



# Cheltenham Local History Society

Newsletter No. 75

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March 2013



R. W. JEARRAD, ARCHITECT.

THE QUEEN'S HOTEL — CHELTENHAM.

Drawn, Printed & Published by G. Rowe, Lithographer & Teacher of Drawing, Exeter House, Cheltenham.

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## EDITORIAL

Wondering what to put on the front of this issue, I happened to look up and notice this print on the wall behind my desk, where it has hung, largely unappreciated, for many years. As the Society recently had a very interesting and wide-ranging talk from Dr Frances Wilson-Copp on the architecture of Cheltenham (see page 5), and as she mentioned the Queen's Hotel, I thought other people might like to see this picture too. It is attributed to R W Jearrad, Architect—he being responsible for the design of the Queen's—but the small print right at the bottom says 'Drawn, Printed and Published by G. Rowe, Lithographer & Teacher of Drawing, Exeter House, Cheltenham'. The hotel, built in 1838, looks new, and the styles of clothing shown suggest the 1840s, so this is a very early image of one of our best-known buildings.

*Kath Boothman*

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Society's Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday 21st May in the Council Chamber, Municipal Offices, Promenade, Cheltenham at 7.30 pm prompt. (SEE AGENDA AND PREVIOUS AGM MINUTES ENCLOSED WITH THIS NEWSLETTER—**please bring these papers with you to the meeting**). The Mayor, Councillor Wendy Flynn, as President of the Society, will chair the meeting and give a short address.

### *Election of Officers and Committee 2013-14*

Officers and committee members (as listed in the 2012 AGM Minutes) will resign in accordance with the Society's constitution, although they can be re-elected if they so wish. Nominations are invited for Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and for committee members. As our current Secretary Heather Atkinson is standing down this year after several years of sterling service, for which we are very grateful, we would particularly welcome nominations for a new Secretary. (See notice on page 4.) If you would like to nominate someone or be nominated yourself, either for this post or one of the others, or as a committee member, please contact Heather (e-mail [heatherbell71@hotmail.com](mailto:heatherbell71@hotmail.com) tel. 01242 232740) for a nomination form.

After the AGM business is concluded there will be a showing of the film 'Cheltenham and the Glorious Cotswolds: the Carlsbad of England' introduced by **Dr Steven Blake**.

## SUMMER VISITS

You are invited to take part in the following visits with the Society. **IN ALL CASES PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THE SLIP ENCLOSED WITH THIS NEWSLETTER WITH YOUR PAYMENT AND A STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE. There will be a priority booking period for members only until 13th April and, as places are limited on these visits, you are advised to book early to be sure of getting a place.** If you wish to bring a non-member as a guest, please indicate this on the slip when booking your own place. If there is any availability after 13th April, places will be offered to non-members in order of application. **If you find that you cannot attend a visit for which you have booked, please inform Sue Brown (01242 231837) or another committee member of your cancellation, so that someone else may have the opportunity to take your place.** If you don't let us know that you cannot attend, we shall expect you to pay the cost.

### *Tuesday 18th June at 6.30 pm*

#### **An evening walk around Swindon Village**

Our tour, guided by Eileen Allen and Barry Simon of the Swindon Village Society, starts at the village hall car park, where there is ample parking. We go first to Swindon Hall, the front of which was bought with Scrooge's money (explanation to be provided on the day!), then to St Lawrence's church with its six-sided tower. We then pass via the amenity area—once the mill pond—to the Manor, which over the centuries has grown from a small Tudor house to a large assembly of buildings incorporating six residences.



Finally we are invited to tea and biscuits in the garden of Swindon Hall, or possibly in the village hall, depending on the weather. The visit will take about an hour and a half. Charge: £3 to include tea and biscuits.

### *Wednesday 10th July, 6.30 pm—8.00 pm*

#### **Visit to Frocester Court**

Frocester, 4 miles south-west of Stroud, was a Roman settlement on a road from Cirencester to Arlingham. Frocester Court is a complex of medieval buildings that until the Dissolution formed part of an estate belonging to St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester. The Court House itself is late 15th century with later additions, and among the outbuildings there is a medieval dovecote, a 17th century gatehouse and a magnificent 53-metre-long tithe barn dating from c1300, one of the longest and best-preserved in England. It has been in continuous use as an agricultural building for 700 years. The visit, which will last about an hour and a half, will include the Court and the outbuildings.



Frocester Court tithe barn

Please note the time of the visit; this is for the convenience of the farmer who currently owns the property. Frocester Court is not really accessible except by car, but there is plenty of parking space. We hope to arrange car-sharing for those who need help with transport. (See the enclosed booking form). Charge: £5 to include tea and cakes.

### *Saturday 10th August, 9.30 am—5.30 pm*

#### **Visit to Birmingham Back-to-Backs and Birmingham History Galleries**

The Birmingham Back-to-Backs, a National Trust property, are the city's last surviving group of working people's houses built backing on to a communal courtyard. The guided tour takes visitors back in time, from the 1840s to the 1870s, to discover the lives of some of the people who lived there, with fires alight in the grates and sounds and smells from the past helping to evoke the experience of life in these carefully restored houses.

The Birmingham History Galleries, situated on the third floor of the Museums and Art Gallery and devoted to illustrating the history of the city itself, have recently undergone an £8.9m refurbishment with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund. Entrance is free.

Please note that the full Back-to-Backs tour involves eight sets of stairs, and that we shall be walking from there to the Museum, a distance of about half a mile. There is lift access to the Birmingham Galleries.

We shall be travelling on a Denwell coach, leaving from and returning to Royal Well bus station.

Charge: £12 for transport only. Entry to the Back-to-Backs will be by timed ticket, free for National Trust members and £7 per person for non-members.

## *EVENING LECTURE PROGRAMME 2013-14*

*Tuesday 17th September:*

**Mr Malcolm Watkins—The Birdlip Grave Group, a 2000-year mystery**

*Tuesday 15th October:*

**Helen Brown and Ann-Rachael Harwood—Cheltenham Local History and the Role of the Museum**

*Tuesday 19th November:*

**Dr Nicholas Herbert—The Turnpikes and the Improvement of the Roads**

*Tuesday 10th December:*

**Professor Gareth Williams—From Gloucestershire to the World: the Legacy of Edward Jenner**

*Tuesday 21st January 2014:*

**Research and Display Evening**

*Tuesday 18th February 2014:*

**Amber Patrick—A Malting Industry in Cheltenham?**

*Tuesday 18th March 2014:*

**Neil Holbrook—Death and Burial in Roman Gloucestershire**

*Tuesday 15th April 2014:*

**Roger Turner—The Victorian Architecture of Gloucestershire**

*Tuesday 20th May 2014:*

**AGM followed by Patrick Furley—The Magic Lantern: a history and show using original equipment and slides**

## *MORNING LECTURES 2013-14*

Morning lectures will 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 22nd October:*

**Mick Kippin—Naval Schoolie to Vicar of Winchcombe**

*Tuesday 29th April 2014:*

**Geoff North—Gloucestershire's Voluntary Aid Hospitals 1914-1919**

*Reminder.....*

### **MORNING LECTURE**

*Tuesday 23rd April at 10.00 am for 10.30 am  
at St Luke's Church Hall, St Luke's Place  
Cheltenham*

**Mr Michael Cole—  
Prestbury's Lost Buildings and their Legacy**

*The 2013 CLHS Journal will be available for  
collection at this meeting.*

## *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 18th April :*

**John Loosley—Gloucestershire Almshouses**

*Thursday 16th May:*

**AGM followed by Terry Moore-Scott—Leckhampton's Manorial History**

### **Gotherington Local History Society**

Meetings are held at Gotherington Village Hall starting at 8.00 pm. Visitors pay £2.00.

*Tuesday 26th March:*

**Canon John Evans—Chartism and Snigs End**

*Tuesday 23rd April:*

**AGM followed by Pat Story—The Pleasures and Pitfalls of Tracing One's Ancestors**

### **Swindon Village Society**

Meetings are held at Swindon Village Hall at 7.30 pm. Non-members pay £1.

*Wednesday 20th March:*

**Amy Woolacot—The Border Castles and Abbeys**

*Saturday 20th April, starting at Swindon Village Hall car park at 9.30 am, weather permitting:*

**Bird and Nature Walk on Cleeve Common led by John Heathcott**

*Saturday 25th May at 4.00 pm:*

**Barry Simon—The History of Swindon Manor (with history display)**

*Wednesday 17th July:*

**Brian Torode— Gloucestershire's Masters of Ceremonies**

### **DISPLAYS IN LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARY**

Tuesday 5th - Monday 25th March:

**CELEBRATING HORSE RACING IN CHELTENHAM**

Tuesday 2nd - Tuesday 23rd April:

**CHELTENHAM'S FIRE SERVICE: A HISTORY**

Tuesday 7th - Wednesday 29th May:

**CHELTENHAM ON THE MAP**

Tuesday 4th - Saturday 22nd June:

**EDUCATION FOR ALL**

Tuesday 2nd - Saturday 20th July:

**CHELTENHAM'S MUSIC SCENE**

Tuesday 6th - Saturday 24th August:

**CHELTENHAM'S ORNAMENTAL IRONWORK**

*Any contributions to these displays will be welcome.*

*Please contact Elaine North, tel. 01452 857803 or  
e-mail [elaine-north@hotmail.com](mailto:elaine-north@hotmail.com)*

**MORE 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 26th March:*

**Trish Thomas, MA, FRSA—Birdlip ‘Lady’, the subject of the Death of a Princess Exhibition**

*Tuesday 23rd April:*

**Aylwin Sampson—The Roman Cotswolds**

*Tuesday 28th May:*

**Anne Strathie—Harry Pennell and Catherine Hodson: an Antarctic story with Charlton Kings connections**

**Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society**

www.bgas.co.uk

**Note change of venue :** talks will be held in the Frith Building at Gloucestershire Archives, Alvin Street, Gloucester, starting at 7.30 pm. Visitors pay £1.

*Wednesday 27th March :*

**Dr Nicholas Herbert—The Forest of Dean Eyre of 1643: Boundaries, Settlement and the King’s Policy**

**Prestbury Local History Society**

www.prestburyhistory.btck.co.uk

All meetings are held at the Library in the Burgage, Prestbury, starting at 7.30 pm. Visitors pay £2.

*Monday 25th March :*

**Michael Cole—Masters, Servants and Tradesmen**

*Monday 22nd April:*

**Peter and Sally Annesley—The Thatched Cottage and Tony Noel—Robert of Prestbury**

*Monday 20th May:*

**Roger Beacham—The Grotto, Prestbury’s own Garden**

**ANNUAL  
CHELTENHAM CIVIC AWARDS LECTURE**

*Thursday 18th April at 7.30 pm  
at St Andrew’s Church, Montpellier Street*

**Jonathan Glancey, Honorary Fellow  
of the Royal Institute of British Architects**

**OUTRAGE REVISITED...ALL OVER AGAIN!**

Jonathan Glancey, Guest Presenter of the Cheltenham Civic Awards for 2012, is a highly regarded architectural critic, journalist and broadcaster. Besides contributing to many publications he makes radio and TV documentaries for the BBC and has written books on a wide variety of subjects. In reappraising and updating Ian Nairn’s polemic Architectural Review of 1955, an attack on post war development, Jonathan’s campaigning for higher standards in architecture and planning, together with his infectious enthusiasm, should deliver an enjoyable and stimulating evening.

**Tickets £7.50 (to include a glass of wine) on the door or from the Tourist Information Centre.**

Lecture sponsored & organised by  
Cheltenham Civic Society

**The 2013 Deerhurst Lecture**

*Saturday 7th September at 7.30 pm  
in St Mary’s Church, Deerhurst*

**Dr Paul Barnwell (University of Oxford)—  
Locating Baptism in Anglo-Saxon  
and Norman Churches**

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

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

The illustration shows the Saxon font in Deerhurst church.

*Note: the 2012 Deerhurst lecture had to be postponed until April this year. See notice on page 12.*

**CLHS SEEKS NEW SECRETARY**

**Heather Atkinson**, our present Secretary, wishes to stand down at the AGM in May, though she will continue serving on the Committee. We shall be very sorry to lose her expertise in this role which she has carried out so efficiently for several years. However, we now need a **VOLUNTEER** to take over as Secretary. The work is not onerous, consisting mainly of writing up the minutes of the Committee meetings and the AGM, with a few other small administrative tasks in the course of the year, and Heather would be more than willing to offer advice and support. If any member of the Society is willing to take on this role, please contact either Heather, our Chairman David Scriven or any other member of the present Committee.

All contact details are in your Member’s Programme and on our website.

**GLOUCESTERSHIRE  
FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY OPEN DAY**  
*Saturday May 4th from 10.00 am - 4.00 pm*

at the new venue of the Gloucester Rugby Club  
Kingsholm Road, Gloucester GL1 3AX

As before, entrance and parking are free.

**Bigger and better this year! Attractions include:**

Help desk for your research problems  
Displays of local historical interest  
Products for sale including books, maps, CDs, photographs, fiches etc.  
Other societies and organisations including Gloucestershire Archives and some new exhibitors  
Light refreshments are available all day.

**Come along and meet the experts!**

Enquiries to: [help@gfhs.co.uk](mailto:help@gfhs.co.uk)

## REVIEWS

The autumn lecture series continued on November 20th with an illustrated talk by **Philip Moss** entitled **The Spas of Gloucester**. Gloucester always had potential as a spa town, the speaker explained, because it had a good water supply—from the 12th century, and probably from Roman times, there were wells fed by the strong spring line on Robinswood Hill. One, known as the Red Well possibly because there were iron deposits nearby, was near the present ski centre. Our Lady's Well in the grounds of Llanthony Priory was so called because the Virgin was said to have stopped to drink there when travelling to Glastonbury by river. The *Mabinogion* has a story about nine witches of Gloucester who looked after a sacred thermal spring on the banks of the Severn. At the bottom of Westgate Street there was once a house called Eagle House, built around 1720. A later owner, a corn factor called Freeman, found that the water supply in the house, though unsuitable for making tea or washing, improved his wife's nerves and his daughter's skin. When analysis revealed mineral content, he turned the house into a spa and succeeded in attracting paying guests for the next ten years. Among the later owners was the Duke of Norfolk, but in the mid-19th century the advent of the railways moved the hub of social life to the east end of town and Westgate became unfashionable.

Gloucester's second spa was founded by a Mr Jelf, who dug a well in a field he owned and was interested to find that the water contained iodine. The Oxford chemist who analysed it said it was better than Cheltenham or Leamington water and would be beneficial for digestive, skin, lung and other disorders. Jelf went bankrupt in 1815, after only a year, but others took over his spa. It was centred on Brunswick Square, where speculators built houses many of which survive. It became a fashionable area with its own church, Christ Church. More terraced villas were built and the spa did well until the 1830s, when investors turned their attention to the new canal. There was a pump room dispensing water until 1926, and the original Spa Hotel survives, though converted to flats. Its popularity at the time was partly owing to its proximity to the infirmary, which enabled visitors to consult doctors as well as taking the waters. Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who lived near Ledbury, spent a year in Gloucester as a teenager being treated for back pain. Some visitors considered Gloucester more genteel than Cheltenham because it was quieter. Among the retired military gentlemen who settled there was Gladstone's father, and Gladstone himself came here from Eton in the holidays. Mr Moss showed a picture of the elegant little pump room designed by Jelf, where gentlemen were expected to drink a pint of water straight off while ladies took two half-pints, and entertainment was provided in the form of dancing, bowls and concerts by the band of the militia. The grounds were later enlarged into a big public park, but the building itself was demolished in about 1960. This very interesting talk was much enjoyed by the audience, and those of us who had never thought of Gloucester as a spa came away enlightened.

The last speaker of 2012 was **Dr Frances Wilson-Copp**, who had been scheduled to speak next April but kindly

changed places with Anne Strathie when the latter was unable to come on December 18th. Her subject was **Cheltenham Architecture and its Roots**. The title was soon explained when she pointed out that most buildings in Cheltenham are classical, deriving at least some elements of their design from ancient Greece. The three main 'orders' of Greek architecture, Doric, Ionic and Corinthian, can all be found in the town, either separately or in combination. Doric (the style of the Parthenon) was often used for public buildings because it was felt to express authority and tradition. The Montpellier Rotunda has Doric pillars, but to be



correct they should not be mounted on stone 'feet'. Barclays and Lloyds banks in the High Street are heavily classical, though not mainly Doric. The Romans adopted all three styles from the Greeks and sometimes used them together, for example in the Coliseum. The same combination can be seen in the frontage of Whittard's shop in the Promenade. She showed pictures of other buildings in the town centre, picking out details of classical style: Boots has huge Ionic pillars on the upper level, the entrance to Waterstone's is Doric and the Town Hall combines rounded Roman arches with Corinthian pillars, as does the Queen's Hotel. Some designers managed to mix styles in a harmonious way, even if not correctly. A house near Pittville Park has Ionic pilasters on one wall and Doric on another. Caryatids, often used in Ancient Greece to replace columns, are a pleasing feature even on modern shop fronts in Montpellier. Another notable influence in Cheltenham architecture was Gothic, the first style to use pointed arches. Gloucester cathedral is a late Gothic building. When the style was revived in the 19th century it was thought suitable not only for churches (such as St Andrew's in Montpellier) but for schools as well, the most prominent example in Cheltenham being the Ladies' College. She drew attention to many features of the school buildings from the wrought iron railings to the flying buttresses, turrets, 'rusticated' (rough) stonework and the carved niches designed to hold statues on the outside walls. She then turned briefly to Victorian houses, showing pictures of distinctive details of roofs and chimneys, before moving on to Art Deco. The former Odeon Cinema, with its corner windows and appliqué decoration on the facade particularly appealed to her. Small groups of houses in the Pittville area are also in the Art Deco style, and there are strong elements of it in the frontage of Burton's shop in the High Street. As with so many of our lectures on physical aspects of Cheltenham, this talk opened our eyes to details of our surroundings that we might never have noticed.

Anne Strathie's topic on February 19th was **Henry 'Birdie' Bowers: Captain Scott's Marvel**, the title of her recent book. She said she had embarked on writing the book because in an old biography of Bowers she had found a reference to his mother which had led her to the discovery that she came from Cheltenham. Born in St George's Terrace as Emily Webb, the daughter of a tailor, she attended Holy Trinity School, then trained at St Mary's College. Once qualified as a teacher she left Cheltenham, never to return, and became head of a primary school in Sidmouth. From there she went out to teach in a mission school in Penang, where she met her husband-to-be, Captain Alexander Bowers. They married in 1877 in Singapore and had two daughters. He was a successful entrepreneur at first, running shipping lines, but his businesses began to fail and the family moved back to the house he had built in Greenock. There Henry Robertson Bowers, their only son, was born in 1883. His father returned to the Far East and died in Rangoon in 1886. His widowed mother was then asked by a friend of her husband to act as foster-mother to his numerous children while they were being educated in England. She agreed, and he installed her and all the children in a house in Streatham. When Bowers left school in 1897 his mother could not dissuade him from going to sea, and he went to HMS Worcester, a nautical training college where he received a rigorous education before spending four hard but exciting years sailing round the world as an apprentice on the square-rigged *Loch Torridon*. In 1905 he enlisted in the Royal Indian Marine Service (his family not being rich enough to buy him a commission in the Royal Navy) and served in India, Ceylon and Burma. Meanwhile he followed the progress of Scott's and Shackleton's expeditions in Antarctica with great interest. Sir Clements Markham, one of Scott's backers, whom Bowers had met earlier, suggested he apply to join Scott's next expedition, and he wrote to Scott and was accepted. When Scott first met Bowers on the *Terra Nova* he was unimpressed, but by time the ship reached New Zealand several months later he had realised that this tough, indefatigable little man (Bowers was only 5ft 4ins), who seemed impervious to cold, was invaluable. Bowers also formed a bond with Edward Wilson, with whom he shared strong religious beliefs and a fascination with the

natural world. The speaker then recounted the gruelling experiences of the party on the voyage to Antarctica and on their various journeys across the ice and snow, notably the winter journey undertaken by Bowers with Wilson and Cherry-Garrard to the emperor penguin rookery at Cape Crozier. She told how Amundsen's unexpected dash for the south pole deprived Scott's party of the triumph of being first, and analysed some of the reasons for the tragic death of all five men on the return journey. She herself had been to Christchurch, New Zealand, where she traced the family of the local girl, Dorothy Bowden, with whom Bowers (who never married) had had a brief romance before the *Terra Nova* sailed for Antarctica. A church still exists there where Scott and his party worshipped, and the town is very proud of its historical link with the ill-fated expedition. The large audience listened with rapt attention to this exceptionally well-illustrated and informative lecture.



Photo: Geoff North

#### *Research and Display Evening*

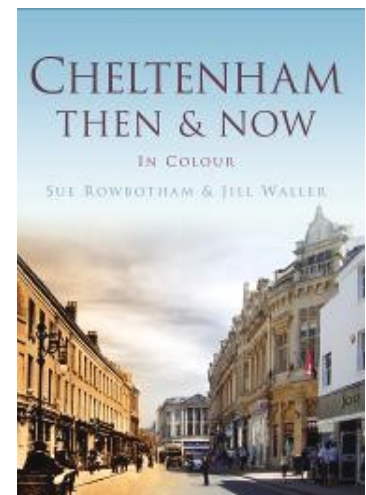
The Society's annual social evening was held this year on January 15th. On the screen in the Council Chamber were images relating to the Victoria County History and Pittville Gates Restoration projects, and there were other displays both there and in the Montpellier and Sherborne Rooms on themes such as Thirlestaine House, St Paul's, the various marbles used in Cheltenham architecture and Ron Prewer's photographs of the Lower High Street. Refreshments were served in the Cambray Room as usual, and a raffle, this time in aid of the Society's own funds, raised £140.

## *NEW PUBLICATION*

### **Cheltenham Then & Now**

by Sue Rowbotham and Jill Waller

Picturesquely located on the edge of the Cotswolds and famous for horse racing as well as for its numerous festivals, Cheltenham also has a rich history. The authors of this new book, CLHS members Sue Rowbotham and Jill Waller, are already highly regarded as writers with an unrivalled knowledge of many aspects of local history. Here they throw light on Cheltenham's history in a novel way, comparing 45 archive photographs from key locations around the town with the same scenes of today, showing how much and how little has changed over the years. From the Everyman Theatre and the Assembly Rooms to the Playhouse and the Montpellier Gardens, *Cheltenham Then & Now* captures the essence of the town and the life of its people, past and present. With detailed and informative captions accompanying each pairing of photographs, this fascinating book will awaken nostalgic memories for all who know and love Cheltenham.



Published in hardback in December 2012 by The History Press, price £12.99. ISBN 978-0-7524-6527-2

## FEATURE

## THE HEIR HUNTERS COME TO CHELTENHAM

Aficionados of the BBC TV series *Heir Hunters* will have been delighted to find Cheltenham as the focus of an episode originally broadcast last year and repeated in January. The 'orphan assets' in question resulted from the sale of Dunalley School after it had closed in 1999. The school had been built on land donated by the grocer, tea dealer and later also baker John Crew.

Inheritance law requires that proceeds from the sale of a charitable benefaction are to be distributed among any surviving descendants. John Crew, who died in 1872, had six children of whom five left descendants, but the heir hunters concentrated on his granddaughter Ada Grace Ward (in fact generally known simply as Mrs Grace Ward), who had distinguished herself as Commandant of the Red Cross Hospital at Leckhampton Court during the First World War. Over twenty beneficiaries were eventually identified and they each received a share of the £126,000 estate.

The programme makers interviewed Anthea Jones and myself. Anthea spoke about the area of Cheltenham where Dunalley School was built, and how the enclosure of the open fields meant that property owners were allotted small pieces of former common land in compensation for their loss of grazing rights. These small plots were best suited to market gardening (John Crew's father-in-law was a market gardener) or to building. She mentioned John Crew's shop at 83 Winchcombe Street, probably on the corner of the High Street, and the fact that he expanded his business to be a baker. I dealt with the career of Mrs Grace Ward. She was in charge of an extremely busy but cheerful hospital where doctors and nurses had to contend with unfamiliar and difficult wounds and conditions. I also drew comparisons with the Court's present-day role as a Sue Ryder Hospice, though this was omitted from the later broadcast. A representative from the British Schools Museum at Hitchin also spoke about the Monitorial System of Education that was originally practised at Dunalley School.



The former Dunalley School, now 'The Academy' apartments  
(Photo: Eric Miller)

Neither Anthea nor I knew that the other was involved, nor were we told much about the background to the case, which traced a line of descent from John Crew to Grace Ward and eventually to Grace Ward's granddaughter. As the programme didn't really explain these relationships, readers may be interested in some corroborative detail. The significant facts are that John Crew's daughter Grace married William Hall who (like her maternal grandfather) was a market gardener. He lived at Treelands off Leckhampton Road (the house was demolished and the surrounding vegetable plots and orchards built over in the 1970s) and had several shops in Cheltenham, trading as William Hall and Sons Ltd at 92 and 92a High Street and 16 Montpellier Walk.

William and Grace Hall's daughter Ada Grace married Charles Albert James Ward, the elder son of George Ward of Fairfield House, not far down the road from Treelands. Charles had been educated at Cheltenham Modern School and trained as a lawyer before joining the Army. He fought in the Boer War and during the First World War was serving as a lieutenant in the Indian Army Reserve of Officers. He died on board a hospital ship on the Red Sea in December 1918, aged 51. Their son Kenneth Eric (1896-1964) was the father of the last inheritor identified in the programme. William Hall, Grace Ward and Kenneth Ward, as well as Grace's mother, who had died in 1883 when Grace was only 14, are buried in a large family plot in Leckhampton Churchyard. The white marble cross that commemorates Grace (*d.* 1951) bears the inscription 'SERVICE NOT SELF', a motto with which John Crew would surely have concurred.

*Eric Miller*



Mrs. A. GRACE WARD, M.B.E.  
Commandant, Glos. 42.

Mrs Grace Ward, MBE, from the Leckhampton Court Hospital souvenir book, 1919

## SOCIETY NEWS

### New Members

A warm welcome is extended to the following:

*Miss Susan Stead and Mr Andy Cate*

*Miss R M Franklin*

*Allen and Jenny Miller*

*David and Virginia Adsett*

*Mrs Shelagh Hancox*

*Mr Dave Smith*

### Victoria County History

#### Summerfield support for two Cheltenham projects

The Summerfield Charitable Trust, set up by the Cheltenham antique dealer Ron Summerfield shortly before his



death in 1989, has given generous support recently to the Art Gallery and Museum. It is very good to learn now that the Summerfield Trustees have in the last few weeks also agreed to make grants to two other very worthwhile causes – the restoration of Pittville Gates, and the planned Victoria County History volume for Cheltenham and district. The Friends of Pittville, and the Gloucestershire County History Trust, are both delighted to have this valuable expression of support from one of our best-known local charities.

If you have passed by the Gates recently, you will have seen the new pillars starting to rise towards the March skies, and there will be an update article in the forthcoming *Journal*. Meanwhile, fundraising continues for both projects! For the latest on the VCH in Gloucestershire, go to [www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/Gloucestershire](http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/Gloucestershire)

### Twins

Ever since Dr Anne Dunn made contact with our twin towns many years ago we have exchanged Newsletters and the occasional visit with local history societies in Annecy, Göttingen and Cheltenham, Pennsylvania. This year Jessika Wichner is coming with other visitors from Göttingen at the end of July and would like to meet some of us to try to establish closer links between our two local history societies. If any of you would like to participate, please contact me. Ability to speak German is not a requirement – her English is excellent.

*Jill Barlow*

[jillbarlow@virginmedia.com](mailto:jillbarlow@virginmedia.com) tel. 01242 233421

#### BALH CONFERENCE

Cheltenham Racecourse, Friday 26th-Sunday 28th April

#### 'Changing Communities: Fresh Perspectives from Recent Local History Studies in Gloucestershire'

The British Association for Local History (BALH) is holding its annual conference in Cheltenham this year with the support of CLHS and the Gloucestershire County History Trust. It takes the form of a wine reception on the Friday evening followed by a whole day of lectures by visiting and local speakers on a wide variety of themes relevant to this county. There will also be stands and exhibits by local and national organisations in the display hall at the racecourse. On the Sunday morning CLHS will be offering guided walking tours of Cheltenham.

Advance booking is necessary to attend the conference. For details of the programme, cost and booking procedure please see the BALH website, [www.balh.co.uk/events](http://www.balh.co.uk/events)

#### THE EXAMINER INDEX PROVES ITS WORTH

Tom Maslin reports that a family researcher friend of his in Monmouth, seeking information about an ancestor in Cheltenham, downloaded the Examiner index at Tom's suggestion and immediately found a very interesting 'lead' to take his research forward. 'Here is proof of the effect of old records', says Tom's friend. 'Well done Cheltenham LHS!'

## NEW PUBLICATION

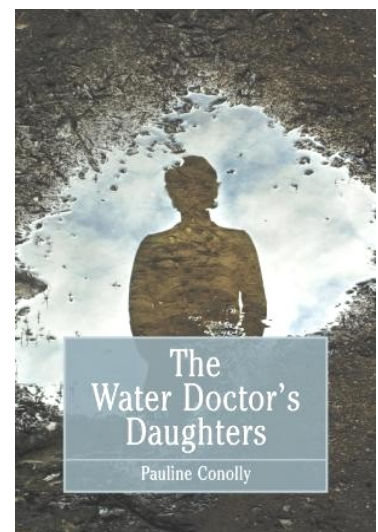
### The Water Doctor's Daughters by Pauline Conolly

This book has strong links with Cheltenham. In 1852 the five daughters of widowed Malvern water-cure physician James Marsden were sent to Paris in the care of their governess. The following year Marian and Lucy Marsden died and there were two sensational trials after the governess was charged with manslaughter and cruelty.

Both the girls' grandmothers were from Cheltenham and were closely involved with the Marsden children. At the second trial the defence produced a dossier in which Dr Marsden was accused of bribing and hiding a witness at Cheltenham, aided by his elderly mother. This dossier was suppressed by the judge, but the author located a rare copy of it in the course of her research.

There is a saying that old crimes cast long shadows: in 1877 a third daughter died from poisoning in mysterious circumstances.

The book is fully referenced and indexed and includes 32 illustrations of people and places associated with the story. It is to be launched at 2.00 pm on March 23rd at the historic Foley Arms Hotel in Malvern. Published by Robert Hale at £18.99 ISBN 97807 19805707





## LOCAL NEWS

### St Mary's Attains Minster Status

Cheltenham Parish Church has ceased to exist – not on account of an earthquake or the arrival of the demolition men. On February 3<sup>rd</sup> it was elevated to the status of Minster by the Bishop of Gloucester, the Right Revd Michael Perham, in a ceremony attended by more than 450 people.

Historians may feel that the wheel has turned full circle since it is suggested that Cheltenham had a minster in Anglo-Saxon times which was a collegiate church rather than a monastery with a number of clergy ministering to the parish and evangelising the surrounding area. However, the new Cheltenham Minster differs from the Anglo-Saxon model. Like other recently created minsters in Preston, Plymouth, Sunderland and Doncaster it is designed to enhance the status of a town it serves and bring community and church closer together. As the Bishop expressed it in his sermon: 'Here is a church at the heart of a significant town that, while being technically a parish church, has a vocation for the whole of that town and a particular responsibility to engage with the social, civic, political and cultural life of that town.' As the Rector of Cheltenham, Revd Dr Tudor Griffiths observes: 'The bestowal of the title 'Minster' here in Cheltenham not only acknowledges the significance of this town in the Diocese of Gloucester, but is also a call for the church to engage with renewed confidence and energy in the life of the community.' In recent months improvements have been made to the church's interior and plans are now afoot to upgrade the Minster Grounds.

*Roger Jones*



Photo: Geoff North

## VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

### THE MILES SCRAPBOOKS—HELP STILL NEEDED

In the last issue we appealed for one or more members to come forward to help the Cheltenham Local Studies Library digitise the MILES SCRAPBOOKS, now held in the Gloucestershire Archives. There are ten scrapbooks, all compiled in the 1920s and 1930s by Alfred Miles, a Cheltenham resident. They are largely handwritten and contain press cuttings and maps as well as correspondence, notes and record extracts, all potentially valuable research material for local historians. The aim is to photograph, page by page, at least the volumes most relevant to Cheltenham and make a digital copy available here. The staff of Gloucestershire Archives would provide all necessary help and support. Anyone who owns a good camera and would be interested in undertaking at least part of this task is invited to contact Sally Self ([journal.clhs@btinternet.com](mailto:journal.clhs@btinternet.com)), who can supply more details.

### CHRONOLOGY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Volunteers are needed to help research and produce an enlarged, updated version of *A Chronology of Trade & Industry in Cheltenham* - all contributions welcome. Please contact Jill Waller on 07512 318866 or 01242 522485.

### PITTVILLE GATES

As part of the restoration of Pittville Gates there will be a project to find out more about the social history of the neighbourhood with the aim of providing material for local schools and for publication. If you are interested in taking part in this work (no previous experience necessary) please contact Judie Hodsdon on 01242 233045 or e-mail [jj49@btinternet.com](mailto:jj49@btinternet.com).

## NEW PUBLICATION

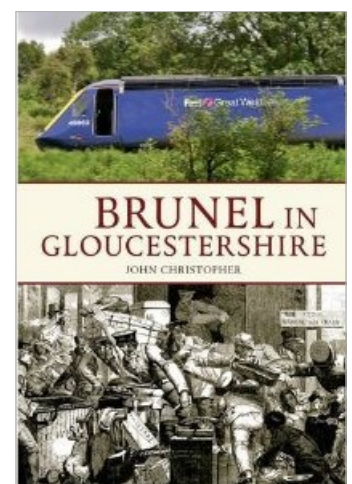
### Brunel in Gloucestershire by John Christopher

Isambard Kingdom Brunel, Britain's most celebrated engineer, is perhaps best known for his ships and the Bristol to London main railway line. He also designed many structures in Gloucestershire, notably the tubular bridge crossing the Wye from England to Wales at Chepstow, which was the precursor of the Royal Albert Bridge at Saltash. Brunel oversaw the construction of the railway line from Swindon to Gloucester and the Broad Gauge goods shed at Stroud station, as well as the station in Cirencester. He was heavily involved in the surveying of other major rail routes in the county too, and was the engineer for the Bristol to Gloucester route, which opened in 1844.

John Christopher, an acknowledged expert on Brunel with numerous books to his name, takes us on a tour of the county, showing the effect that Brunel had on the railways, roads and rivers and the transport network of Gloucestershire.

Published in October 2012 by Amberley Publishing at £14.99.

ISBN 97814 45607818



## FEATURE

EARLY MEDICINE IN MINSTERWORTH  
(AND ELSEWHERE)

An 18th century apothecary at work

Going back a century or two and well before the arrival of any form of National Health Service in this country, medical treatment was available only if you were well-off enough to pay the doctors' fees or, in certain cases, were able to receive help from some local charity. In Minsterworth for example, in the worst scenario the poor could be treated at the union workhouse in Westbury-on-Severn which had a small infirmary, but for most people, the workhouse and its hardships were a dreaded last resort. This meant that ordinary sufferers were easy prey for all kinds of travelling 'doctors', quacks and charlatans offering, at a price, cures and remedies for all complaints.

Back in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century the Gloucester Journal regularly published for its readers a 'Catalogue of Medecines', listing what was available. In an issue dated February 28th 1774 for example, there were treatments such as The 'Herb Coltsfoot' (for "coughs, wheezings, physicky complaints, consumptions, hoarseness, defluxions, catarrh and all diseases of the breast and lungs"), and Dr Ward's 'Liquid Sweat' ("an excellent remedy against fevers, vomitings, gripes, complaints of the head, difficulty of breathing, hoarseness and weaknesses peculiar to the fair sex").

Medical authorities of the day were concerned to combat 'the obtrusion into our profession of ignorant and unskilled persons'. Thus in the Journal of February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1774 the following advert appeared:

**FOR CHILBLAINS, RHEUMATISMS, &C.  
Dr. STEER'S OPODELDOC.**

**CAUTION**

The innumerable Counterfeits and Imitations of this Medicine render it absolutely necessary to guard the Publick against the impositions that are daily practised. Various Druggists and other designing persons (some taking the advantage of being of the name of Steers, and others venturing to use both Mr. Newbery's and Mr. Steer's name in their bills) have disseminated, throughout the town and country, many spurious sorts of Opodeldoc, infinitely inferior in quality to the real preparation.

All purchasers, therefore, who would wish to avail themselves of the virtues of Dr. Steer's Original Opodeldoc, are required to observe very particularly, and as the only means to prevent their being deceived, that the name of P. Newbery is engraved on all the stamps which are pasted around the directions on the outside of each bottle; and as this distinction has been made by order of the Commissioners of the Stamp-Office, no person can imitate it without being guilty of felony. The efficacy of this medicine is so universally acknowledged in Chilblains, Rheumatism, Bruises, Sprains, and other complaints, that any specification of its virtues is unnecessary.

Sold in London only at Mr. NEWBERY's (the only Warehouse for Dr. James's Powder), No.45, in St. Paul's Churchyard, and at Mr. Steer's Medicine Warehouse, Old Bond Street, in bottles, price 2s. each, duty included. Sold also by R. Raikes, Gloucester, and by the vendors of Mr. Newbery's Medicines in other country towns.

According to several sources, 'opodeldoc' was a liniment made from soap, spirit of wine, camphor, rosemary oil and sometimes spirit of ammonia. It seems to have been fairly reputable, but it was also easy to mix up yourself, hence the proprietors' attempts to convince the public of the superiority of their version.

Things are different today of course – or are they?

*Terry Moore-Scott*

(with thanks to Dr. Anthony Lynch for drawing this material to my attention)



## 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. Most of these books are in new or 'as new' condition, and others are priced accordingly. They include the following:

The New Club by Neil Parrack— new, special price £8.50 (several copies, some signed and kindly donated by the author)  
 A Grand City: Bristol in the 18th and 19th Centuries, ed. M J Crossley Evans—£7.50 (2 copies)  
 History of Cirencester by Beecham— £25  
 Miniatures by Dudley Heath (1905)—£20  
 Mee—The King's England series: Monmouthshire (1st edition, 1951)—£15; Worcestershire—£8.50; Warwickshire—£4; Somerset—£4  
 Pevsner County Series: Wiltshire (revised Cherry)— £12; Oxfordshire (with Sherwood)—£10; Suffolk (revised Radcliffe)—£10; NE Norfolk & Norwich—£10; Herefordshire—£10; N Somerset & Bristol—£10; Worcestershire—£8.50; Cumberland & Westmorland (some loose pages)— £5; S & SW Somerset—£8.50  
 Stow on the Wold: A History of a Cotswold Town by Johnson—£10  
 Medieval and Post-Medieval Development within Bristol's Inner Suburbs, ed. Watts—£10

Volumes of the **BGAS Record Series**, now for sale at **only £5 each**, as follows:

(Vol 7) Tewkesbury Churchwardens' Accounts 1563-1624 (2 copies)

(Vol 15) A Calendar of the Registers of the Priory of Llanthony by Gloucester 1457-1466, 1501-1525

(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 - set of 2 books, 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 232740 or e-mail [heatherbell71@hotmail.com](mailto:heatherbell71@hotmail.com)

## OBITUARY

### DEREK SHORTHOUSE (1932-2012)

*'Good better best, never let it rest, until the good be better and the better best'*



Photo: Geoff North

Derek died suddenly on 27th November 2012 and his death was a great shock to us all. Derek was one of those 'larger than life' characters whom, even if we did not know very well, we looked forward to seeing and having a conversation with, and expected to always be there. The photograph was taken on the 2nd October 2010 at the GRCC Local History Afternoon at Sir Thomas Rich's School, Longlevens. This event, held annually until 2011, was attended by members of various local history societies. Derek loved these meetings, even after he became less mobile and was restricted to sitting on the stage, where people came to talk to him (the photograph shows Derek with Bryan Jerrard), bring him cups of coffee and, of course, books to look at. He never left without a pile of books to add to his extensive library! His funeral and burial on December 10th 2012 was at The Church of Holy Innocents, Highnam, a church he loved, although we were told by his elder son Dominic in his tribute that Derek had, shortly before his death and after much deliberation, decided to embrace the Roman Catholic faith. Hence, the Service of Thanksgiving was officiated by both the Reverend Jeff Crago and Canon Liam Slattery of St Peter's, Gloucester. Derek loved nothing better than a good debate and those attending this Service felt, I'm sure, as we did, that this was Derek at his best, asking us all to question our religious beliefs and rethink our lives. We feel privileged to have known Derek, and indeed the Society has lost a very valued member. Our sincere good wishes go to the family and his closest friends who will miss him terribly.

*Elaine and Geoff North*

## CAN YOU HELP?

### 'Echo' Racing Columnist?

An enquirer seeks information about Harry Elias Clark (1866 - 1947). The 1911 census shows him as a grocer with a shop at 4 Bon Marche Place, Cheltenham (one of four shops in Great Norwood Street, near Suffolk Road), where he was living with his wife and 9 of his 11 children. At about that date he changed the spelling of his surname from Clark to Clarke—because, as an additional job, he wrote a racing column for the Gloucestershire Echo and he just thought that Clarke with an 'e' looked better! When he died in 1947 he was living at 22 Tivoli Place.

Does anyone have any ideas or information about Harry's 'second career' as a journalist and the material he wrote for the Echo?

### The boatman and the lady of Pittville Lake

Henry George Healey was employed by Cheltenham Borough Council as a boatman in the early 1900s, tending the boats on Pittville Lake with the help of his wife Gertrude. While Henry was on active service during the first World War, Mrs Healey (née Safe) assumed her husband's duties and was often to be seen taking soldiers who were convalescents from local hospitals on boat trips around the Lake.

The enquirer would be grateful for any information on this couple.

*If you can help with either of the above queries please contact Joyce Cummings on 01242 527299 or e-mail [joyce@cyberwebospace.net](mailto:joyce@cyberwebospace.net)*

## 14th ANNUAL DE FERRIERES LECTURE

Wednesday 20th March 2013 at 7.15 pm  
in the Bacon Theatre, Dean Close School

### Caroline de Guitaut

Curator of Decorative Arts and Assistant to the  
Director of the Royal Collection

### ROYAL DIAMONDS

Caroline is an authority on royal jewels. In 2012 she curated the exhibition 'Diamonds: A Jubilee Celebration' for the Buckingham Palace summer opening, and wrote the book of the same title which marked the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. In this lecture she examines famous diamonds in royal ownership, particularly those acquired by monarchs from George IV to Elizabeth II.

*Tickets £10 from the Tourist Information Office and from the Bacon Theatre box office.*

Friends of Deerhurst Church 29th Annual Lecture

St Mary's Church  
Deerhurst  
at 7.30pm

On the eve  
of The Martyrdom of  
St Alphege

**St Ælfheah  
From Deerhurst  
To Martyrdom:  
Millennial Reflections**

Professor Nicholas Brooks  
University of Birmingham

**REVISED DATE SATURDAY 20th APRIL 2013**

Tickets: £5 - Students: £3

Tickets on the door or visit:  
[www.deerhurstfriends.co.uk](http://www.deerhurstfriends.co.uk)

The 2012 Deerhurst Lecture was postponed due to the lecturer's illness. It was originally scheduled to mark the millennium of the martyrdom of St Alphege (also called Ælfheah, a pre-conquest Archbishop of Canterbury) who began his career at Deerhurst. The revised date is the morrow of the feast of St Alphege and will thus serve to bring to a conclusion the millennium year. For further information see <http://deerhurstfriends.co.uk>.

This year's Deerhurst lecture will take place in September as usual. For details see page 4.

## NEXT ISSUE

Please forward items for inclusion in the  
JULY 2013 Newsletter by

**Monday 10th June 2013**

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

Tel: 01242 230125  
E-mail: [kbooth@dircon.co.uk](mailto:kbooth@dircon.co.uk)