



Cheltenham Local History Society

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EDITORIAL

There is nothing historic about the picture above—it's just a golden autumn evening (the last before the clocks went back) in Montpellier Gardens, where we all enjoyed the Fiesta Day back in July. There's a group of teenagers out amusing themselves, much as their ancestors might have done a hundred years ago or more. The use of public parks is one aspect of urban life that doesn't change so very much over time. Back in the 19th century and up to World War I a local archery club used to meet in Montpellier Gardens; now boys practice stunts on skateboards. Different activities, yet with certain things in common—the exercise of a skill, the enjoyment of sunshine and fresh air, the company of friends. Cheltenham's many beautiful parks and gardens, always among the chief attractions of the town, are to some extent a legacy of the 'spa' era, but we use and appreciate them just as much today.

Kath Boothman

LECTURE PROGRAMME

December 2010 — April 2011

Meetings will be held in the Council Chamber, Municipal Offices, Promenade, at 7.30 pm on the third Tuesday of each month with a later Tuesday for the AGM in April. Visitors are most welcome to attend at a charge of £1.00 per person per meeting. The Members' Evening in January is open to all without charge.

Tuesday 21st December 2010:

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

In 2009 CLHS member Sue Rowbotham published *Commemorative Plaques of Cheltenham*, co-written by herself and 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 the town, and throw light on Cheltenham's broader history. It is hoped that both residents and visitors 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 18th January 2011:

Research and Display Evening

The annual social evening gives members a chance to meet informally and to exhibit the results of their research. Sue Newton would like to hear as soon as possible from any member who is willing to provide a display large or small. If you wish to contribute a display of your own research findings or source materials, please contact her on 01242 243049 or e-mail spnewton@talktalk.net

Tuesday 15th February 2011:

Mr Alec Hamilton - Samuel Daukes and Prince Albert : a Cheltenham Architect in Royal Trouble

Samuel Whitfield Daukes (1811-1880) started humbly as an architect in Gloucester, loomed large in Cheltenham, and finally over-reached himself in London. He ought to be a bit more famous than he is – after all, he built Lypiatt Terrace, Francis Close Hall, the Royal Agricultural College at Cirencester, and fashionable churches in Hampstead and London's West End. But he had a nose for trouble. He built one church for Francis Close – and another for Close's opponents. He fell out with the mighty Dean over drains. He built England's biggest asylum – but trouble with the foundations led to a court case. He upset the Freemasons, and insulted Prince Albert. Nonetheless, his buildings have energy, wit and appeal. Alec Hamilton, whose article on Daukes in CLHS Journal 25 won the Bryan Jerrard Local History Award in 2009, brings this intriguing scapegrace character to life.

Tuesday 15th March 2011:

Mr John Heathcott—Ancient Woodlands of Gloucestershire

The talk will give some background on the Woodland Trust and focus on Ancient Woodland. It will discuss the history

of woodland in this country, how you can identify it as ancient and its importance as a wildlife habitat. The locations of Ancient Woodland sites in Gloucestershire and their particular attributes will be identified. If there is time, the talk will also discuss veteran trees and how you can help in the nationwide effort to record them.

Tuesday 26th April 2011:

AGM followed by Mr Eric Miller — Serendipity

Over the years, Eric has been struck by the way in which his research has been helped by serendipity – happy accidental finds that provide leads and make connections, as if an 'unseen hand' had been at work. He will illustrate his point with examples resulting from chance meetings, casual remarks and things glimpsed out of the corner of the eye. Though centred on Cheltenham, the topics span the globe.

Tuesday 12th April 2011 at 10.00am for 10.30 am:

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

Dr Steven Blake – In the Footsteps of George Rowe: Travels in the Australian Goldfields 1852-9 and 2010

In May 2010 Steven Blake travelled to Australia to follow in the footsteps of George Rowe, the Cheltenham topographical artist and printmaker, who spent several years there in the 1850s. (See Steven's article on p8.) While he was there he tracked down Rowe's original watercolours of Australian scenes, most of which are now in libraries and galleries, and visited the places in which Rowe lived and worked. This talk will consider Rowe's years in Australia, the work he produced during that period and how the country has changed since he was there.

*** Vacancy for Programme Secretary ***

We are urgently looking for someone to handle bookings for speakers. The Programme Secretary would not have to find the speakers although suggestions would be welcome. It would be best if he or she has email. The Programme Secretary does not have to be a member of the Committee but could be co-opted onto it as necessary. If you could help, please contact the Chairman/Programme Secretary Sue Newton or any Committee member.

FOR YOUR DIARY

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 23rd November:

Mr Greene, Gloucester Cine and Video Club — 'Archived Gloucestershire'

Tuesday 25th January 2011:

Mr Tim Porter—The Medieval Cotswolds at Work

Tuesday 22nd March 2011:

Mr Barry Simon—St Kenelm and St Kenelm Way

MORE FOR YOUR DIARY

Gotherington Local History Society

Meetings are held at Gotherington Village Hall at 8 pm.
Visitors £1.00.

Wednesday 1st December:

Dr Steven Blake—Discovering the Dightons

Tuesday 25th January 2011:

Arthur Price—From Quarry to God—Stones of Gloucester Cathedral

Tuesday 22nd February 2011:

Neil Holbrook—Where'er you walk

Tuesday 22nd March 2011:

Ian Mackintosh—400 years of Stroudwater Textiles

Tuesday 26th April 2011:

Christine Seal—Occupations in the Village Communities Round Bredon Hill 1851-1901

Historical Association, Cheltenham and Gloucester Branch

All meetings start at 7.30 pm unless otherwise stated. Cheltenham meetings are at the Up Hatherley Library, Caer-navon Road, Gloucester meetings at The Friends' Meeting House, Greyfriars (off Southgate Street).

Non-members pay £3 per meeting, students £1.

Monday 13th December at 7.00 pm in Gloucester:

Mr Gwilym Davies—Cotswold Carols, Wassails, and other Christmas Traditions

Monday 17th January 2011 in Cheltenham:

Professor Neil Wynn, University of Gloucestershire—Martin Luther King: a Reassessment

Monday 14th February 2011 in Gloucester:

Dr Charles More, lately of University of Gloucestershire—France 1940: the Road to Dunkirk

Monday 7th March 2011 in Cheltenham:

Professor Tom James, University of Winchester—The Black Death

Monday 28th March 2011 in Gloucester:

Dr T Heathcote—Afghanistan and the Great Game

Leckhampton Local History Society

www.llhs.org.uk

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

Thursday 18th November:

Dr Christine Seal—Domestic Servants

Thursday 16th December:

John Peters—The Tetbury Boyhood of F. Peters (1890-1940)

Thursday 20th January 2011:

Eileen Fry—War Poets (with local emphasis)

Thursday 17th March 2011:

Phil Moss—Priories and Friaries of Gloucester

Friends of All Saints' Church

Thursday 9th December at 2.30pm in the church, All Saints' Road, Cheltenham:

David Gardiner—William Tyndale: English Scripture's Gloucestershire Provenance

Guests welcome, £3 including refreshments.

Friends of Gloucestershire Archives

All meetings are held at Gloucestershire Archives, Alvin Street, Gloucester

Thursday 25th November at 7.30 pm:

Averil Kear—The Power of the Chapel

Saturday 19th February 2011, 2.30-6.00 pm:

The Happiest Days of Your Life? Social History Through Educational Records

A mini-conference jointly sponsored by the Archives and FOGA. Details to follow. Members £5, non-members £8.

Thursday 24th March at 7.30 pm:

David Aldred—Winchcombe and its lost Abbey—Where was it?

Talk complemented by display of records including rarely-seen archive material from 811-1368.

Visitors welcome, £2.

2010 Paterson Memorial Lecture

Tuesday 14th December 2010 at 7.30 pm

At the Parabola Arts Centre, Bayshill Rd, Cheltenham
Admission on the door £5 to include a glass of wine

Tim Foster

Architect of the award-winning Parabola Arts Centre and the Everyman restoration

A New Building in a Historic Setting

The Development of the Design for the Parabola Arts Centre

The new Parabola Arts Centre for The Cheltenham Ladies' College, opened in 2009, was nearly ten years in the making. Its architect, Tim Foster, will describe the evolution of the project, including designs for several alternative sites, the challenges of adding a modern extension to an existing Grade II* listed house and the ideas underlying the design of this new state of the art theatre.



In 2010 the Parabola Arts Centre was presented with a Cheltenham Civic Award. The project has also been entered for the 2010 National Civic Trust Awards.

Tim Foster is the senior partner in Foster Wilson Architects. Since establishing his own practice in 1979, he has been responsible for a number of major theatre projects. He is a trustee of The Theatres Trust, which has responsibility for the protection of theatre buildings in the UK. Amongst his current projects is the restoration of Cheltenham's Everyman Theatre, the earliest surviving theatre designed by Frank Matcham. 2010 is also the centenary of the birth of Robert Paterson, in whose memory this annual lecture is held.

Paterson was the local architect responsible for the restoration of Pittville Pump Room 50 years ago.

MORE FOR YOUR DIARY

Churchdown Local History Society

Meetings are held at the Community Centre, Parton Road, at 7.30 pm.

Thursday 9th December :

Patrick Furley—A Magic Lantern Show

Thursday 13th January 2011:

Hugh Conway –Jones—Gloucester’s Dockside Community

Thursday 10th February 2011:

Ann Bennett—Pills and Potions

Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

www.bgas.co.uk

Meetings are normally held at Gloucestershire Archives, Clarence Row, Alvin Street, Gloucester at 7.30 pm.

Visitors pay £1 per meeting.

Wednesday 19th January 2011:

Revd Brian Torode—Medieval Pilgrimages: Diocese of Worcester

Wednesday 16th February 2011:

Miss F Stoor—Hospitals in Gloucester from 16th to 20th centuries

Gloucester and District Archaeological Group

Meetings start at 7.30 pm. Gloucester meetings are held at the Gloucestershire Archives, Alvin Street, Cheltenham meetings at St Andrew’s Church, Montpellier Street.

Wednesday 2nd February 2011 in Gloucester:

Adrian Chadwick—Archaeology of the Severn Estuary

Wednesday 23rd February 2011 in Cheltenham:

David Aldred—Hailes Abbey and the Mystery of the Holy Blood

Exhibitions

Holst Birthplace Museum

To run from 3rd September to 13th December:

Theodor von Holst: his Art and the pre-Raphaelites

REVIEWS

Summer visits July-August 2010

Visit to Prestbury Church , 10th July

Following last year’s oversubscription for the guided walk of Prestbury, it was decided to repeat the walk with Roger Beacham in 2010 and also to offer a visit to St. Mary’s Church. Accordingly one group set off on the walk and a smaller group visited the church.

The Prestbury history group led by Linda Hodges and Beryl Elliott had arranged a display of parish documents for us to see and they each told us some of the history of the church. Although parts of it are 12th century in origin, it dates mainly from the 15th century and there have been many changes over the years including buttressing the tower in the 17th century and again in the 19th century, following an earth tremor in 1795. In the 1860s the church’s galleries were removed and the interior furnishings were changed as the vicar John Edwards II was a follower of the Oxford Movement. Although he appears to have had the support of many of his parishioners, the

changes caused quite a lot of controversy in the area. At the end of the afternoon both groups gathered to enjoy a lovely tea provided by the ladies of the church.

Sue Newton

Visit to Charlton Park (St Edward’s School), 10th and 17th August

This was so popular that two visits were arranged. Unfortunately on the afternoon of the first visit most of the St Edward’s staff were away at a funeral but I was lucky enough to be part of the second group.

One of our members, Jane Sale, brought some old maps and pictures of the Charlton Park estate and gave us a short talk on the early owners and builders of the house. Then, before taking us to see the school, Pat Hemmings told us about the nuns of La Sainte Union who ran the convent as a girls’ boarding school until they left in 1987 and the school amalgamated with Whitefriars to become coeducational.

We started our tour in the old house. There is not a great deal left to see of the 18th century gentleman’s residence apart from the staircase and some fine beams in the attic. The house originally had an open court in the centre but an early owner with aspirations of grandeur filled the space with an oval room described on the map as the ‘saloon’. It is now the chapel.

Our tour took us everywhere. Mrs Hemmings has had a long association with the school and had a story to tell about every corner. One of our group was a former pupil, so there was plenty of reminiscing. We admired the new drama studio and the view of the grounds from the refectory windows; we heard about the ghost in the rafters above the library. The rafters belong to the old stable block and are now occupied by a computer room.

It was a real tour de force and we are most grateful both to Jane for providing the historical background and to Mrs Hemmings for giving up an afternoon to entertain and instruct us so well.

Jill Barlow



The **Montpellier Fiesta** on Saturday 10th July attracted phenomenal crowds this year, no doubt partly because it happened during a spell of beautiful weather. The arrangement of the stalls in a ‘market place’ configuration away from the noisier parts of the event was a good idea, we thought, and the Society’s stall attracted many of the visitors who came to browse around them. Many thanks to those who helped on the day.

Autumn lectures Sept-Oct 2010

The new season of lectures got off to a good start on 21st September with Anthea Jones's lecture entitled **Past into Present: Some Historical Influences on the Development of Cheltenham**. With an audience of around 130 there was just one spare seat in the Council Chamber. Chairman Sue Newton gave a special welcome to a group of students sitting in the gallery.

Anthea began by recounting a tale of mayhem from 1516 taken from The Register of Bishop Charles Bothe of Hereford. The tale concerned a break-in and the cutting down and theft of trees from the bishop's park in Prestbury and involved a large number of Cheltenham men (all of whom Anthea could name), armed with bows, arrows, swords and bucklers etc. The park keeper, one William Raynesford, tried to stop the men but was 'sorely wounded' and several arrows were shot at his servant. Robert Spenser of Cheltenham, yeoman, later admitted 'braining the keeper with a forest bill'.

Anthea talked about the history of Prestbury, showing us photographs of Prestbury Park including the area around the boundary of the Park encompassing the site of an early manor house. These photographs served to illustrate how we can look for clues in the landscape today which may point to evidence of former settlement etc. I, personally, was not aware of the excavation in the 1930s of this area which established the outlines of the medieval manor house with its two moated enclosures. She then moved on to the history of Cheltenham, talking about minsters and parishes and the possible organisation of those in the Cheltenham area, the Cheltenham Hundred as recorded in 1617, and the development of the 'borough', using charts and plans to illustrate her arguments. We heard about the electoral system in the 19th century and Cheltenham's first MP in 1832, Craven Fitzhardinge Berkeley.

However, Anthea said that she believed possibly the most significant contribution to the shape of Cheltenham was its formation as a market town and this brought us to the High Street and a very detailed examination of burgage plots, as laid out in 1806 and the subsequent division of many of these plots over time. Coming to the present day we saw how much of the early layout of the town is still evident and that many of these plots can be matched with the building line in the High Street and behind, in the 'back road' and around Albion Street today.

Anthea included some wonderful early maps and plans in her talk, including a particularly detailed one of the plot of the Plough Hotel, when being sold in 1888. She also made several references to her latest book entitled *Cheltenham: a New History*, currently on sale. The talk kept everyone enthralled, and I can only urge you to buy a copy of the book and read about the fascinating development of Cheltenham, as portrayed by Anthea, for yourselves.

Elaine North

On 19 October a capacity audience was treated to a fascinating and entertaining lecture on **The Lord-Lieutenancy of Gloucestershire, Past and Present** by Sir Henry Elwes, HM Lord Lieutenant. He began by describing the history of the role of Lord-Lieutenant, who acts as the Queen's representative and the most senior military officer in a county.



Part of the plan of the Plough Hotel plot as sold in 1888

Sir Henry gave us some amusing insights into his coordination of about 30 royal visits to Gloucestershire each year. He described the response of one of the workers at the Walls ice cream factory in Brockworth, after meeting the Queen, whom he had not recognised. He vividly described the difficulties of trying to moor two large warships in Gloucester Docks on another occasion. He summed up his experiences of coordinating such visits by saying that "chaos is lurking pretty near by".

The Lord-Lieutenant is responsible for presenting awards locally on behalf of the Queen, and Sir Henry boasted proudly that Gloucestershire receives more Queen's Awards for Enterprise than any other county. He also presents OBEs and MBEs, most memorably to the Rev. Awdry, author of the *Thomas the Tank Engine* books, whose OBE was pinned to his pyjamas. During the Gloucestershire floods in 2007 Sir Henry regularly updated the Queen on the situation.

Sir Henry revealed that he was to stand down from the role of Lord-Lieutenant on 24 Oct 2010, after serving the county for 18 years. We wish him all the very best for his retirement, and welcome his successor Dame Janet Potter.

Sue Rowbotham

Happy 75th birthday, Sir Henry!

The role of Lord Lieutenant requires the holder to retire on his or her 75th birthday. Geoff & I were privileged to attend the ceremony at Gloucester Cathedral on Friday 22nd October to pay tribute to Sir Henry Elwes KCVO on his retirement and also to his wife Lady Carolyn for her part played in 'Team Elwes' over the years. To mark the occasion, Sir Henry was presented with a large leather-bound book of photographs, compiled with the help of staff at Gloucestershire Archives, recording the numerous and varied events attended and reflecting his great love for the people and communities of Gloucestershire.

Elaine North



REVIEWS

Cheltenham Local History Afternoon*Sunday 18th July 2010*

at St Andrew's Church, Montpellier Street

This was the fourth of our biennial History Afternoons, and once again the event proved very popular with both members and visitors. The chief attraction this time was a well-publicised talk by Dr Nick Barratt of the BBC television series *Who Do You Think You Are?*, who turned out to be a particularly fluent and entertaining speaker. He related how when he first came to work on the programme it was intended to be about 'ordinary people' and based on research carried out mainly over the telephone. The focus soon switched to celebrity subjects, however, because they attract higher audience ratings and are also much easier to direct. Even celebrities, though accustomed to the camera, are sometimes unwilling to be used, or withdraw their consent when research into their antecedents reveals something they do not wish to make public. Of every hundred lives that are explored only about 30 reach the screen. The BBC believes that audiences have very short attention spans, which is not necessarily true (as he himself demonstrated on this occasion by holding his own audience spellbound for an hour while speaking without either notes or slides!), but even so the programme has to be lively and fast-moving. Consequently it is impossible to show how much time-taking work by skilled researchers has gone on behind the scenes before the subject arrives at an archive somewhere and is apparently presented with instant responses to his or her questions. This does not seem to matter, however. The programme has proved a great and lasting success and is now into its 8th series.

Meanwhile, as on previous occasions, there were displays to look at, card and book stalls, refreshments and a raffle. Nine other local societies were represented, and Jill Waller and Kath Boothman were there with laptops ready to help visitors with searches of the Cheltenham Town Survey maps and the Examiner index on CD.

The other principal entertainment on offer was a walking tour of Cheltenham's decorative ironwork conducted by Geoff and Elaine North. This attracted forty people and was much enjoyed. The guides used Amina Chatwin's book *Cheltenham and its Ironwork* (first published 1975) as the starting point for their research, and found that some of the examples noted there had disappeared. Happily, others are being restored and some long-lost features are being replaced. One garden gate had actually been hidden during the war, when so much ironwork was requisitioned, and is now back in place. Geoff and Elaine would very much like to hear from anyone who has similar stories to tell.



'A Fair Day's Wage for a Fair Day's Work: Workers' Movements in Gloucestershire'
Gloucestershire Annual Local History Afternoon

Saturday October 2nd 2010

at Sir Thomas Rich's School, Longlevens



Brian Jerrard and Terry Moore-Scott

Once again a good crowd turned out for this popular annual event, and once again CLHS did not come away empty-handed. The award for the best display this year went to Fairford, but the finalists for the Brian Jerrard Award included three of our members, David Aldred, James Hodsdon and Terry Moore-Scott, and the winner was Terry Moore-Scott with his article 'Medieval fish-weirs of the mid-tidal reaches of the Severn River' in *Glevensis* No.42.

There were three speakers. Professor Adrian Randall of Birmingham University spoke about wages and protest in Gloucestershire from 1738 to 1830, dwelling mainly on the efforts of weavers and miners to defend their standard of living against the impact of new machinery. Desperate to preserve what they saw as their customary rights, and in the weavers' case the piece-rates for their work, they often resorted to strikes, rioting and violence. The next speaker, Jill Chambers, talked about the Swing Riots that began in 1830 and the fate of some of the poverty-stricken workers who were involved in them. Twelve parishes around Cirencester were affected by riots and arson attacks, and eventually 27 people were sentenced to deportation to Tasmania. Interestingly, because they were agricultural workers with useful skills they were shipped separately from the common criminals and were well received in the colony. Finally Canon John Evans, describing the activities of the Chartists and the Chartist Land Company in Gloucestershire, emphasised the dire poverty and insecurity that gave rise to so much social unrest. The Chartists' plan to resettle workers on smallholdings was a well-meant practical response to their plight. Although the scheme had limited success, some of the houses the Chartists built can still be found.

Before the meeting closed a presentation was made to John Loosley, who is retiring as Chairman of the Local History Committee of the GRCC. Warm tributes were paid to his numerous and varied achievements and to his leadership over many years. Dr Steven Blake is to take his place.

A new *Chronology of Workers' Movements in Cheltenham* compiled by Mike Grindley and Jill Waller was on sale and sold well. It is now available at meetings and also by post (see order form enclosed with this Newsletter).

The theme of next year's event is to be 'World War II in Gloucestershire'.



Brian Jerrard and John Loosley

FEATURE

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF GEORGE ROWE

In 1852 the Cheltenham artist and topographical print-maker, George Rowe (1796-1864), who is perhaps best known for his *Illustrated Cheltenham Guide* of 1845, ran away to the recently-discovered goldfields of Victoria, having got into financial difficulties through his various business involvements in the town. After failing as a 'gold digger', Rowe soon turned back to 'his own profession', and made a living painting flags and shop signs, as well as portraits of the 'diggers' and views of the goldfields for them to send back home. He later established his own studio at Bendigo, in the heart of the goldfields, and after his return to England in 1859, he painted a series of large watercolours of Australia, which won him a gold medal at the 1862 London International Exhibition.



Part of the reconstructed 1850s 'gold diggings' at the Sovereign Hill Museum, Ballarat

In 1982, I organised an exhibition of Rowe's work at Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum, which included full-sized colour photographs of around 18 of his Australian works, a decision having been taken – on both practical and financial grounds – not to attempt to borrow any of the originals from the Australian museums and libraries that now house them. Ever since then, I have hoped for an opportunity to travel to Australia to see Rowe's original paintings and to visit the places where he lived and worked. That opportunity finally arrived in May 2010, when I was able to spend three weeks in Australia following a trip to see some long-lost relatives in New Zealand.

My Australian journey took me first to Sydney's Mitchell Library, which has no less than eight of Rowe's original watercolours, five of which were shown in London in 1862, and where I was taken into the Library's picture store to see where his paintings live! Rowe certainly visited Sydney, although only one small watercolour, showing the harbour, is known. Most of Rowe's works show either Victoria or Tasmania, so off I went on a 12 hour train journey to Victoria's capital, Melbourne, and to the State Library of Victoria, which has a fine panoramic lithograph of Melbourne, published by Rowe towards the end of his Australian years, and a number of his letters home to his family; many more of these are held by the National Library in Canberra, which I sadly did not have time to visit –although I do have photocopies of them all, for study purposes.

From Melbourne I took an overnight ferry to Tasmania. Port Melbourne, where the ferry departs, is actually on the shores of Port Philip Bay, at a place once known as Liardet's Beach, where Rowe first pitched his tent after his arrival in Australia in late 1852, and from where I was able to come away with some sand from that very beach as a souvenir of my visit!

Rowe painted at least two panoramic views of Hobart, Tasmania's capital, the finest of which, showing a view of the city from the inner harbour, now hangs in the Tasmanian Club. Many of the city's buildings, as shown by Rowe, are still recognisable today, as is the distinctive backdrop of Mount Wellington.

Back in Victoria again, I used the State's extensive train network to visit several goldfields towns, including Castlemaine, to which Rowe and his son, George Curtis Rowe, walked from Melbourne early in 1853. At Castlemaine, part of the old Forest Creek diggings have been preserved – Rowe and his son certainly camped and dug there, and it was there, according to one of Rowe's letters home, that his son encountered another well-known Cheltenham figure, Pearson Thompson, the former owner of the Montpellier Spa, who had also travelled to the goldfields in search of a new life. Just a few miles west of Castlemaine is Bendigo, where Rowe lived at the so-called 'White Hills' for much of his time in Australia. Although hardly anything from Rowe's time remains there amidst the urban sprawl, the Art Gallery does have a number of his paintings and is planning the first ever Australian exhibition of Rowe's work, in 2012.

My final destination was the town of Ballarat, of which Rowe also produced a panoramic watercolour, and which is home to the Sovereign Hill living history museum. This excellent open air museum includes a recreated 'diggings' of the 1850s, set around an original gold-bearing creek, and which with its array of tents and hand-painted signs looks just like a scene from one of Rowe's watercolours. Visitors even have the chance to pan for gold (although I was reliably told that the flecks of gold are put into the creek by the Museum staff for visitors to discover!), Sadly, my own attempts at prospecting were as unsuccessful as poor George Rowe's were back in the 1850s, so I had to content myself with buying some Ballarat gold in a glass tube instead, to go with my Liardet's Beach sand!

My talk at the Society's morning meeting on 12th April 2011 will consider Rowe's Australian years, and in particular his artistic output, and will investigate just what remains of the Australia that Rowe might have known.

Steven Blake

SOCIETY NEWS

New Members

A warm welcome is extended to the following:

<i>Keith & Julie Brown</i>	<i>Jean Hunter</i>
<i>Diana Medland</i>	<i>Will Doxsey</i>
<i>John Whitehead</i>	<i>Juliet Reeve</i>
<i>Pamela Dickinson</i>	<i>Anne Paul</i>
<i>Peter West</i>	<i>Jean West</i>
<i>Ros Hetreed</i>	<i>Anne Bowen</i>
<i>Nick Mann</i>	<i>Ray Barlow</i>
<i>Paulette Faulkner</i>	

And a warm welcome back to *Janet Hextall & Brian Meek*

New Publications



Anthea Jones and Rosemary Harvey at the BBC History Festival. Anthea is holding her book *Cheltenham : A New History*, which was launched at the Town Hall on September 10th in the presence of Martin Horwood, MP and is now in stock at Waterstone's. It was also on sale at this year's Cheltenham Literary Festival, where Anthea gave a talk about it in the new Parabola Arts Centre.

The book is published by Carnegie Publishing at £20.



David Hanks' new book *Cheltenham Past and Present*, a pictorial review of the past 150 years using old and new photographs, was launched at Waterstone's (above) on September 25th and rather to David's embarrassment sold out within half an hour! - a problem many authors would probably be happy to have. The picture shows David with Ron Prewer (left) at the end of the session. Further stock was of course promptly ordered in and is now available. The book is published by The History Press at £12.99.

BBC History Festival in Gloucester

On Saturday 28th August 2010 CLHS was invited to participate in a day-long celebration of British heritage when the BBC History Festival came to Gloucester. The event was held as part of the nationwide campaign, BBC Hands on History. a two-year learning campaign offering people inspiration to take the next step from watching TV programmes to discovering history around them. Hands On History began this Summer with the Norman Season on BBC Two and BBC Four and it includes a range of events and activities including the History Festival at Gloucester.

Centred around the cathedral, attractions covered all eras from the pre-Romans to the 20th century and included re-enactors, archive film shows, talks, heritage walks, living history displays and a host of children's activities.

Event organiser Trish Campbell from BBC Learning said; "This is a great opportunity for people of all ages to learn about the Cathedral's Norman origins, discover why Gloucestershire was the birthplace of the Domesday Book and even walk in the footsteps of William the Conqueror."

The Cathedral Cloisters held a number of local history exhibitions and heritage displays. Representing our Society during the day were Sue Brown, Jill Barlow, Anthea Jones, Rosemary Harvey, David Hanks, Roger Jones, Jean Aucott, Desmond Hardman, Sue Newton and Alec Hamilton. Thanks to these volunteers, we were able to take part in this event, promoting our Society and its interests to a wider audience.



Birthdays !

Congratulations to Dorothy Seton-Smith, who was 80 on September 12th, and to Tom Maslin, whose 70th birthday was on August 30th. Both have given sterling service to the Society, Dorothy as Membership Secretary over many years and Tom as the IT expert who set up our website for us. Jane Sale, another loyal member of long standing, turned 80 on September 17th. We wish them all many happy returns.

Congratulations Chris!

We were delighted to hear that at the Arts Council Award ceremony on September 23rd Chris Lammiman, former Chairman of the Arts Council, was presented with the prestigious Joyner Cup for his outstanding contribution to the arts in Cheltenham. The award seemed even more richly deserved when the news came through a few days later that the Cheltenham Festival of Performing Arts, our oldest festival, had been saved at least until 2014 following the Council's decision to make a much reduced charge for hiring the Town Hall. As event Chairman Chris was instrumental in securing this victory by organising a petition which collected 2,500 signatures.



FEATURE

A HISTORICAL SNIPPET FROM MINSTERWORTH

Finding out about the daily lives and circumstances of ordinary people living hundreds of years ago is not easy but one way of doing so is to study their wills and note what they regarded as their 'worldly goods'. John Sparry was a yeoman farmer living in Minsterworth, who died in June 1650, and his will gives a fascinating insight into his family's circumstances.

John was married to Sarah and they had three quite young children: sons John and William and a daughter Anne. According to John's will, all his goods, plate, household stuff and the rents and other proceeds from his leased lands were to pass to Sarah during the minority of their children and be used for "their severall maintenances and breeding them up at school". John seems to have seen his son William as the one likely to take over the family business, and he was to be placed as an apprentice to some good trade until he was of years "fit to undertake the disposition of" affairs.

But the more intimate details of their life style become apparent from the lists of possessions that John senior intended should eventually pass to his individual children. It included silver tankards, silver salts and silver bowls and spoons, six pewter dishes "of the largest size" and brass "panns". John (his eldest son) was to get "my biggest brasse potte". John also was to receive the "paire of iron andirons* in the parlor chymney" while William would get the pair of brass andirons in the chamber. The Sparry family's possessions also included a "long table board and frame** in the hall" and another table board and frame in the chamber. Other items of furniture included "my double cupboard in the parlour", a "wrought chayre" in the chamber, some wrought stools and several bedsteads along with feather beds, "boulsters", pillows, blankets and numerous "payres" of sheets.

Evidently, the Sparrys were not particularly wealthy – the will for example mentions no high quality clothes or furs, nor gold chains and jewellery nor generous bequests to the church as might be expected in a will of someone of high status. But Sparry was one of only nine or ten yeoman farmers in Minsterworth at that time and his possessions suggest that the family was of no mean standing. Their house was probably a thatched-roof half-timbered structure of which there would have been a number in the village then and we can tell that it had at least two main rooms downstairs, (the hall and the parlour) and one bedroom (or 'chamber') presumably upstairs where the whole family probably slept. In addition to a hearth in the parlour, the chamber upstairs seems also to have had a fireplace, a luxury not everyone would have had at that time.



One of the surviving 17th century cottages in The Street, Minsterworth, where the Sparry family is believed to have lived

Somehow, thanks to John's will and despite the passage of over 300 years, I feel I've got to know the Sparrys quite well!

Terry Moore-Scott

- * Andirons (more commonly known as 'fire dogs') are bars on short legs with ornamental upright front supports placed in the hearth to support logs in a wood fire.
- ** In keeping with the style of the time, tables were plain affairs made of oak consisting of a flat top (the 'board') which was laid on to a separate supporting frame.



Part of John Sparry's will

LOCAL NEWS

CHEL TENHAM HONOURS A FOURTH VICTORIA CROSS HERO

Friday 24th September was a rainy day in Cheltenham, but this did not stop there being a good turnout for the unveiling of Cheltenham Civic Society's latest blue, commemorative plaque. This plaque, by the door of 3 Lansdown Terrace, commemorates Surgeon-General William Manley VC, CB, of the Royal Artillery.

General Manley earned his VC on 29th April 1864 at Tauranga in New Zealand during the 2nd Maori War. During the attack on Gate Pah, Dr Manley accompanied the assault troops and was instrumental in saving the lives of several men. The following year Manley was awarded the Royal Humane Society's bronze medal for saving a soldier who had fallen overboard from



his ship.

Uniquely, Manley was awarded the Iron Cross for his medical work with the Prussian 22nd Division during the Franco-Prussian war of 1870. He later received awards from the French government and so was decorated by both sides for his humanitarian work.

General Manley retired from the army in 1884 and came to live permanently in Cheltenham at 3 Lansdown Terrace. He died at his home on 16th November 1901 and is buried in Cheltenham cemetery.

The plaque was unveiled by the Mayor of Cheltenham, Councillor Ann Regan. The Royal Army Medical Corps was represented by Captain Peter Starling, Director of the Army Medical Services museum and Major Marie Ellis, Regimental Secretary to the RAMC. The plaque

was co-sponsored by the Civic Society and the Cotswold Branch of The Orders & Medals Research Society which was represented by the branch secretary John Wright and several branch members, including myself.

Mick Kippin



BRIAN WHITE ON RADIO GLOUCESTERSHIRE



Our popular 'meeter and greeter' Brian White had his hour of glory on September 26th when he was interviewed by Pete Wilson of Radio Gloucestershire on the subject of his pictures. Brian was formerly a professional draughtsman and, as most members probably know, he is a talented artist with a particular gift for portraiture. For over 50 years he has been drawing pencil sketches of celebrities in various walks of life (generally from photographs) and asking the subjects to sign them. The quality of his work, which can be judged from the one example shown here, makes it unsurprising that most of the famous people have indeed signed their pictures and returned them to Brian as requested, often with appreciative comments. He has even stayed in touch with some of them. His subjects have included many celebrities both British and American — Margaret Thatcher, Mohammed Ali, Jimmy Edwards, Shirley Bassey and Bruce Forsyth, to mention only a few. Brian entertained the audience with anecdotes and reminiscences while Pete Wilson marvelled at the 80-odd pictures in the collection. It was a delightful programme, but would of course have been even better on television!



The Journal of the CLH Society

Are you aware that we now have a data base of the contents of all of the twenty-six CLHS Journals? We can search, via keywords, for people, roads, other highways and buildings, schools, colleges, churches, chapels, societies, leisure activities, commercial undertakings and illustrations. So if you have a particular interest and would like a search made, (no charge), please get in touch with me at russself@aol.com. A recent example was for 'theatres' which resulted in eight 'hits' and the enquirer was so impressed he became a new member of the Society!

As usual, I am also appealing for new articles for the 2011 Journal 27. All subjects relating to the local history of Cheltenham will be considered; but the Journal is particularly short in any research pre-1720, so if you have written or are writing an article, of any length, on Early Modern, Medieval or even earlier Cheltenham history, it would receive special consideration. Help and advice can be given if you are unsure of the correct format, either by myself or one of our more experienced contributors. The deadline for submission is **10 January 2011**. Please contact me at the above email address.

Sally Self



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:

The Golden Minster (St Oswald, Gloucester) Heighway and Bryant - £30

Crickley Hill: The Hillfort Defences, P Dixon - £25

Withington: A Cotswold Village History Withington WI - £20

Naunton 2000, D Hanks (inscribed and signed by the author) - £25

There are various volumes of the **BGAS Record Series**, as follows:

(Vol 6) The Military Survey of Gloucestershire, 1522 - £25 (2 copies)

(Vol 9) An Historical Gazetteer of Cheltenham (Vol 9) - £40

(Vol 15) A calendar of the Registers of the priory of Llanthony by Gloucester 1457-1466, 1501-1525 - £25

(Vols 17&18) A Catalogue of the Medieval Muniments at Berkeley Castle - £25 the pair

(Vol 22) Calendar of Summary Convictions at Petty Sessions 1781-1837 - £25

Further volumes of the **BGAS Record Series** are for sale at **only £10 each**:

(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 (2 copies)

(Vol 14) A Calendar of the Registers of Apprentices of the City of Gloucester 1595-1700

(Vol 16) Abstract of feet of Fines relating to Gloucestershire 1199-1299

(Vol 19) Notes on the Diocese of Gloucester by Chancellor Richard Parsons c1700 (2 copies)

(Vol 20) Abstract of feet of Fines relating to Gloucestershire 1300-1359

(Vol 21) Gloucester Cathedral Chapter Act Book 1616-1687)

The Society is always grateful for donations of suitable books (ie non-fiction books of local historical interest) 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

ST MARY'S CHELTENHAM PARISH RECORDS PROJECT

About twenty years ago a county-wide scheme called the Bristol & Gloucestershire Parish Register Transcription Project started. It was a joint initiative between the Bristol & Gloucestershire Record Offices, the Gloucestershire & Bristol & Avon Family History Societies and the Friends of Gloucestershire Archives. The aim was 'to produce authoritative transcriptions [...] of all the pre-1901 Registers and pre-1812 Bishops' Transcriptions for all Anglican churches and chapels in Gloucestershire and Bristol'. Work on Cheltenham St Mary's began and draft transcriptions for 1631 to 1745 were made, mostly through the dedication and hard work of Carina Bibby and her colleagues.

For various reasons the Cheltenham section of the Transcription Project stalled several years ago, though some transcriptions for other Parishes were completed, published and are now available at the Gloucestershire Archives. CLHS now have Carina's transcriptions, and our aim over a four to five year period is to carry this Project forward to completion. In Cheltenham we are lucky that we have an almost continuous run of records from 1558 up to the present day. This makes them particularly valuable, not only for family history, but also for studying social and demographic trends, mortality crises (there was a smallpox epidemic) and comparative work with other local parishes. Eventually, we aim to publish the work in hard copy and digital formats.

If you are interested in becoming involved you can learn more about it by contacting Sally Self, Project Co-ordinator, russself@aol.com or Kath Boothman, kbooth@dircon.co.uk No particular skills are needed at the moment other than those of accuracy and patience for short lengths of time!

OBITUARY

BRETT HARRIS, 1927-2010

Members may have read a tribute in the Echo several weeks ago to the late Brett Harris, who had just died at the age of 87. He was a member of this Society for many years, but local history was only one of his many interests. In later life he was perhaps best known (and admired) as a cricket umpire, active throughout the county for over 30 years. He was reported to have an amazing memory for statistics and maintained a keen interest in the game to the end of his life. Brett was also a talented linguist, fluent in several languages including Polish, Russian and German. During World War II he served in the Intelligence Corps, and later he worked for many years at GCHQ. He was a member of the Gloucestershire Naturalists' Society and enjoyed bird-watching, an activity he shared with his wife Lyn. A man of many parts and great intellectual ability, he will undoubtedly be fondly remembered and sadly missed by all who knew him. His funeral took place at St Mary's Church, Cheltenham, on September 6th.

CAN YOU HELP?

The Metropolitan Drinking Fountain Troughs Charity Association was responsible for erecting "horse/cattle troughs" and "drinking fountains" in London and across the rest of the UK (and some abroad) between 1880 and 1930 (approx). A national project is now being made to try to track down all the cattle/horse troughs and drinking fountains that were installed at any time, their original site, and if moved, where they now are, and their present use. Any dates when they were erected or moved would be helpful.

The charity claims responsibility for erecting two granite troughs in Cheltenham, one in 1896 (location unknown), the other in 1911, when a new trough and drinking fountain was installed opposite the Pheasant Inn on the old Gloucester Road, near to Gloucester. (Our own research shows that the 1911 trough and fountain were purchased as a result of £100 bequest from the late Leslie Young which enabled the RSPCA to erect them in his memory).

The enquirer thinks there are others in this area, and wants to know if the following still exist -

- one in Andoversford?
 - one on a farm in the Charlton Kings area?
- He tells me the red granite trough erected by MDFTCA in Swindon Village is beautifully kept, and a credit to the villagers.

An enquirer wonders if the Society can help clear up some points in his family history. He believes his grandfather was sent to work for a butcher in Cheltenham as a school leaver in about 1890. The story goes that on Saturday nights the butcher would put his unsold meat down a well in the town gardens to keep till Monday.

His questions are:

1. Is/was there a dry well in the gardens?
2. Was it used for this purpose?
3. Would there be any records showing which butchers were allowed to do this?

Another enquirer seeks information and photographs relating to Cavendish House and its staff in the post-war period up to 1980.

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

FEEDBACK ...

Following the article in the last issue about Keith Smith's visit to Cheltenham, New South Wales, and his discovery that it had been founded by an emigrant named William Chorley, member Richard Smith did 'a little digging' in the official records and came up with some further information about Chorley. The 1881 census shows 21-year-old tailor William Chorley, born in Brompton Ralph, Somerset, now lodging at 20 Fairview Place, Cheltenham. It also shows his future wife Lilly Alder, a tailoress aged 19, living with her parents in Kings Stanley. The BMD indices show a William

Chorley and, on the same page, a Lily Virginia Alder being married—presumably to each other—in the Stroud district in the last quarter of 1881. As Richard says, it remains to check passenger lists or emigration records...

CLHS DISPLAYS IN LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARY

As most members will know, the Society is continuing to mount a display in the Local Studies Library for two weeks each month and we have a rota of members there 'in attendance' on one day a month. Anyone who would like to join this team for an hour or so each month would be most welcome—please contact Sally Self on 01242 243714 or e-mail russself@aol.com for further information or to volunteer.



The displays for the next few months are as follows:
 Mon.7th - Fri.18th **February: Manor Court Books**
 Mon.7th - Fri.18th **March: Racing & the Racecourse**
 In February and March CLHS help available on Wed.9th
 Mon.4th - Fri.15th **April: the Census**
 CLHS help available on Wed.6th
 Mon.9th - Fri.20th **May: Francis Close**
 CLHS help available on Wed.11th
 Elaine North would like to hear from anyone who wishes to contribute to any of these displays (tel 01452 857803).

Gloucestershire Family History Society in conjunction with the Registration Service has created an online index of births, marriages and deaths in the county (with details of maiden names, churches etc) from 1837 onwards. The web address is ww3.gloucestershire.gov.uk/bmd/

NEXT ISSUE

Please forward items for inclusion in the
MARCH 2011 Newsletter by

Monday 14th February 2011

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