



# Cheltenham Local History Society

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Main photo courtesy of Terry Langhorn

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## EDITORIAL

In Cheltenham there is nearly always at least one project under way aimed at restoring or replacing some element of the townscape—the proposed restoration of Pittville Gates comes to mind as a current example. The new pedestrian bridge over the lake in Pittville Park, pictured here on its (extremely cold) official opening day on February 9th, is the latest to reach successful completion. Besides local councillors, many members of Park Watch and Friends of Pittville, both groups that have supported this project, were there to see the Mayor cut the ribbon. There has been a bridge on this site since 1810; the rustic wooden one in the inset picture was built before World War I. The last bridge was demolished in 2004 after being vandalised. The new galvanised metal structure has decorative features based on art work by the children of Dunalley Primary School and made by the metalwork artist Christopher Lisney. With its pleasant simple lines and durable construction it should be an asset to the Park for many years.

*Kath Boothman*

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Society's Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday 24th April 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 Barbara Driver, as President of the Society, will chair the meeting and give a short address.

### *Election of Officers and Committee 2012-13*

Officers and committee members (as listed in the 2011 AGM Minutes) will resign in accordance with the Society's constitution, although they can be re-elected if they so wish. Janet Mann has decided not to stand for re-election, and we thank her for the work she has done as a committee member. Nominations are invited for Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and for committee members. If you would like to nominate someone or be nominated yourself, either for one of these posts or as a committee member, please contact the Secretary, Heather Atkinson (tel. 01242 232740, e-mail heatherbell71@hotmail.com) for a nomination form.

After the AGM business is concluded there will be a talk by **Mrs Caroline Adams** entitled '**Food from the Past**'.

## 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 14th April and, as places are limited on these trips, 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 14th 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.

### New Publication

#### **The New Club at Imperial Square**

by Neil Parrack

The New Club started life over a century ago as The Cheltenham & Gloucestershire Club at the Assembly Rooms in the High Street, and still survives today. Neil, who is a member of CLHS, tells its story against the background of Cheltenham's history during the past 100 years, bringing in many references to local newspapers such as the *Looker-On* and describing, among other things, the construction of the Town Hall and life in the two World Wars. There are fascinating tales about members of the Club and the staff and the Club's inevitable struggle to survive financially. In fact, the book could be very useful to anyone involved in running a club of any kind - there are many lessons to be learned! The book is illustrated with both colour and black and white photographs, the majority taken by Geoff and Elaine North.

Price £10, but Neil has generously donated copies to be sold for Society funds at only £8.50.

For further information phone Heather Atkinson on 01242 230740 or e-mail heatherbell71@hotmail.com

*Saturday 23rd June at 10.00 am*

#### **Backstage Tour of the Everyman Theatre**

The Everyman, the oldest working theatre designed by the celebrated Victorian theatre architect Frank Matcham, is one of Cheltenham's historical and architectural treasures. On this special guided backstage tour we learn about its founding in Regency Cheltenham, its subsequent history and its theatrical pedigree, not to mention its ghost stories. The tour takes about an hour. Meet in the foyer by the box office. Charge: £5. Everyman Theatre Association members and under-16s: £3.

*Wednesday 11th July at 2.00 pm*

#### **Visit to Dean Close School guided by the School Archivist, Charles Whitney**

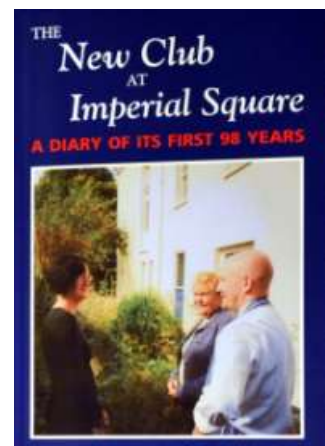
Founded on its present 50-acre site in 1886 as a boys' boarding school, Dean Close admitted its first girls in 1967. (The school's website give a very interesting account of its history.) Our itinerary will include most of the following: the entrance to the old school/ old Headmaster's House; the old School Library (now seminar room); an original classroom; the present Library; Upper (Hooper) Quad; Chapel Close (the original playing field); Chapel; Lower Quad; Swimming Pool; Orangerie; Bacon Theatre; Music School; artificial hockey pitches, old gardens; site of boys' pig 'Farm'; Hoare Memorial Rose Garden; 'Shrapnel' Building; Big Field. Meet at the Main Entrance (large black door) at the far left end of the school buildings as seen from Shelburne Road. There is some parking in front of that door, and also some on Shelburne Road itself. Group size is limited to 20. Charge: £3.50 per head.

*Wednesday 8th August at 6.00 pm*

#### **Visit to All Saints' Church guided by Peter Warwick and Fairview guided by Steven Blake**

All Saints' was designed by John Middleton in early French Gothic style and consecrated in 1868. It has a strong musical tradition: Gustav Holst's father was its first organist. There is much colour and decoration, some of it inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement. Burne Jones designed the rose window in the south transept.

**At 6.30 pm** Steven Blake will lead a walk through the heart of the Fairview area, looking at early 19th century houses and (it is suggested) finishing at one of the local pubs. Group size limited to 20. Charge: £3 per head.



## EVENING LECTURE PROGRAMME 2012 - 13

*Tuesday 18th September:*

**Mrs Sue Rowbotham—Commemorative Plaques in Cheltenham**

*Tuesday 16th October:*

**Dr Simon Draper—Anglo-Saxon Gloucestershire**

*Tuesday 20th November:*

**Mr Philip Moss—The Spas of Gloucester**

*Tuesday 18th December:*

**Anne Strathie—Henry ‘Birdie’ Bowers: Captain Scott’s Marvel. Another Explorer with Cheltenham Connections**

*Tuesday 15th January 2013:*

**Research and Display Evening**

*Tuesday 19th February 2013:*

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

*Tuesday 19th March 2013:*

**Mr Alan Pilbeam—Gloucestershire 300 years ago**

*Tuesday 16th April 2013:*

**Mr Barry Simon—the History of Aviation in Gloucestershire**

*Tuesday 21st May 2013:*

**AGM followed by Dr Steven Blake—Cheltenham and the Glorious Cotswolds**

## MORNING LECTURES 2012-13

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 23rd October:*

**Mr Aylwin Sampson—Città Italiana: Cheltenham?**

*Tuesday 23rd April 2013:*

**Mr Michael Cole—Prestbury’s Lost buildings and their Legacy**

*Reminder...*

### MORNING LECTURE

*Tuesday 10th April at 10.00 am for 10.30 am  
at St Luke’s Church Hall,  
St Luke’s Place, Cheltenham*

**Dr Christina Beardsley –  
Unutterable Love: the Passionate  
Life and Teaching of  
F W Robertson**



*The 2012 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 20th April:*

**John Putley—Stand and Deliver: Highwaymen of Gloucestershire 1700-1830**

### Gotherington Local History Society

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

*Tuesday 27th March:*

**Jinx Newley—Bristol, City of Monks and Bones**

*Tuesday 24th April:*

**Rose Hewlett—Frampton-on-Severn**

### Swindon Village Local History Society

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

*Saturday 14th April at 9.30 am:*

**Bird and Nature Walk at Coombe Hill (weather permitting).** Meet at Swindon Village Hall car park.

*Saturday 26th May at 4.00 pm:*

**Barry Simon—The History of Swindon Village.** There will also be a history display.

### 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 27th March:*

**John Heathcott—Ancient Woodlands of Gloucestershire**

*Tuesday 24th April:*

**Chiz Howard, Cotswold Archaeology Ltd—Excavations on the Route of the Wormington to Sapperton Pipeline**

*Tuesday 22nd May:*

**Mrs Pat Hemming—The History of St Edward’s School**

### Holst Birthplace Museum

www.holstmuseum.org.uk

4 Clarence Road, Cheltenham

*Saturday 14th April at 7.30 pm in the Thirlestaine Gallery, Cheltenham College:*

**Concert by the Bachmann Trio**

With music by Beethoven, Holst, Sibelius and Dohnányi. Tickets £15 available from the Museum or the Tourist Information Centre.

*Friday 18th May, 6.00-8.00 pm:*

**Twilight Opening of the Museum as part of ‘Museums at Night’**

Admission free.

*Monday 21st May in the Museum at 4.30-6.00 pm and repeated at 7.00-8.30 pm:*

**Talk by Sue Addison of the Royal College of Music** Featuring Holst’s trombone united with his piano. Advance tickets only, £10 to include a glass of wine.

## MORE FOR YOUR DIARY

### Historical Association, Cheltenham and Gloucester Branch

Meetings start at 7.30 pm. Cheltenham meetings are at the Up Hatherley Library, Caernavon Road, and Gloucester meetings at The Friends' Meeting House, Greyfriars (off Southgate Street)

*Tuesday 27th March in Gloucester:*

**Guy Walters—The Berlin Olympics of 1936: Dress Rehearsal for the coming Conflict between Fascism and Democracy**

### *Exhibitions*

#### Holst Birthplace Museum

*To run from February 14th to June 29th:*

#### **New Acquisitions**

Including autographed manuscripts and original letters from Gustav Holst and his great uncle Theodor von Holst.

#### **Cheltenham Italian Society**

#### **THE SUSAN NEWTON MEMORIAL LECTURE**

*Tuesday 19th June at 7.30 pm  
at St Andrew's Church, Montpellier Street*

**Chris Ryder, Chairman of Cheltenham in Bloom—'Cheltenham's Public Gardens - past, present and future. Breathing life into the Italian Garden'.**

*Further details at [www.freewebs.com/cheltenhamitaliansociety](http://www.freewebs.com/cheltenhamitaliansociety)*

### **ANNUAL CHELTENHAM CIVIC AWARDS LECTURE**

*Thursday 19th April 2012 at 7.30 pm  
at St Andrew's United Reformed Church, Montpellier*

**Sue Illman, President Elect, LI**  
BA, Dip.AA, Grad DipAA, CMCI

#### **Landscape Architecture, past, present and future**

Sue Illman trained as a Landscape Architect in Cheltenham, returning in 1987 to establish Illman Young Landscape Design in partnership with Yvonne Young. Sue has a large portfolio of projects to her name and has worked with the private and public sectors, locally and nationally. The calibre of her work has been acknowledged by the RIBA. She is known in Cheltenham for the landscape design around the Centaur building, Cheltenham Race Course and the Zurich offices at Bishops Cleeve.

Sue has been a member of the Landscape Institute for 20 years and since 2005 a key member of the LI team that delivered the Pathway for Chartership scheme, which she will be refining during the lead up to her Presidency and promoting a Green infrastructure.

**Admission on the door, £5 to include a glass of wine before the lecture.**

A Cheltenham Civic Society Public Lecture

### **13th ANNUAL DE FERRIERES LECTURE**

*Wednesday March 21st 2012 at 7.15 pm  
at Dean Close School*

#### **Dr David Wilson**

**Edward Wilson's Antarctic Notebooks: the Science, Faith and Art of a Polar Pioneer**

Dr David Wilson is a noted Polar historian and a great-nephew of Cheltenham's Antarctic hero, Dr Edward Wilson, who was the Chief Scientific Officer of Captain Scott's 1910-12 expedition and a member of the team that reached the South Pole on 17th January 1912. A pioneering scientist and a deep mystic, Wilson was also among the last of the great expedition artists. A century after his famous death, his great-nephew will guide us through his work, whilst adding a personal dimension to this centenary occasion.

*Admission £8. Tickets are available from the Bacon Theatre box office and from the Tourist Office in town.*

#### **Concert in aid of Pittville Gates Restoration**

#### **THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE POLICE MALE VOICE CHOIR**

at St Matthew's Church, Clarence Street, Cheltenham  
*Saturday 31st March at 7.30 pm*

Tickets £7.50. Refreshments available.  
For tickets phone (01242) 235173 or 510144  
or mobile 07889112863

#### **GLOUCESTERSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY OPEN DAY**

*Saturday 14th April from 10.00 am - 4.00 pm  
at the Crypt School, Podsmead Road,  
Tuffley, Gloucester*

Entrance and parking free. The no.10 bus from the city centre stops at the school. All welcome.

#### **Attractions include:**

- Help desk for your research problems
- Products for sale, including books, maps, CDs, photographs, fiches, discs etc.
- Other societies and commercial organisations

Light refreshments are available all day, courtesy of Highnam WI

#### **Come along and meet the experts!**

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

#### **British Association for Local History (BALH) LOCAL HISTORY DAY IN MANCHESTER Saturday 16th June**

*at Friends' Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester*

The programme includes:

**Dr Paul Carter - Records of the Victorian Poor**

AGM and presentation of Awards for 2012

**Professor Karen Hunt -The Local and the Everyday:  
Inter-war Women's Politics**

*For further details and booking form go to [www.balh.co.uk](http://www.balh.co.uk)*



## LOCAL HISTORY AFTERNOON

Sunday 1st July, 2.00 – 5.00 pm

at **St Andrew's United Reformed Church,**  
**Montpellier Street, Cheltenham**  
hosted by **Cheltenham Local History Society**  
**Admission: adults £1, children and students 50p**  
**to include tea/coffee/squash and biscuits**

**2.20pm Talk by Jacquelené Fillmore :**  
**'Local History on the Internet'**

**3.30pm Choice of two walking tours:**

- 1. Montpellier's decorative ironwork, guided by Geoff and Elaine North**
- 2. A Tree Walk in Montpellier guided by Chris Chavasse, Senior Trees Officer at CBC**

There will also be many displays by local societies, a raffle and sales of new and second-hand publications. Tickets for Jacquelené Fillmore's talk (£3) will be on sale in advance at Society meetings and from the Treasurer, Miss Sue Brown (tel. 01242 231837).

## REVIEWS

### *Winter lectures*

On November 15th the **Revd John Thompstone**, speaking on **North Cotswold Churches**, gave us a survey of church architectural history as well as a most interesting tour of the county's churches. He explained that he was a retired clergyman and had founded the Historic Churches Group. The earliest phase of church building, he said, brought monasteries and missionary centres such as Deerhurst and very small, plain churches such as Odda's chapel, which was built around 1050. After 1100 more elaborate styles evolved; churches such as Farmcote near Hailes Abbey, and Condicote, are typical simple Norman buildings but have a surprising number of decorative features. In the 13th century church services involved more ritual and chancels were enlarged to accommodate it, changes that can be seen at Bibury and Wyck Rissington for example. Many churches had rood screens dividing the congregation in the nave from the chancel where the communion service took place. Over the chancel arch there might be a wall painting of the Day of Judgment (a 'Doom'), as at Oddington. Hailes, among others, has early 13th century wall paintings in the nave. In the late 1200s stained glass was introduced from France, Fairford church being the most remarkable early example in the Cotswolds. Many churches were enlarged by the addition of a porch, as at Northleach, a chantry chapel endowed by a rich patron (Stow-on-the-Wold and Burford) or a tower, possibly replacing a small Norman one. Oxenton's tower is still small and plain, whereas Chipping Campden's is large and elaborate. After that time the outside may not have altered much, but on the inside the



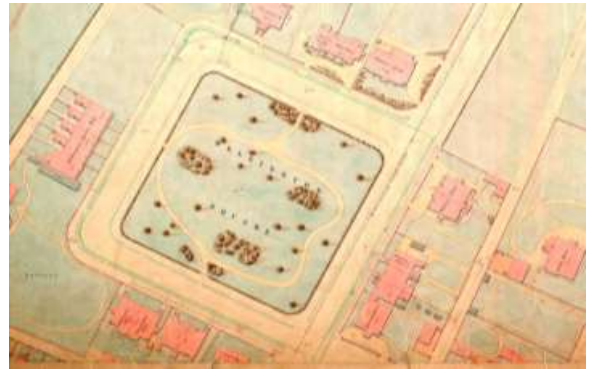
Reformation brought drastic changes. Henry VIII claimed to have restored the purity of the church: there were to be no more paintings or architectural frills. From 1550 to 1660 the Puritans were dominant, but their influence ended with Charles I. Music became an important part of worship, and in some churches a gallery was built to accommodate an organ, as at Buckland near Broadway. The next wave of widespread change came in the 19th century with Pugin and the Victorian Gothic revival, when efforts were made to restore churches to what they had been in the 14th century. Many churches were dilapidated and needed attention, so though the Victorians spoiled some, they saved others. Some they built: Toddington church is an example of pseudo-medieval architecture created at that time. At the end Mr Thompstone handed out a list of all the illustrations he had used, which could give those of us who like looking round old churches ideas for many pleasant summer outings into the Cotswolds.

In December the speaker was **David Aldred** with the theme **Images of the GWR 1962-4**. He said that although the GWR had officially ceased to exist in 1948, many of its trains had continued to run until the early 1960s, when he was a young railway enthusiast with a camera. The nostalgic photos he was to show were mostly his own. He showed a map of the local railway network before 1960, pointing out lines that no longer exist, such as the GWR lines from Cheltenham to Kingham and Ross-on-Wye. The old St James station on the Waitrose site, which he had photographed just before it closed in 1966, was a large one with marshalling yards and 4 platforms. The quickest way to get to London had been to take a train from there to Kingham and change to the Oxford line. Another picture showed the last train on the Honeybourne line, which closed in 1960, though Honeybourne station survived for several more years. Like other small rural stations (eg Chipping Campden and Blockley, which were built of wood) it was fully staffed even though very few trains passed through. He remarked that it was no wonder they had to be closed. He had travelled on one of the last trains to Kingham, passing through Andoversford and Notgrove (two more shabby little wooden stations), Bourton and Stow-on-the-Wold. In Bourton the train stopped to take on water and he had been able to get off and take pictures. Chipping Norton, which had only two trains a day by 1962, had survived as a railhead for goods trains for two years after the passenger service stopped. The now vanished Churchdown station, by contrast, had 40 trains a day in 1962. From Gloucester it was possible to take a sleeper to London. David then talked about the stations down the Stroud valley line, including tiny 'halts' such as Cashes Green and Ham Mill, some of which he had visited by bicycle as a boy. On some of the branch lines in those days little reversible 'auto-trains' were used, later replaced by diesel rail buses. His favourite line was the one to Ross-on-Wye, and he had travelled on it on its very last day, October 31st 1964, passing through various small crumbling stations that have since disappeared. David's talk, with all its wonderfully evocative illustrations, was much enjoyed by the audience, some of whom volunteered memories of their own at the end.

## OLD TOWN SURVEY 1855-1857 CD PRICE £10

It's amazing - magnification can be increased to see the individual brush strokes!

Another milestone for the Society has been reached – we have burned our first CD and it is available from Sally Self, 70 Brooklyn Road, Cheltenham GL51 8DU, (01242) 243714 or [journal.clhs@btinternet.com](mailto:journal.clhs@btinternet.com), price £10. It is an essential research tool for anyone interested in the local history of our town, as it not only shows the extent of the development in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, but also gives valuable clues to the earlier layout of the town in preceding centuries.



The 1855-57 Old Town Survey is a large scale (44ft to 1 inch) map of Cheltenham, consisting of 84 sheets, each 24ins x 36ins, mostly in colour. It covers an area of 3,600 acres, 1,700 acres in great detail. It was originally commissioned to show all the drainage and sewerage in the town, and was held in the Borough Engineer's Department in the Municipal Offices. Its fragile state came to the notice of some of our members, and steps were taken to have it preserved – it is now at the Gloucestershire Archives. Jill Waller has fully indexed it, so that if you have an area, building or street that particularly interests you it can be easily found.



### *Research and Display Evening*

Our annual social evening was held on January 17th. This year it was something of a special occasion, because it is now 30 years since the Society was founded and this informal gathering, when everyone mingles and socialises rather than listening to a speaker, was our birthday party. We had more refreshments than usual and a beautiful cake, which Heather Atkinson cut into a great number of small pieces so that members who had been unable to attend, as well as everyone present, could have a share. The evening also marked the completion of the latest Society project, the publication in digital form of the Old Town Survey Map of 1855-7. Sally Self, who has been in charge of the project, had the map on display on a laptop, and copies of the CD were on sale. As usual there were several displays prepared by members in the Council Chamber and in the Sherborne, Cambray and Montpellier Rooms. Themes included the Lloyd George Land Survey, Richard Rogers 'the Dick Whittington of Cheltenham', cigarette cards with local connections, Cheltenham in World War II and the history of the Society itself, featuring photos going back to its early days. Photos taken at Society events were also displayed on a wall-mounted screen. The date, January 17th, happened to be exactly 100 years from the day when Captain Scott's ill-fated party reached the South Pole. To mark this important centenary Geoff and Elaine North, with help from Jill Barlow, had prepared a special exhibition with particular emphasis on Edward Wilson's part in the event, and David Elder had brought copies of his book *Cheltenham in Antarctica* to sell. A raffle in aid of the Mayor's charities raised £150.



Graham Sacker, author of *Leaving All That Was Dear*, inspects the wartime display

## FEATURE

*Mrs Catherine Hayne continues her reminiscences of life as an evacuee in wartime Cheltenham.*

## A CHELTENHAM CHILDHOOD IN WORLD WAR II

Living in cramped, impermanent conditions means that much time is spent out of doors, in the park or the town. The area between Bath Road and the Promenade has become the most familiar, the route passing the neat flat fronted terraced houses. Turning the corner by Oriel House, we pass the dentist's, then the Town Hall. From Belmont Lodge with its curved steps we arrive at the Prom. If it is spring the chestnut trees will be in pink blossom. In summer with dappled shade I am in a new handed-down frock and Clark's sandals.

My mother meets her friends, mainly other 'evacuated' ladies, for what she calls 'snackets', or for occasional lunches. The Cadena, in the Promenade opposite Neptune's waterless fountain, is a favourite café. Upstairs, where there is a desert-scene wallpaper, and sometimes a small orchestra, I have orange squash. Below there is a Gentlemen's Smoking Room, where retired army officers might be seen if they are not sitting in basket chairs outside their Club next door. Before the war, I am told, there was a rooftop cafe, so I am looking forward to the day when I can eat something called a knickerbocker glory up there on the iron railed balcony.

Another venue is Brunners, on the curve of Clarence Street, next to Daniel Neal's the school uniform shop. Lunch (long queues) costs one shilling and ninepence. I squint at my reflection in the pale pink mirrors lining the walls. Cavendish House has a restaurant on a circular balcony overlooking the suits and dresses. One morning the siren goes off loud and close on the top of Shirers and Lances Department Store, and we dive into a Cavendish House doorway until the all-clear sounds.

Then there are the bookshops: W.H. Smith and Banks in the Promenade, and another with cheaper books nearer the Bath Road end of the High Street. Best of all is Mr Darter's, in a cave of a shop, in Suffolk Street I think. He is a gentle man with a leonine head of hair, who takes a personal interest in his customers' choices. He orders my birthday present Arthur Ransome books. Sometimes Cavendish House sells second-hand goods in the basement furniture department, and I find E.V. Lucas's *The Slowcoach* there. We go to the Post Office opposite, and to the Midland Bank on the corner where the Prom meets the High Street. Here I can just reach the Waifs and Strays charity box in the shape of a cottage, which sits on the counter. And next we can shop in Boots, which also has a library, and is another place for a snacket (iced sugar buns).

Walks feature on most days. I can be out early enough with an apple to feed the milkman's horse. There are special-purpose journeys, such as a visit to the doctor's. Dr. Browne's surgery is at the top of the Promenade, in a bow-fronted house. On the way I balance on the little wall edging the Winter Gardens; it has regular marks where the railings have been removed. We cross the road by the Queen's Hotel, and go up the steps to the waiting room. My adenoids are troublesome and that means their removal and four days in a nursing home in Church Road.

One memorable outing takes us up the Bath Road to the 'gas mask building', just beyond the Irving Hotel where lives an interesting 'mad' person, Lady Margaret Sackville, who appears in her mangy fur coat to accost strangers. We arrive to join a long queue entering a gloomy hall. I have no idea what this is all about, but I am sad to learn I am just too old to get a Mickey Mouse gas mask. I practise breathing in and out and the rubber sticks heavily to my cheeks before the mask goes back into its cardboard box for me to carry everywhere.

A very well-trodden way leads to the Public Library in Clarence Street. At first I swing on the little entrance gate which clicks shut and leads to the adult counter, waiting while my mother disappears behind the bookcases. Then we go out passing the marble fountain, not looking into the room where men read newspapers on stands. Soon I am old enough to go in next door, up the staircase in the Art Gallery to the boxed-in counter where the children's librarian is, and I have my own ticket. The room is square, with long windows and brightly coloured pictures high above the shelves. The fiction books, with their dull nubbly rexine covers, are in alphabetical order, and I begin a lifetime of shelf-searching, head tilted, for my favourite authors. It is also possible to glimpse the Museum through a gate in the library, which is tantalising. To visit is a rare treat. The best bits are the sedan chair (which I try out - it smells!...) and the fur suit worn by Edward Wilson the brave scientist explorer who went with Captain Scott to the Antarctic. I know his statue is among the flower beds in the Prom. We return home down St. George's Place, passing the opening to the Forge: a hot glow and a powerful smell of burning horse hoof.

Daily food buying means going along Montpellier Spa Road (there is a house here where mother buys her corsets!). By the caryatids we queue outside Wilsons the grocer's. Inside, the butter and bacon are carefully weighed out, and there may be the offer of some broken biscuits.....

Most days we go down Bath Road to friendly Mrs Reece's corner greengrocer's and general store, returning via Holyoakes the newsagents and then the pharmacy near St Luke's Road. This has an exciting steeply sloping interior to climb, past the weighing machine and the big green, blue and red bottles.

We return to Devonshire House and mother makes nut cutlets on the Belling hob.



Catherine shopping with her mother in the Promenade

*To be continued*

## SOCIETY NEWS

### New Members

A warm welcome is extended to the following:

*Mr Michael O'Connor*

*Mrs Betty Thompson*

*Chris Bentall and Joanna Vials*

*Mrs Lyn Hughes*

### The CLHS Latin Group—I

At the end of last year the Latin Group finished its biggest undertaking so far – an early 13<sup>th</sup> century cartulary translated at the request of Newent Local History Society. The original is in the British Library so we were given CDs to work from. From the 11<sup>th</sup> century Newent belonged to the Abbey of Cormeilles in Normandy and the cartulary is a book containing copies of all the documents the monks considered important.

There was certainly plenty of variety. One particularly challenging document turned out to be Magna Carta so we hastily abandoned that. There were letters from several popes in convoluted ecclesiastical Latin including one allowing the monks to continue to say mass when the rest of the country was banned from doing so as long as they

locked the doors, rang no bells and let no-one know what they were up to.

There were of course land transfers but also a rental giving in minute detail the duties of every tenant on the manor – down to which of them had to take a rake to the hayfield and how many days they had to work in a week which contained one, two or even three feast days. The results of two years' work were bound and presented to Gloucestershire Archives by Derek Pearce. Our only sadness was that Jane Sale, who made such an invaluable contribution to the translation, did not live to see it finished.

*Jill Barlow*



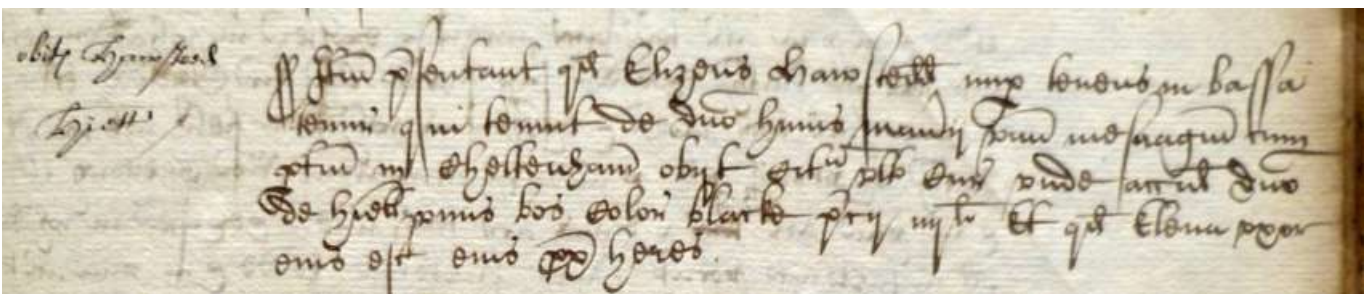
### The CLHS Latin Group—II

The Latin Group continues to meet once a month at Jill Barlow's house. Having successfully sorted out a Newent document for Dean historians, last autumn the Group turned its attention back to Cheltenham, and got going on another slice of manorial records. The plan is to 'do' the 16<sup>th</sup> century, so we have started with the court book covering 1597-1602, the very end of Elizabeth's reign. We are working from digital photos of the original at Gloucestershire Archives. The handwriting varies, but most of the time deciphering the letters is less of a problem than deciphering Latin abbreviations and capturing the sense of the legal language. We occasionally suspect it didn't make complete sense even to the chap who wrote it, but generally we get the drift. In the period we have looked at, there are lots of (repetitive) property transactions, many orders for the upkeep of roads and watercourses, fines for assorted minor offences, and numerous disputes (sometimes sanguinary) between neighbours over land and animals. We have become well acquainted with the leading lights of the town – the Packers, the Machins, the Whithornes, and so on. To make best use of the group's time together, we have devised a method where we identify the likely hard bits in advance, and concentrate on those.

By the start of February, we had more or less completed the examination of the first court book, which has resulted in an English gist of some 70 pages. It's hoped this will be the first section of a further volume to match the 2010 one covering 1692-1803\*. This may take a while to complete, so in the meantime we are considering how the first section could be made available on the internet. One option is the Victoria County History 'Explore' pages, where local history research and materials can be posted up for all to see.

The next court book we tackle covers the early years of James I, up to the end of Henry Norwood's tenure as lord of the manor. If your school Latin hasn't deserted you completely, and you're free on the first Friday of each month, you'd be very welcome to join the gang.

*James Hodsdon*



December 1598: the court records the death of Elizeus Hawstedd, tenant of the manor. A heriot (a tax payable on the death of a tenant) of one black ox is owed to the lord of the manor. His widow Helen probably kept the animal but paid the cash equivalent, stated here as £4.

\* *The Court Books of the Manor of Cheltenham 1692-1803* edited by James Hodsdon and published by BGAS



MORE SOCIETY NEWS

In Memoriam

**JANE SALE**

Jane Sale, who died last summer aged 80, had been a member of this Society for many years. Jane and her husband Tony lived in Charlton Kings and had belonged to CKLHS for even longer, since 1985 in fact. That Society has published a tribute to her in the Spring 2012 issue of its Bulletin, telling how she twice served as Chairman, received the Cheltenham Arts Council's Award for her outstanding contribution to the arts in the town in 1996 and took particular pride in editing the Bulletin, for which she also wrote many articles. It concludes: 'Jane, helpful, pragmatic and effective, was one of the driving forces of the Society. We shall really miss her.' We in CLHS certainly share that feeling. We also owe her a debt of gratitude for one particular reason: she was a leading member of the Latin group, and not only took a large share in the work but actively helped and trained others who wished to become involved. Practice sessions took place at Jane's house on alternate Mondays, beginning briskly at 9.30 am and continuing till lunchtime. A lot was accomplished and it was much enjoyed. Among many memories of Jane, this is one that I, as a fellow member of the group, shall especially cherish.

*Kath Boothman*

**St Mary's Parish Records Project**

The project is progressing well. Two large sections, 1631-1653 and 1676-1703, have been transcribed and entered into spreadsheets, and several other sections are approaching that point. We have set a target of getting the original transcriptions to the first draft stage by September this year. Then we hope to complete the 'new' sections 1558-1631 and 1745-1804 by the beginning of 2014.

*Sally Self*



A seat has been placed near the bandstand in Montpellier Gardens in memory of Peter Levy, who died last year. On a fine morning in February two visitors to the park (who were happy to be photographed) were using it to enjoy the sunshine.

FEATURE

**THE HOARE SUNDIAL, DEAN CLOSE SCHOOL**



The Hoare Sundial is named after Ernest Stanley Hoare, 1903 - 1994, the youngest of four brothers, all of whom were educated at Dean Close School which he entered in January 1914. He was a remarkably gifted games player. When he left in 1922 as Senior Prefect (head of School) he had been captain of gymnastics for four years, of cricket and hockey each for three years and of football for two. He also swam for the School.

He read Mathematics and Geography at Queen's College, Cambridge. Playing at centre-half, he won Blues for hockey (1924-6) and played for England (1926-37) winning 35 caps. He captained Cambridge University and England and was the School's first international hockey player. In 1956, when another member of staff, Denys Carnill, captained the Great Britain Olympic hockey team in Melbourne, Australia, Stanley was the coach and manager. He also occasionally played cricket for Gloucestershire under the great Wally Hammond's captaincy.

Stanley returned to Dean Close School in 1926 as an Assistant Master. With colleagues he helped to raise the standard of games, especially hockey. Housemaster of Brook 1936-59, he became Second Master (deputy head) 1959-68. Stanley was modest, deeply devoted to the School and a man of integrity and faith. His work for past pupils (the Old Decanian Society) was

prodigious, being an office holder in one capacity or another from 1927 to 1968. He married Joan Edwards in 1958.

When he retired in 1968, Stanley and Joan moved to Greatfield Drive, Charlton Kings. Stanley became a keen grower of roses until his death in 1994. The following year a rose garden in his memory was opened at Dean Close School overlooking the artificial hockey pitches. Presently, the Sundial was added as a focal point. It is five years later than the Hooper Sundial discussed in an earlier article (July 2011) but it, too, has been set with much mathematical care and the stone carving and engraving was once more the work of John Williams of St David's, Dyfed. The School Badge with its motto 'Verbum Dei Lucerna' - 'God's Word is a Guiding Light' is on the stem of the pedestal. The inscription around the top reads:

'In sight of hockey and roses, remember Stanley Hoare. Brook was his love, Dean Close his life 1903-94'.



*C E Whitney*  
Archivist, Dean Close School

## FEATURE

A CHELTONIAN ON THE *TITANIC*

Here he is on his wedding day in 1901: Alfred Rowe, aged 48. He was perhaps a little old to be a first-time bridegroom, but he had been very busy making his way in the world since leaving Cheltenham College thirty years before. Now his position was secure and he had much to offer to a wife.

Though educated here, he was not a Cheltonian by birth. He was born, the fourth of seven children, in Lima, Peru. His father was a partner in a Liverpool-based shipping company with business interests in South America, and the family lived there for a time until the children were ready for school. Alfred's elder brothers Charles and Herbert also attended the College, and Alfred himself was there from 1867 to 1870.

After leaving school Alfred worked in the family business for a while and studied at the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester before embarking on a business venture of his own. In 1878 he went to America, where he settled in Donley County in the Texas panhandle and took up cattle ranching. For a year he worked on another ranch to learn the business, then he began to buy herds and land of his own. Shrewd, principled and hard-working, he became a well-liked and respected figure in his community. The RO Ranch, as it was called, prospered and grew, so that by the time Alfred married in 1901 he was a wealthy man. His wife Constance, who was English and a cousin of the author Charles Kingsley, was an excellent horse-woman and adapted well to life in Texas. Over the following years the couple had four children, one of whom died in infancy. In 1910 Alfred decided to bring his family back to England, leaving the ranch in the care of a manager. He himself then needed to return to Texas only two or three times a year to see that all was well with the ranch.

This explains his presence aboard the *Titanic* that wintry night almost exactly 100 years ago. He was travelling first class, as befitted a successful entrepreneur: his ticket had cost him £26 11s. Interestingly, letters he wrote to his wife from the *Titanic* reveal that even before she sailed he had misgivings. 'My Dearest Girl', he wrote, 'She is too big, you can't find your way about and it takes too long to get anywhere. She has no excessive speed to compensate for all this and is a positive danger to all other shipping in port'. After the disaster, according to later reports, he was seen swimming and clinging to a piece of floating ice, having refused to get into a lifeboat until others were saved. Sadly, his turn to be rescued never came. His body was picked up some days later by the cable ship *Mackay-Bennet* (one of several ships hastily chartered and sent to the site of the disaster) and taken to Halifax, Nova Scotia. Of the 306 bodies collected by that ship only 190 were landed. Those that had no means of identification on them were simply numbered and recorded ('138. Male, age 30. Hair, light brown. Wore boiler suit...Possibly an engineer') and buried at sea. The rest were processed on board. Alfred, who fortunately was carrying visiting cards with his name and address on, was given the number 109. The bodies were tagged, and each individual's belongings were carefully noted and placed in a bag marked with the same number as the body. Then the bodies had to be stored away and kept for more detailed examination on shore. The Halifax authorities, anticipating this need, had sent an embalmer on the ship, borrowed from a local firm of undertakers, and it was his responsibility to preserve the bodies as best he could. Once landed they were re-embalmed before being examined by Dr William Finn, Medical Examiner for the City of Halifax. The doctor's full written reports survive for only two individuals, and Alfred Rowe happens to be one of these.

The doctor's task must have been a grisly one. By the time Alfred was examined early in May he had been dead for over a fortnight. His body showed evidence of having been exposed to the action of the water, the doctor reported, and presented superficial injuries due to being buffeted around by the sea and ice. His full description is more illuminating. Alfred was 'a well developed square-shouldered man' with rather a short neck, 5ft 7½ inches tall and weighing about 190lbs (or 13½ stone). He evidently looked younger than his years, no doubt due to his outdoor life as a rancher, since the doctor estimated his age as 50 when he was in fact nearly 59. His hair was dark brown streaked with grey, partly bald on top, and he had a fair moustache. His face was full and round, and – here the doctor supplies a wealth of detail – he had an extraordinary mouthful of gold and silver teeth. Almost every tooth in his head was either capped or filled with precious metal, so that he must have looked as prosperous as he was. The contents of his pockets, on the other hand, gave little evidence of wealth. Unlike body no. 259, who was found to have \$30,000 sewn into the lining of his suit and a further \$15,000 in his pockets, Alfred was carrying no money apart from three £5 notes. His card case contained, in addition to the visiting cards, two photographs. One was a picture of a baby, marked 'Our boy, 3 weeks 3 days'. The other showed a small child sitting on a step with a ball. The baby may have been his second son Henry, who died as an infant. The child could have been any of his other children: Constance, born in 1902, his first son Charles Alfred, born in 1904, or two-year-old Ethel Margaret. All these personal effects, together with his clothing (a grey suit worn over a pyjama jacket, with a leather belt and tan shoes) were subsequently claimed by his eldest brother Charles Rowe, who also arranged for his body to be sent back to England.

Alfred was shipped aboard the *Empress of Britain*, which sailed for Liverpool on May 4<sup>th</sup>. He was buried on May 14<sup>th</sup> in the family grave at Smithdown Road Cemetery in Liverpool. Four months after he died his widow Constance gave birth to another son, who was named Alfred. As for the ranch, which at its peak encompassed 200,000 acres of owned and rented land, it was sold by the Rowe family in 1917 and survives to this day, though reduced in size and under a different name.

Kath Boothman

(A version of this article first appeared in the Cheltenham College alumni magazine Floreat in January 2012)



## 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:

Six Wives: The Queens of Henry VIII, David Starkey (signed by the author) - as new—£20

A History of Britain 3000BC-AD1603, Simon Schama - as new—£10

Cheltenham Music Festival at 65—Graham Lockwood —£9 (several copies)

A Grand City: Bristol in the 18th and 19th Centuries—ed. M J Crossley Evans—£9

BGAS Essays in Honour of David Smith (2007) —£5 (2 copies)

An Historical Gazetteer of Cheltenham, J Hodsdon —£30

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

(Vol 6) The Military Survey of Gloucestershire, 1522

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

(Vol 11) Original Acta of St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester c 1122-1263

(Vol 13) The Bishop Benson's Survey of the Diocese of Gloucester 1735-1750

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

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

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

(Vol 21) Gloucester Cathedral Chapter Act Book 1611-1687

Also Vols 17 & 18 A Catalogue of the Medieval Muniments at Berkeley Castle - 2 volume set £8

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

### *MEMBER'S REQUEST*

#### **A History of Cheltenham in 100 Objects**

I am currently writing a book entitled 'A History of Cheltenham in 100 Objects', to be published by The History Press in Spring 2013. The book will be one of a series which the publishers hope will eventually cover many cities, towns and counties, and which has been inspired by the recent BBC/British Museum radio series and associated publication, 'A History of the World in 100 Objects'. A volume on Stirling has already been published, and one on Norfolk is due out later in 2012.

The book is being prepared in close co-operation with the Art Gallery & Museum – where I was formerly Museum & Collections Manager — and all the objects featured will be from the Museum's collections, including many that have not been seen or published before. As well as agonising over which objects to include/exclude, I am currently researching many of the objects, to supplement the information contained in the Museum's 'history files'. I would very much like to ask Local History Society members if they might have some information and/or illustrations for a number of items for which the available information appears to be rather 'thin on the ground'. Can anyone help with the following?

1. Information about the manufacturing confectioners, Andy's Candys, who operated between c1922 and 1958, and in particular the firm's apparent connection to Cheltine Foods of Chester Walk. I would especially like to find a photograph of their now-demolished 'Cotswold vernacular' style factory at the corner of Tewkesbury Road and Princess Elizabeth Way, the site of which is now occupied by the Harley Davidson showroom. The Museum has two of the Company's sweet tins.
2. Information about a family of taxidermists named White, including Thomas White (d 1876) and his sons, George and Barnard, one of whom taught the future Antarctic explorer, Edward Wilson, how to stuff and mount birds.
3. Any posters, leaflets or other printed ephemera relating to 'Cheltenham Warship Week' in November 1941, for which the Museum has two small enamel badges.
4. Any information on a number of former local businesses, items from all of which will be included in the book, namely Edwin Beckingsale (ironmonger, High Street), William Clarke & Co. (confectioner, Winchcombe Street), Walter Ayris Ltd (outfitters, Promenade) and J Silk & Son (grocers, High Street).

Any help would be gratefully received – I can be contacted by post at 'Delton', Fairmount Road, Cheltenham GL51 7AQ, or by email at [steven.blake@deltonglos.plus.com](mailto:steven.blake@deltonglos.plus.com), or by telephone on 01242 510926.

*Steven Blake*

**CAN YOU HELP?**

**Victoria Street**

An enquirer is looking for anyone with memories of living and working in Victoria Street, St Paul's and the surrounding area between about 1928 and 1950. Any anecdotes, family history etc would be welcome.



**Welch family plaque**

This plaque came into the hands of the West Midlands Police recently and they are anxious to restore it to its rightful owner. It commemorates three generations of the Welch family of Arle House, all of them army officers. It was recorded a few years ago as being on a wall in St Mary's church, Cheltenham, but if it was stolen from there no-one seems to know when this happened. If anyone has seen it anywhere else, or knows anything about it, please get in touch.

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

**Correction**

In the last issue there was an error in the website address given for the Lloyd George land survey. It should have read [www.glos1909survey.org.uk](http://www.glos1909survey.org.uk)

**The 2012 Deerhurst Lecture**

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

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

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

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



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

**CLHS DISPLAYS  
IN LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARY**

March 12th-24th: **ST MARK'S**—the building of the estate and the 150th anniversary of St Mark's church  
April 10th-25th: **ST MARY'S PARISH CHURCH** with special reference to the bells of St Mary's  
May 1st-June 23rd: **CHELTHENHAM'S ROYAL CONNECTIONS** to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee  
July 3rd-21st: **CHELTHENHAM'S AMERICAN CONNECTIONS**  
*Note: Gloucestershire Family History Society will be in attendance in Cheltenham Library on Wednesdays 2nd May and 4th July.*

**NEXT ISSUE**

Please forward items for inclusion in the JULY 2012 Newsletter by

**Monday 11th June 2012**

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)

*The Committee is happy to consider requests to place advertisements in the Newsletter and/or include flyers for circulation to members.*