of Cheltenham's history had been mounted at the Local Studies Library throughout the year. A stall at the Montpellier Fiesta in July gave the Society valuable public exposure and raised funds from the sale of its publications and donated books. For the Heritage Open Days in September a display was mounted in Regent Arcade, illustrating the history of the site. In October the Society took part in the Gloucestershire Local History Afternoon with a display illustrating the impact of WWII on Cheltenham; and in March it had a stand in an exhibition on Cheltenham's South Town at Bethesda Hall. Of several projects undertaken by the Society, the main achievement this year had been the publication of a digital reproduction of the 1855-7 Old Town Survey map on CD. David thanked the Committee and all those members who gave their time freely and worked hard to make the Society successful. In particular he thanked Geoff and Elaine North for their excellent displays and their active promotion of the Society. Special thanks were given to Judy Smith for a further generous donation to fund the Peter Smith Award in memory of her late husband.

Presentation of the Peter Smith Award : This year's award was presented to Brian White in recognition of his 30 years of service to the Society in different roles, latterly as 'meeter and greeter' at meetings and other events. (See photo on page 9.)

Treasurer's Report (*summarised*)

(*Copies of the Accounts were circulated before the meeting.*) Sue Brown said that the Society had had another successful year, and that its finances are sound. The Independent Examiner, Alison Milford, has examined the accounts and written her report. The excess of income over expenditure is £343.62 in the general fund and £475 in the Peter Smith Award fund. Sue Brown went through each heading of the accounts. Subscriptions were up on last year, but unfortunately the Gift Aid claim was not submitted within the year, but will be included in next year's figures. Judy Smith has generously given a further £500 towards the Peter Smith Award. General donations have been lower, as have sales of the Journal compared to last year's successful effort in clearing old stock by selling back editions at reduced rates. The net cost of the Journal was £1,057.10. The Society publication this year, the 1855-7 Cheltenham Old Town Survey Map on CD is selling well. The Society applied for an Arts Council Grant towards this, and also the ongoing Parish Records project. Costs have also been incurred for the Town and Tithing Map, due for publication later this year, and an Arts Council Grant has been applied for towards the cost of this. Donations from sales have amounted to £532.70. This results from the sale of books donated, including legacies of books such as those from the late Mary Paget, percentage sales from authors selling their own books at meetings, card producers, a percentage of the books sold by Geoff and Elaine North, and recently all proceeds from the sale of Neil Parrack's book on the New Club which he kindly donated to the Society. The cost of the Newsletter has increased, and the cost of postage is due to rise considerably from 1st May. The Treasurer urged members to deliver as many Newsletters and Journals as they could to help the Society. Fortunately, Geoff North is able to source photocopying and stationery at a reasonable rate, which keeps costs down. Other outgoings include the necessary BALH Insurance, subscriptions to the Arts Council and the Friends of Gloucestershire Archives, and costs associated with the displays. A donation was made to the Gloucestershire County History Trust. The bank balances at 31 March 2012 were £7,207.54 of which £6,557.54 is in the unrestricted fund. Finally, Sue thanked the other members of the Committee for their support.

Address by the Mayor, Councillor Barbara Driver (*summarised*)

The Mayor said that local history was a very important topic, and should be taught more at school. Children she had shown around the Council Chamber were very interested in her Chain of Office and the history of local democracy. CLHS made it fun to learn about the history of Cheltenham, and she thanked the Society, saying that she already has her ticket for the St Andrew's event. The cheque presented by CLHS for her charities - St Vincent's and St George's, Star College, and YMCA, will be used towards refurbishing the accommodation for young people.

SOCIETY NEWS

New Members

A warm welcome is extended to the following:

<i>Ann Harding</i>	<i>Mr and Mrs R Dean</i>
<i>Cyril Bleasdale</i>	<i>Catherine Bradbury</i>
<i>Jill Needham</i>	<i>Colin Miles</i>
<i>Robert Bateman</i>	<i>Penny Hall</i>
<i>Mrs Penelope Wood</i>	

Arts Council Grant for CLHS

We were fortunate again this year to be included among the local societies to receive a grant from the Cheltenham Arts Council. A cheque for £300, which will go towards the cost of printing and publishing an annotated version of the Cheltenham Town and Tithing Map of 1800 in book form, was presented to David Scriven on behalf of the Society at the Arts Council AGM on 13th June.



Judy Smith, the Mayor Councillor Barbara Driver and Brian White, this year's winner of the Peter Smith Award, at the AGM on April 24th



Welcome to our new President the Worshipful the Mayor of Cheltenham, Councillor Colin Hay. On Wednesday 16th May Vic Cole represented the Society at the inauguration of the new Mayor in the Town Hall.

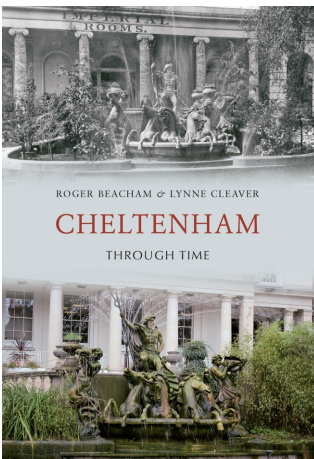
The Susan Newton Memorial Lecture

As most of us know, our late Chairman Sue Newton was for many years very much involved with the Cheltenham Italian Society as well as with CLHS. On Tuesday 19th June the Italian Society organised an illustrated lecture in her memory at St Andrew's church entitled 'Cheltenham's Public Gardens: past, present and future. Breathing life into the Italian Garden'.

The Italian Society Chairman Luana Carrer introduced the three speakers. Chris Ryder, Chairman of Cheltenham in Bloom, talked about the history of the organisation and the local sponsorship and support it attracts, and said that it is now working with Cheltenham Community Projects to raise money for the Italian Garden. Wayne Sedgwick, Senior Ranger, outlined the history of Sandford Park, where the Italian Garden is located, and Malcolm Wallis, Community Parks Officer, explained the origins of the Italian Garden, the design created for it by Edward White in the 1920s and the plans to restore it with a variety of suitable low-maintenance plants. The lecture was well attended and was enjoyed by members of both societies.

Kath Boothman

NEW PUBLICATIONS



CHELTHENHAM THROUGH TIME by Roger Beacham and Lynne Cleaver

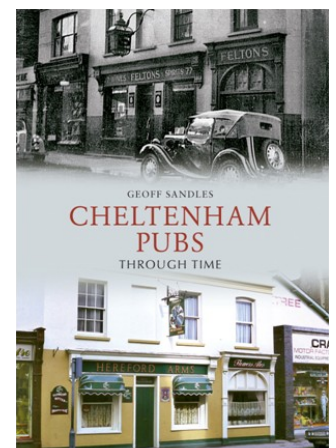
This is a wonderful collection of old and new photographs of Cheltenham. The older images are each printed alongside a contemporary full colour photograph of the same scene, so that the contrasting illustrations show how the area has changed and developed during the last 100 years. The photographs illustrate shops, schools, garages, churches, houses and street scenes, each photograph is captioned and the book has an introduction which gives a brief overview of the history of the area.

Roger Beacham is the author of two other books on Cheltenham and a member of CLHS.
ISBN: 9781445602950

CHELTHENHAM PUBS THROUGH TIME by Geoff Sandles

Lavishly illustrated with old photographs, postcards and promotional advertisements, this book highlights and records the events and changes that have occurred within Cheltenham's brewing industry. It also offers the reader a valuable insight into not only the industry itself but also into the lives of the people who worked within it. Photos of well known breweries, of many smaller breweries, of pubs, the workers, the owners and transport all feature here, as do images of related labels, beer-mats and advertising signs. Geoff Sandles has compiled an absorbing record of a bygone age that is sure to delight anyone with an interest in brewing and its history.

ISBN: 9781445603995



Both books are published in paperback by Amberley Publishing at £14.99

FEATURE

Mrs Catherine Hayne concludes her reminiscences of life as an evacuee in wartime Cheltenham

A CHELTENHAM CHILDHOOD IN WORLD WAR II

As so much time, in all seasons, is spent out of doors, the Parks loom large. Most frequently visited is the nearby Montpellier Gardens. Along Montpellier Drive we go, by the Ellenborough Hotel, crossing by the house-where-there-was-a-tragedy, and we enter the Park near the Garage. Here I skip, turn handstands, play tig. Mother sits with her closest friend, Mrs Notariello, while I play with her daughters Antonietta and Felicity, younger and cleverer than me. The mothers, while they darn socks, discuss rationing, philosophy and religion, and topics not for children's ears - like the one about another mother who has an illegitimate baby after the Americans arrive..... One day the Park is filled with people and I am standing at the back of the crowd. On a raised dais, a distant figure in a toque hat is Queen Mary addressing the people of Cheltenham. Another time it is 1945 and dark. I am dancing near the bandstand in a ring holding hands with strangers; there is a lot of laughter and singing. It is VJ night.



Catherine in the park with her mother and friends

Pittville Park is a longer trek through the town. The Pump Room is derelict and closed, but there is the lake, and new pathways to explore. I leave my doll Topsy on a bench, and when we go back she has gone forever. On Saturdays I try to persuade my father to take me to Hatherley Park. This is a walk through redbrick streets with no trees, passing Naunton school. On one journey there my father is shouted at by another of Cheltenham's eccentrics. She thinks he is the Vicar of St Luke's, and is very rude about the sermon. She does not like my doll's pram either. Hatherley is bleak, and apart from a little rockery area, not pretty. But, more importantly, there are good swings and slides. Sandford Park has friendly hide-and-seek bushes, twisty paths, a fountain statue and, best of all, the Lido for summer swimming.

My first film is 'Snow White' at the big Regal Cinema, just behind the Neptune fountain. The queen is too frightening and I am taken out. But I love 'The Wizard of Oz', 'Bambi', 'National Velvet', 'State Fair', and something with Danny Kaye. This last we see at the Daffodil. The Theatre Royal is in Regent Street, where I am taken to see ballets. I like best the 'Kracow Wedding'. I am told the dancers are famous: Alicia Markova and John Gilpin.

We do not often go to church, though sometimes to Morning Service in the chapel at the boys' College where you can look across to see your friends in facing pews. I also remember going to St. Mary's in the town, because there was yet another interesting mad woman who shouted out in the middle of Matins.

In the early days of the war we have a blue Standard car and collect my brother from St James' Station. There is a parcel on the back seat for me. Father says it is a cabbage. In fact it is a wooden doll's bed John has made at school. Before petrol is rationed we drive to Tewkesbury, and to Gloucester. The bus takes us up Cleeve Hill, and we walk to Winchcombe. The bus to Leckhampton stops at Daisy Bank where there are dog roses on the hillside and wild scabious higher up. Then we reach the Devil's Chimney; this is quite a climb, but it is even more exciting in snow. One day we get the train from St. James' to Laverton Halt, walk across fields and see the school house where my father lived in the 1890s.

Most of my contemporaries are friends made at the Ladies' College. Some are staying with relations or, like me, have been displaced from their homes. The ones I see most are the Notariellos from Bournemouth who live in Imperial Square. The Signor is an opera singer, and pupils come to his house sometimes when I am playing with his daughters. Then, as he is Italian, he is interned, and disappears from our lives. Going out to tea is a regular event. Justine Lascelles is living with her grandmother in Eldorado Road, and I visit often, until one afternoon we are discovered dancing naked under a weeping willow tree in the garden..... In a little flat off Suffolk Square we have tea with Suzy Geiershofer, whose mother knits impressively fast, the German way. Mothers vie with each other to provide an ample tea. I take my green ration book for granted, but know that food parcel arrivals are exciting.

From 1944 we are living on the top floor of Herbertsville, 83 Bath Road. It and its conjoined house were built for two 19th-century brothers, one of whom was called Herbert. We are still in furnished rooms, but have two bedrooms, a miniscule kitchen and a bathroom a flight down shared with the Youdens in their first floor flat. The bath has a huge geyser and the door has a brilliant red St George and Dragon stained-glass window. On the ground floor live the owners, the Misses Jewell, who many years before ran Herbertsville as a school. Whenever we enter the hall, one or other lady peeps out from their room, and I peep in and see the bed is so high it has steps to reach it. Only very occasionally can I go into their garden - really a field between the house and two newer semi-detached ones. When I have chicken pox, I am allowed to play in this meadow of ladies' smocks and grasses. Once in June the grass is cut, and I run around in the loose hay with the Youden children Pamela and Roger.

The war is over. I still change my library books in Clarence Street, go on bike rides and to Cavendish House, to Brunners and to parties, and I still play Ludo and listen to Children's Hour. On Christmas Day 1946 I list my presents in my diary: they are all books. Then we go to stay with the Notariellos, now back in their big house in Bournemouth.

In February 1947 it snows and I walk on the ice on Pittville Lake. There is no heating at school and we all do exercises to keep warm. The diary entry for 6th March is 'very deep snow'. And this month my parents are buying a house (with garden) in Hall Green, Birmingham.

Now it is 1st April. My diary reads: 'tea at Cadena and went home to Birmingham'.



BOOKS FOR SALE



As members will know, good quality local history books priced between £2 and £10 are regularly offered for sale at meetings. In addition the Society has a quantity of more valuable and/or less easily obtainable books, surplus to the needs of the library, and the Committee has decided that these too should be offered for sale to members. They include the following:

A History of Britain 3000BC-AD1603 by Simon Schama, as new—£10
 Cheltenham Music Festival at 65 by Graham Lockwood—£9 (several copies)
 A Grand City: Bristol in the 18th and 19th Centuries, ed. M J Crossley Evans—£9
 BGAS Essays in Honour of David Smith (2007)—£5 (2 copies)
 An Historical Gazetteer of Cheltenham by James Hodsdon—£30

There are various volumes of the **BGAS Record Series**, now for sale at **only £5 each**, as follows:

(Vol 6) The Military Survey of Gloucestershire, 1522
 (Vol 7) Tewkesbury Churchwardens' Accounts 1563-1624 (2 copies)
 (Vol 11) Original Acta of St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester c 1122-1263
 (Vol 13) The Bishop Benson's Survey of the Diocese of Gloucester 1735-1750
 (Vol 15) A Calendar of the Registers of the Priory of Llanthony by Gloucester 1457-1466, 1501-1525
 (Vol 19) Notes on the Diocese of Gloucester by Chancellor Richard Parsons c1700
 (Vol 20) Abstract of Feet of Fines relating to Gloucestershire 1300-1359
 Also Vols 17 & 18 A Catalogue of the Medieval Muniments at Berkeley Castle - 2 volume set £8

The Society is always grateful for donations of suitable books in either the lower or the higher price range. If you have anything to donate, or if you are interested in buying any of the books listed above, please contact Heather Atkinson on 01242 230740 or e-mail heatherbell71@hotmail.com

LOCAL NEWS

South Cheltenham Local History Exhibition held 16th & 17th March at Bethesda Church Hall, Great Norwood Street

I was more than happy when asked to provide a display for this event, arranged by the St Philip and St James Area Residents' Association. Sorting out photographs for the display brought back many happy memories of my childhood and teenage years. My parents had a shop in the Bath Road until the 1960s and I attended nearby Naunton Park infant and junior schools. On entering the church hall, I was reminded of numerous Friday nights spent as a teenager at the youth club, where we fought to put our latest 45s on the record player and played endless games of table tennis. The display was much appreciated, I was told, and enabled older members of the local community to also share their memories. Thanks to those members of CLHS who manned a sales table and were on hand to help and answer queries.

Elaine North [née Worsfold]

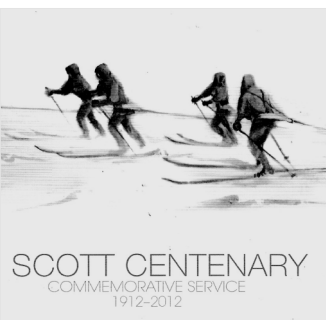


Neela Mann and Heather Atkinson at the Bethesda display

Scott Centenary Commemoration Service at St Paul's Cathedral, Thursday 29th March

Geoff and I were very pleased to receive invitations to the service commemorating the centenary of the British Antarctic (Terra Nova) Expedition of 1910-13 during which Cheltenham's own Antarctic hero, Dr Edward Adrian Wilson, perished along with Captain Scott and his companions. After HRH The Princess Royal had taken her place under the Dome of a packed St Paul's we sang the first hymn *Onward Christian Soldiers*, which was Scott's favourite hymn. In many ways this service mirrored the memorial service to the polar heroes held at St Paul's and reported in *The Sphere* on February 22nd, 1913. We heard extracts from Scott's diary and a reading from *Ulysses* (Tennyson) by his grandson, Falcon Scott. Dr David Wilson, a great-nephew of Edward Wilson and a familiar face in Cheltenham, took part in a litany of praise and prayer with descendants of Lieutenant Evans and Frank Debenham. A retiring collection was taken for various charities, including the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust, which we have since heard amounted to nearly £15,000. We revisited the Cathedral afterwards to look at the Memorial in the south-east barrel arch to the five men who died on that fateful expedition. At 3.30 pm we stood with crowds by Scott's statue in Waterloo Place for a Ceremony of Beating Retreat and Sunset performed by the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Portsmouth (Royal Band), an emotional and fitting end to an unforgettable day.

Elaine & Geoff North



CAN YOU HELP?

Pricham Cottage and the Adams family

An enquirer living in Australia is trying to establish the whereabouts of a house called Pricham Cottage, somewhere between Cheltenham and Cirencester, which he says belonged to his late great-uncle Wilfred Carne Adams from the 1920s until at least the 1960s, when the enquirer remembers visiting the house. Wilfred Adams married Edith Dorothy Bunbury (known as 'Dorie') in 1927 in British North Borneo, and they returned to England in 1929 giving their intended address as 'Pricham Cottage, near Cheltenham'. When Dorie died in 1977 she was living at White's Barn, Chedworth. Her father Charles Reeves Bunbury, who lived at Battledown House, died in Cheltenham in 1947. Wilfred died sometime in the 1980s. The enquirer would be very grateful for any information about either Pricham Cottage or the Adams family.

Norman Pett, 1891-1960

An enquirer seeks information on the cartoonist Norman Pett, who drew the 'Jane' cartoons in the Daily Mirror, and also on his model Christabel Leighton-Porter. 'Pathe' newsclips on the internet show Norman drawing Christabel in the house he rented at Toddington during the second world war. He also worked at Moseley College, Birmingham, as an art teacher.

If you can help with either of the above queries please contact Joyce Cummings on 01242 527299 or e-mail joyce@cyberwebospace.net

CLHS DISPLAYS IN LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARY

July 24th - August 25th: **CHELTENHAM'S
OLYMPIC CONNECTIONS**

September 4th - 22nd: **THE NAUNTON PARK &
BATH ROAD AREAS OF CHELTENHAM**

October 2nd - 27th: **SHOPPING IN CHELTENHAM—
Retailers and Traders, Past and Present**

November 6th - 24th: **CHELTENHAM AND THE
NAPOLEONIC WARS**

December 4th – January 5th 2013: **'ON A SEASONAL
THEME'**

Note: Gloucestershire Family History Society will be in attendance in Cheltenham Local Studies Library on Wednesdays 10th October and 7th November.

Compensation!

Those members who ordered the Old Town Survey maps on CD and had the inconvenience of collecting them, as insufficient postage had been paid, will be interested to know that following our complaint to the Post Office a letter of apology and a cheque for £20 has been received.

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Correction

It was stated on the back of the March Newsletter that the recently discovered Welch family plaque was at one time in St Mary's church. Joyce Cummings wishes it to be known that she was not responsible for this statement, which is incorrect. There are several other Welch family memorials in St Mary's, but the original location of this particular plaque is still unknown.

NEXT ISSUE

Please forward items for inclusion in the
NOVEMBER 2012 Newsletter by

Monday 8th October 2012

to the Editor: Kath Boothman
35 The Park
Cheltenham
GL50 2SD

Tel: 01242 230125
E-mail: kbooth@dircon.co.uk