



Gloucestershire Local History Association

Newsletter No. 3, July 2013



Norman soldiers prepare to take on poachers in the Forest of Dean.

With News From..

British Association for Local History, Churchdown Local History Society, Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club, Forest of Dean Local History Society, Friends of Gloucestershire Archives, Gloucestershire Archives, Gloucestershire County History Trust, Gloucestershire Gardens and Landscape Trust, Gloucestershire Local History Association, Gloucestershire Archaeology (formerly GADARG), Gotherington and Area Local History Society, Maisemore Local History Society, Prestbury Local History Society, Slimbridge Local History Society and Stroud Local History Society.

Contents

From the GLHA

Introduction	2
News from the AGM and Members' Forum, 6 th June	2
Wilson's Wanderings, a Talk by Pete Wilson	4
Writing Local History for Publication	5
GLHA Summer meeting at Stonehouse, 6 th July	7
Some More Dates for your Diaries	8

Events

Friends of Gloucestershire Archives	10
Gloucestershire Archives	10
Stroud Local History Society	12

News from Societies

British Association for Local History	13
Churchdown Local History Society	13
Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club	14
Forest of Dean Local History Society	15
Gloucestershire Archaeology, formerly 'GADARG'	15
Gloucestershire Archaeology Members Visit Salisbury Plain	16
Gloucestershire County History Trust	18
Gloucestershire Gardens and Landscape Trust	19
Gotherington and Area Local History Society	20
Maisemore Local History Society	21
Prestbury Local History Society	22
Slimbridge Local History Society	23

Updates from the GLHA

Introduction

Welcome to the third issue of the GLHA newsletter. As you'll see we have made some changes to the layout, splitting it into four main sections, with new dedicated sections for events, news and, hopefully in the future, reviews.

I'd like to take this opportunity to repeat Vicki Walker's thanks, on behalf of all the members of the GLHA, to Steven Blake, for his continuous hard work as chairman.

I'd also like to thank all those who have donated to the GLHA, who at the time of writing include: Bryan Jerrard, William Evans, Gloucestershire Archaeology, Cheltenham Local History Society, Forest of Dean Local History Society, Leckhampton Local History Society, Nailsworth Society Local History Research Group, Slimbridge Local History Society, Stonehouse History Group and Tidenham Historical Group.

I would also like to make a personal thanks to Steven Blake and the GLHA for allowing me the joy of editing this newsletter and their generous expression of thanks. I hope for another good three months to us all.

If you would like to put a special event, update or review in the next issue of our newsletter, the deadline for submissions is the 13th of September. You can email them to me at ben.berry4@btinternet.com. Pictures are encouraged!

Ben Berry

News from the AGM and Members' Forum, 6th June

The Association's second AGM was held at Gloucestershire Archives on 6th June and was attended by 30 people, representing 27 of the Association's members; representatives of a further six members also sent their apologies.

The Chairman, Steven Blake, reported on the Association's activities over the previous year. The Association had taken on many of the activities of the former Rural Community Council's Local History Committee, which it had succeeded in April 2012. These included the pattern of its quarterly and annual meetings, and the annual Bryan Jerrard Award for what the judges believed to be the best journal article on the County's history during the preceding year; in 2012 this was awarded to William Evans for his article on Norborne Berkeley's Politics in the *Transactions of the Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*. The Chairman thanked his fellow judges – Mike Greet and John Howe – for their input to the award judging. Two other aspects of the former Committee's work had also been taken over – its website, which is now that of the GLHA, and is maintained on our behalf by Dr Ray Wilson, and the Newsletter, which is edited by Ben Berry. The Chairman expressed the Association's thanks to them both, and an *ex gratia* payment of £50 was made to Ben Berry in recognition of the considerable time that he has put into compiling, designing and producing our first two Newsletters. The Chairman also thanked Alison Hobson for her hard work in designing a new logo, leaflet, poster and letterhead for the Association. A media campaign to promote the Association and its work was planned for later in 2013.

The Chairman reported the increase in membership to 44, including Randwick and Winchcombe who had joined since 31st March. Two Members' Forums had been held – in December 2012 and March 2013 – and a Summer meeting had been organised by Maisemore Local History Society in July 2012. Further Summer meetings were planned at Stonehouse in 2013 and the Forest of Dean in 2014, and plans were also underway for the Local History Day in Cheltenham in October 2013. The Association had also held the first in a series of workshops for members: it focused on websites for local history groups and societies, and the Chairman thanked Dr Ray Wilson for organising it. Further workshops, including some in conjunction with Gloucestershire Archives, were being planned.

The Chairman believed that the Association was establishing a central role for itself in the County's local history activities, and he was pleased to have been asked to provide letters of support for two HLF bids – one to extend Bristol's 'Know Your Place' website to the surrounding counties, including Gloucestershire, and the other for a joint Gloucestershire Archives/Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum/Everyman Theatre bid for funding for activities relating to the commemoration of the First World War, a commemoration in which the Association and many of its member organisations will no doubt be involved.

The Chairman concluded by thanking all those who had helped to make the new Association a success during the first 14 months of its existence – the local groups, societies and organisations who had shown their support by joining the Association, a number of whom, along with some individuals, had also made cash donations; and the GLHA committee – Secretary Vicki Walker, Treasurer David Scriven and Committee Members Alison Hobson and Mary Sullivan – along with the External Examiner of our Annual Accounts, Sue Brown. He made a special point of thanking Gloucestershire Archives, and the County & Diocesan Archivist, Heather Forbes, for practical and financial support, and in particular for hosting so many of our meetings, with special thanks to Paul Evans and Vicky Thorpe of the Archives staff, who were regular contributors to our quarterly Forums.

The Treasurer, David Scriven, reported that the Association's finances were in a healthy state, with a year-end balance of £515, when he presented the Annual Accounts, which had been independently examined. He recommended that the current levels of subscription should be maintained for the next two years (2013-14 and 2014-15). The Treasurer's Report was unanimously accepted.

All the current Officers and Committee Members were re-elected, and the Chairman noted that there were up to three Committee vacancies and appealed for anyone who would like to join the Committee and help to take the Association forward to contact him.

Copies of the Chairman's Report and the Annual Accounts have been circulated to the named representatives of all GLHA member groups.

Wilson's Wanderings, a Talk by Pete Wilson

Following the AGM on June 6th, members were entertained with a talk by the Radio Gloucestershire presenter Pete Wilson.

Describing his early life in Westbury on Severn, Pete created a vivid picture of his childhood in the 1950s. Their cottage had an outside toilet – a two-seater to accommodate both an adult and a child! He remembered his gramp driving a steamroller and teaching him how to fish. Pete attended Abenhall Secondary School in Mitcheldean where he excelled at football. He was offered trials at several professional clubs but had to turn them down as he had no means of travelling to their grounds.

Instead he joined British Nylon Spinners at Brockworth in September 1965, as one of 12 junior trainees. Pete became a training officer and stayed through many changes of company until he retired in 2004.

In 1988 his wife Sue got a job as a receptionist with the new Radio Gloucestershire and Pete used to help out behind the scenes. There was a show called *Saturday Challenge* which went out to surprise people with daft challenges. Someone dropped out at the last minute and so Pete was drafted in and taken to the Playhouse Theatre to learn to sing! His rendition of *Younger than Springtime* was so popular he was asked to do *Fun in a Phonebox* in which he had to hide in a random phonebox and see who could find him first.

This eventually led to his Sunday lunchtime show *Wilson's Wanderings* where he visits towns and villages to talk to people about their communities. He has interviewed many a local character about their memories of the past, including those from History Societies. Recently he has recorded three shows around Dursley with Andy Barton.

Pete's show is an hour long but it takes him many hours to put it together and edit the finished show. He divides the interview into 5 sections with music in between which he tries to match to the subject if possible. He has around 14,500 listeners a week. Pete is a friendly, funny man who is easy to talk to. He is always looking for new towns and topics to feature, so if you would like your History Group to be included, contact Pete Wilson at wilsons.wanderers@blueyonder.co.uk.

Writing Local History for Publication

With Rose Wallis and John Chandler

This was a joint session organised by GLHA and Glos Archives. GLHA members were given priority booking before it was opened up on the GA website. It was attended by 23 people whose interests ranged widely from family history to the transport of coffins by train!

The course speakers are both historians employed by the Gloucestershire County History Trust to work on writing the Victoria County History for Gloucestershire.

Research

The first part of the day concentrated on research and planning. Rose emphasised the importance of having a clear idea of the purpose of your work, being focused but also flexible to change if appropriate. She encouraged us to look at the way our own research fits into wider history and possibly to use it to challenge or support existing work. Try to bring a different aspect or viewpoint to a subject and look at the way your community fits into world events. This will push your work beyond just local interest.

Writing

Session 2 concentrated on the writing of your work. Rose gave a good overview of the points to consider, a structured plan being the most important thing. The importance of recording all sources of information is vital. Accuracy in referencing enables the reader to check the provenance of your facts and also to read further on the subject. Some examples of systems of referencing were given. Rose also advised writers to say why something is important or interesting and to make clear the difference between facts and opinions in your work.

Recommended reading:

Carr, E.H. *What is History?*, Cambridge University Press, 1961 (still available in a Penguin edition)

Publishing

The second part of the day was led by John Chandler who runs his own small publishing company. He described the process a book must go through before publication. A useful handout of tips is available on his website www.hobnobpress.co.uk

John stressed the importance of discussing your book with a publisher first to agree an outline and a timescale. A publisher will expect the author to follow a stylesheet to ensure consistency in their publications. A small publisher will do the design and typesetting for you and produce a proof for you to check. You will need to discuss how much the publisher will do for you and how much it will cost. Think about number of copies needed, storage of them and how they will be sold. You can design your publication yourself and simply take it to a printer.

In the future more books will be published online or through a company like Amazon. "Print on demand" means you can submit your files to an online publisher and they will then print copies as they are ordered to save storing hundreds of copies in a warehouse.

If the enthusiasm of the 23 participants on the course is anything to go by, we should look forward to a wide variety of published projects over the next few years. We hope authors will send us the details of their work for review in the GLHA Newsletter.

GLHA Summer meeting at Stonehouse, 6th July

Seventy-five people attended this year's Summer meeting, which was hosted by Stonehouse History Group, whose committee members had prepared a comprehensive display on the history of the town, which those attending had a chance to study at various times during the afternoon.



Participants on the Canal and Church walk, pictured at the entrance of St Cyr's Church, Stonehouse.

The meeting began with an introduction to the history of Stonehouse by the Group's Secretary, Vicki Walker. Following this we divided into four groups for walking tours of the town, all in warm afternoon sun. Each tour focused on a different aspect of the town's past – its High Street; the Stroudwater Canal and either the canal-side mills or the church of St Cyr (whose tower was climbed for a fine view down onto

the canal and across to the surrounding Cotswolds); and the impact of World War Two on the town. The meeting ended with a splendid afternoon tea, provided at the Community Centre by the Stonehouse W.I.

Sincere thanks are due to all those who helped to organise the day and/or lead the tours, notably local mills expert, Steve Mills, and the nine members of the Group's Committee – Valerie Blick, David Bowker-Praed, Carole Crisp, Shirley Dicker, Jim Dickson, John Peters, Vicki Walker, Darrell Webb and Colin Wood.

Next year's Summer meeting will be hosted by the Forest of Dean Local History Society and will be

held on the afternoon of Saturday, 5th July 2014; further details will be available in due course. The Association would very much welcome offers to host future meetings from other local history groups and societies – please contact Steve Blake for more details if your group would like to do so.



View from the top of St Cyr's Church tower. The Mills walk group can be seen on the canal tonpath.

Some More Dates for your Diaries...

Thursday, 5th September, 7.30pm. GLHA Forum at Gloucestershire Archives, including a presentation by Marion Hearfield on the Wiliam Cowle/Field Estate project in Stroud.

Saturday, 12th October, 10.30am – 4.30pm. GLHA Local History Day on 'Gloucestershire's Special Houses' at Pate's Grammar School, Cheltenham. Talks, displays and a chance to meet with members of local history groups and societies from across the County. Full details of the meeting will be available soon.

Monday, 4th November, 2am – 4pm. Joint Gloucestershire Archives/GLHA workshop at

Gloucestershire Archives, looking at sources for studying the impact of the First World War on Gloucestershire communities. Numbers will be limited and booking will be via the Archives' on-line booking system, so look out for further information during August.

Monday, 2nd December, 2pm. GLHA Forum at Gloucestershire Archives, including a talk (with a display of original material) by Grant Repshire on the Archives' recently-acquired F. W. Harvey collection.

The dates of our 2014 Forum meetings, including our AGM, will be available soon – but one 2014 event to put in your diaries now is our annual Summer Meeting, which will be hosted by the Forest of Dean Local History Society on Saturday, 5th July 2014.

Events

Friends of Gloucestershire Archives

You can book the following events by filling out a booking form. Just copy and paste the following into your browser address bar:

<http://www.foga.org.uk/13sumevents.php>

Please make sure you have included a contact number or email, so that we can notify full details/any changes. We hope to see many of you at these events. FOGA members are welcome to bring along friends who are non-members who will be charged the same price as members.

Visit to Berkeley Castle

Wednesday, August 7th start time tbc: This will cost £12.50.

Anyone can visit the Castle when it is open, but we will have the advantage of seeing a display of archives presented specially for us by David Smith. Apart from the castle tour, there are the gardens and the Butterfly House, in fact so much to do, that you may decide to bring a picnic to enjoy before the visit. Tea and cake will be available (included in cost) afterwards in the Yurt Cafe.

Visit to Gigg Mill

Saturday, 21st September. This will cost £7.50.

This could be a real treat: Dunkirk Mill offers working waterwheels and machinery, a restored 1806 mill clock and a visit to the mill pond, with Gigg Mill offering working machinery demonstrations. If we have 10 or more in our party, Gigg Mill can be opened specially for us in the afternoon; with a big enough turn out we can split the group in two, each half visiting one mill in the morning and the other in the afternoon. In between we could pre-book tables for lunch at Egypt Mill Restaurant, if enough people are interested (please let us know on the booking form). The cost of lunch is not included.

Gloucestershire Archives

What Gloucestershire's Engineering Firms Gave the World

Global Language Immersion Centre, 4-6 Commercial Road, Gloucester, GL1 2EA, on Saturday 31st August from 10.00 until 13.00 (doors open at 09.45). The event is free, but pre-booking is essential.

Book by emailing archives@gloucestershire.gov.uk or by ringing 01452 425295.

A mini-conference celebrating three of Gloucestershire's most famous engineering companies, each of which exported their innovative products around the world. Steve Mills will talk about the Gloucester-based firm Fielding & Platt; David Evans will discuss the firm R A Lister of Dursley; and Ian Pope will present the story of the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Company. There will be an opportunity for questions after each talk. Tea and coffee will be available to purchase and displays of images from Cheltenham Local History Society, and from the Fielding and Platt documents on deposit at Gloucestershire Archives can be viewed during the morning.

Creative Writing Session

Gloucestershire Archives on Thursday 19th September from 19.00-21.00. This costs £10. To book online click the hyperlink below copy and paste it into your browser address bar:

https://gloucestershire.firmstep.com/default.aspx/RenderForm/?F.Name=iXimsLcpQkV&HideToolbar=1&customer_present=Yes

This will be led by a local writer, Angela France, and will help you to see how sources in the Archives can be an inspiration for writing stories, poems and drama.

Beyond the Basics

Gloucestershire Archives on Monday 7th October. This costs £25.

To book online click the hyperlink below or copy and paste it into your browser address bar:

https://gloucestershire.firmstep.com/default.aspx/RenderForm/?F.Name=iXimsLcpQkV&HideToolbar=1&customer_present=Yes

A day workshop at which we will look at some of the less obvious sources like school records and coroner's records. Although this has been designed primarily for family history researchers, these sources can be useful for local history research. The session will provide some background info about the sources and their finding aids plus some practical experience in using the sources themselves.

The Archives offers individual societies the opportunity for a behind the scenes tour and document display at a cost of £60.00 per visit. Please email archives@gloucestershire.gov.uk to find out more.

Stroud Local History Society

Victorian Stroud had few sewers, and drinking the water could kill you. The Board of Health transformed the town into a better place to live.

William Cowle was a local grocer who invested his profits in land and

property. For over thirty years his uncompromising obstinacy on the Local Board of Health exasperated the members and delighted the voters.

In his 60s he moved to the house he had commissioned on Park Road, in the centre of the new suburb he had designed and financed. The Field

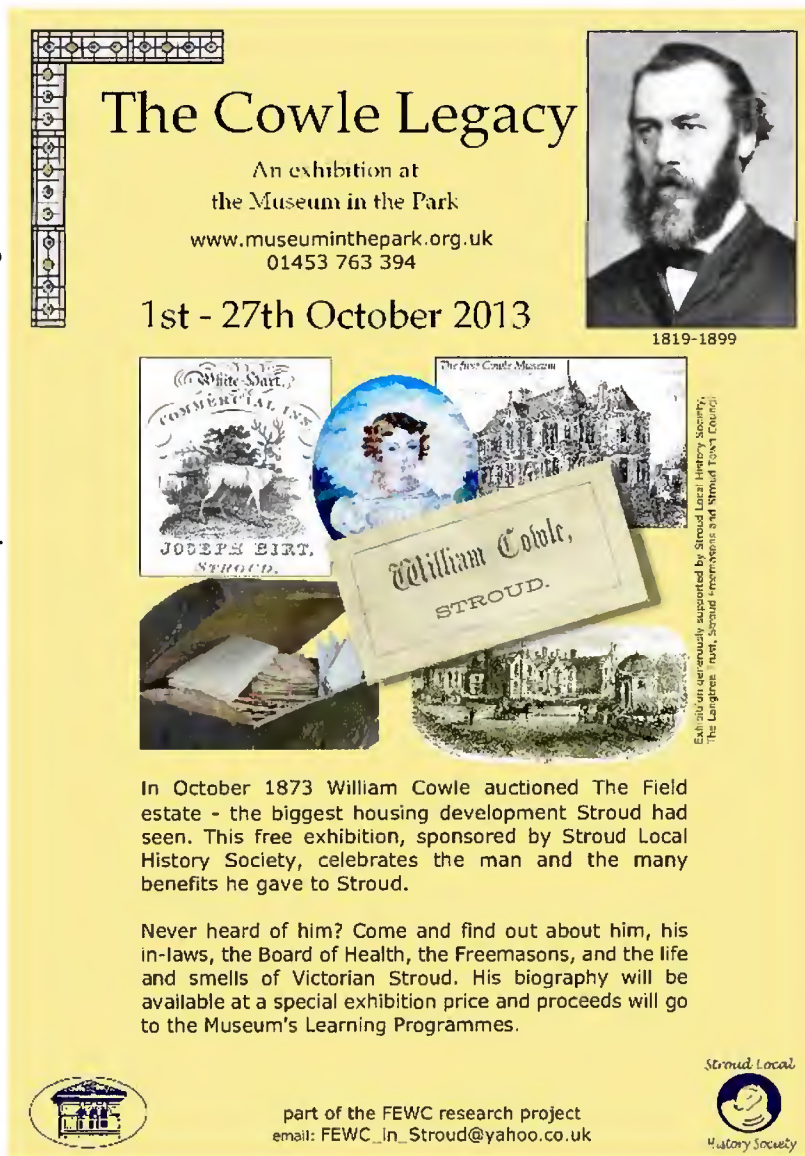
estate, launched by William Cowle in 1873, stretches from the hospital to the cemetery. Now 600 houses cover the hillside between Bisley Old Road and London Road. Stroud Local

History Society is sponsoring a free exhibition in October at the Museum

in the Park about the man, and the

Victorian Stroud he knew. More details of the event and the afternoon talks will be published on the museum's website and in the press.

William Cowle of Stroud, a biography written by Marion Hearfield, will be published by The Friends of the District Museum and launched at the exhibition.



The Cowle Legacy
An exhibition at
the Museum in the Park
www.museuminthepark.org.uk
01453 763 394
1st - 27th October 2013

1819-1899

Exhibition generously supported by Stroud Local History Society, The Langtree Trust, Stroud Enterprise and Stroud Town Council

In October 1873 William Cowle auctioned The Field estate - the biggest housing development Stroud had seen. This free exhibition, sponsored by Stroud Local History Society, celebrates the man and the many benefits he gave to Stroud.

Never heard of him? Come and find out about him, his in-laws, the Board of Health, the Freemasons, and the life and smells of Victorian Stroud. His biography will be available at a special exhibition price and proceeds will go to the Museum's Learning Programmes.

part of the FEWC research project
email: FEWC_In_Stroud@yahoo.co.uk

Stroud Local History Society

News From Societies

British Association for Local History

The British Association for Local History (BALH) held its Regional Conference this year at Cheltenham Racecourse. Organised and co-hosted by Cheltenham LHS, Gloucestershire County History Trust (GCHT) and the BALH, the conference was well attended by local historians from Gloucestershire and further afield. With an overarching theme of Changing Communities, talks ranged from the effect of the Black Death in the 14th century to the commemoration of the fallen in the two World Wars of the 20th century. Speakers included John Beckett, Tom Beaumont James, Kate Tiller, Rose Wallis, Anthea Jones, Nick Herbert and Diana Russell.

The conference also provided an opportunity for GCHT to promote its plans for new volumes in the Victoria County History of Gloucestershire series, covering Cheltenham and Cirencester, work on which is expected to commence in the autumn this year.

Several local history organisations, including Gloucestershire Local History Association, set up stalls to promote their activities and publications and to show how their local communities had changed over time.

On the final day a fascinating talk by Steven Blake, looking at the history of Cheltenham as portrayed by topographical prints produced between 1786-1850, was followed by a choice of guided walks around the town, led by Steven Blake and Frances Wilson-Copp.

Churchdown Local History Society

Membership has almost doubled over the last year which is very encouraging, especially as we continue to get a number of visitors each month.

In April we had our second Study Day at Gloucester Cathedral when we learnt how the monks of St. Peter's Abbey would have lived and worked for over 500 years, up to the Dissolution. After an introductory talk by Jeremy Barnes, we explored the grounds of the Cathedral to see what remains of the original monastery. On a cold day, we were glad to return to the Parliament Rooms for our lunch

of hot soup, sandwiches, cakes and coffee. The afternoon was spent in the Cathedral when we had a guided tour which included a visit to the crypt.

We would recommend these Study Days. They are easy to organise through the Cathedral office, usually only requiring a minimum number of 15. The price, currently £20, includes coffee on arrival and lunch.

Following our AGM in May we have been able to complete a programme to take us up to July 2014.

Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club

The CNFC has recently joined the GLHA in order to benefit from the excellent resources available to local history societies. Our purpose is to promote interest in the natural history, environment and antiquities of Gloucestershire, the Cotswolds and elsewhere, and to provide facilities for members to study, appreciate and enjoy them, typically including lectures, walks, and excursions by coach and car. We also encourage the publication of papers in our annual *Proceedings* on any subject that falls within our broad remit. For example, we have been pleased to carry an annual report from Kurt Adams on artefacts found under the Portable Antiquities Scheme in Gloucestershire and Avon. A generous legacy allows the Editor to give grants towards research expenses leading to publication. We also award annually a small bursary to a promising student at Hartpury College in either Countryside Management or a similar subject.

Our definition of 'antiquities' is, for practical purposes, more 'elastic' than the OED would normally allow, encompassing modern and contemporary history! To illustrate the point, we enjoyed a lecture on Gloucestershire's churches last winter and have recently had an excursion to Bletchley Park, with another to Blaenavon World Heritage Site lined up. Some spaces are still available on the latter; to book a place call 01452 813228 or send an email to jane@pjrowe.globalnet.co.uk. Social history is also catered for, with a lecture this autumn on the life and work of the Arts and Crafts designer Gordon Russell and his 'Broadway Experiment' on the 6th November.

Forest of Dean Local History Society

As well as a full programme of indoor and outdoor events, the Society has been involved in the development of a large scale lottery bid with lead partners, the Forestry Commission. The bid for a Landscape Partnership award – “The Forester’s Forest” – if successful will bring together a number of community groups to make significant changes on the representation and conservation of Forest history and heritage. Our society has been asked to lead the Narrative Thread, which will seek new ways to tell the story of the Forest suitable to the expectations of people in the 21st century, with an emphasis on helping children to understand the uniqueness of the area. The result of the bid will be known in October 2013.

On June 22nd the Society organised a large event in Lydney – *People in the Forest*. Although we were contending with other events, both local and televised, the event was attended throughout the day and we got some very positive feedback. There were some fantastic exhibits, including the Gloucestershire Constabulary Archive Group, Gloucestershire Archives (learning to write with quill pens!), John Powell who was making traditional salmon putchers as used in the Severn, the Royal Forest Sea Cadets and the FW Harvey Society, who also gave us some performances, including poems in the local dialect. A Norman re-enactment group gave us some great performances throughout the day, demonstrating their training and defending the forest against the villainous poachers in a series of skirmishes.

The Society is bringing out a special edition of its *New Regard* journal later this year, featuring an update of an original study of Cinderford, which was conducted 50 years ago. Our own Ron Beard, who did the original study, will be looking at how Cinderford has changed over the last five decades.

Gloucestershire Archaeology, formerly 'GADARG'

At its AGM on March 27th 2013 Gloucester and District Archaeological Research Group 'GADARG' voted to change its name to 'Gloucestershire Archaeology' to better reflect its area of interest and activity and to help it look less forbidding to potential members. The change of name has been approved by the Charity Commission and a new website address has been registered ready for our internal review of the current website www.gadarg.org.uk to be implemented. We are using the abbreviation 'GlosArch', GA being used for Gloucestershire Archives.

We have recruited three new members to the Committee including a much needed Publicity Officer. The potential costs of geophysical surveys, excavation and post-excavation analyses being high we are also looking at fund raising.

Please note that this change is not an attempt to compete with other Gloucestershire archaeology groups: there are not enough of us as it is. As now we will consult and co-operate to better serve the archaeology and history of the county.

Fieldwork has continued at and near Sherborne courtesy of the National Trust. It has involved field walking and geophysical surveys. A two week excavation in Sherborne in June has been agreed, to be carried out in partnership with Archeoscan whose professional leadership are also members of GlosArch. The search for a Saxon Church at Chapel Hay in Churchdown is now resulting in a small excavation. A report on the first phase there appears in our Newsletter 132. Updates will appear in Newsletter 133 out in late July with our talks programme. Results of our fieldwork will eventually be published in our annual journal *Glevensis*.

Gloucestershire Archaeology Members Visit Salisbury Plain

By Terry Moore-Scott.

When I learned that GADARG was planning a summer day trip to see archaeological sites in a normally-prohibited military training area on Salisbury Plain, I knew this was a 'must' for me. I was so glad I went. The weather was superb and we were so fortunate to have as our host and guide Richard Osgood, MOD's Senior Historic Advisor, who not only had an encyclopaedic knowledge of all the archaeology in his care but was clearly very much in harmony with the beautiful chalk landscape and varied natural life of the area.



The military estate on the Plain is vast (30,000 hectares/94,000 acres) and the area around Tilshead which we toured is full of archaeological features ranging from the Neolithic to Roman and medieval

(modern too if you include the village of Imber abandoned in the 1940s). Barrows proliferate in the landscape including the Neolithic Bowls barrow, in which was found some Stonehenge type bluestone which could only have come from the Preseli Mountains, and the Kill earthen long barrow on Chapperton Down. Also on the Down there is a fascinating 3rd/4th century linear Roman village straddling a Roman road from Salisbury to Bath with nearby strip field lynchets. Our host also showed us a section of a Bronze Age two metre deep linear barrier ditch - part of a system of ditches which taken together stretched for up to 70 km, cutting through field boundaries and skirting barrows. At the Knook Roman village we saw square platforms on which brick and stone houses once stood, lining each side of a road which bifurcates at its far end to form a kind of 'village green'. At the same site are remains of Bronze Age ditches and Iron Age fields.

Rounding off our tour was a visit to the spectacular late Iron Age (c.300BC) multivallate Battlesbury hillfort – its ramparts every bit as impressive as Maiden Castle's – where we were told that, somewhat surprisingly, its interior has still not been properly surveyed. Very close by are two other equally impressive hillforts: Middle Hill and Scratchbury, the latter including a



Neolithic causewayed enclosure. Tradition has tended to depict the Plain as a desolate, dark, even evil place but it is clear from all we saw that man has throughout time made the area his home. Especially thrilling for those with a bent for nature were sightings of wildlife including roe deer, hare, badger and buzzard and the sounds of the skylark and cuckoo – but sadly no Great Bustard.

Aside from the monuments we saw, it was most interesting to hear from Richard Osgood about how closely he interacts with the army to ensure the protection of his sites and still allow the army maximum exploitation of their training area, and to learn how responsive they were to his concerns by allowing barriers and palisades to be erected around sensitive archaeological sites. These arrangements have had the beneficial effect of sensitising the army to the importance of heritage features, not just on Salisbury Plain, but also in foreign theatres of war where they are deployed. Altogether a wonderful day and Mike Milward, as well as Richard Osgood, deserve our thanks for organising it so well.

If you would more detail on the archaeology of Salisbury Plain, try getting hold of English Heritage's publication *The Field Archaeology of the Salisbury Plain Training Area* , ISBN 1 873 592493.

Gloucestershire County History Trust

John Chandler reports that he has now written most sections of the parish of Hartpur, and will soon begin reading sources for the history of Norton, the penultimate parish to be included in vol. 13. He is also beginning to oversee the planning, research and writing of two proposed new 'red book' volumes, treating the history of Cheltenham and four neighbouring parishes (vol. 15); and Cirencester and nine small surrounding parishes (vol. 16). It is envisaged that work on these projects will involve collaboration between specialist historians and volunteers, who will be offered supervision to become expert in specific local history topics. Planning is well advanced, and research for the volumes should begin in earnest in the autumn. Exploratory meetings with potential volunteers will be advertised soon, and it is hoped that members of GLHA's affiliated societies will rise to the challenge (see also the announcement below).

Rose Wallis has completed the draft manorial history for the Yate project, which will be available online shortly. Work is now being concentrated on completing the remaining chapters. Volunteer activity regarding Yate and the surrounding parishes for vol. 14 continues at Yate Heritage Centre, with support from other groups organised by Gloucestershire Archives. Rose will be reviewing progress on the 'parish profiles' this month, with a view to publishing complete entries on the VCH website as soon as possible.

Rose lectured about a century of change in Yate from 1840 to the BALH Cheltenham conference on 27th April. She also gave a talk on crime and law enforcement in 18th- and 19th-century Yate at the Heritage Centre in May. Both presentations were based on research conducted for the forthcoming economic, social and local government histories. Rose and John jointly led a workshop at Gloucester on 8th June for GLHA and Gloucestershire Archives on writing local history for publication, which was attended by over twenty GLHA members and others. John and Rose's completed first drafts can be read on our website (see below for link).

The trustees are pleased that progress is being made more generally on Volume 13 as VCH Central Office in London has recently agreed to receive the pre-2010 drafts for final editing.

We continue to seek funding from a variety of sources and continue to be grateful to the Association's member societies who have supported us in this way. It is vital that we receive regular support to enable us to plan ahead securely. Could your society join those who are supporting us financially? Some of the means of raising the donations have come from a levy on membership fees, collections at meetings, raffles, and profits from trips. Any sum, no matter how small, would be much appreciated by James Hodsdon, our treasurer. James has also prepared the following announcement for this newsletter:

The Gloucestershire County History Trust is pleased to announce that John Chandler, who has been researching Severnside parishes for VCH Glos. Volume 13, has now agreed to become County Editor. Apart from seeing Volume 13 through the publication process (expected to take most of next year), in his new part-time role John will also be supervising work on the two new volumes, for Cirencester and Cheltenham. In each case, the plan is to commission the work in chronological/thematic sections, from appropriate expert authors. More information on VCH progress can be found at: www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/gloucestershire.

Gloucestershire Gardens and Landscape Trust

Members of the Gloucestershire Gardens and Landscape Trust have been researching the history of gardens in the county for a number of years. Their work has involved studying what the local historians of the past may have said about particular houses and estates, as well as the invaluable Victoria County Histories and many local histories.

One interesting source of material is the Kyp engravings in Sir Robert Atkyns' *The Ancient and Present State of Glostershire*. The more these bird's eye drawings are studied, the more can be drawn from them about the layout of gardens in the early eighteenth century.

A visit to Leckhampton Court, for instance, showed how very closely the footprint of the garden shown in Kyp is still there, even though not maintained in any large-scale way. A second study has involved Lower Swell Park, better known for the later nineteenth century house called Abbotswood which was built in the medieval deer park of Lower Swell, and where the famous gardens were developed in the early twentieth century.



A group of garden researchers meets at Gloucestershire Archives once a month to pursue their studies in the maps, letters, sale particulars, and printed literature held there. This is a different slant on local history; it deepens understanding of the places where notable gardens and parks exist. Material is written up and entered on the national Parks and Gardens register, which is linked with English Heritage. Lower Swell Park is the latest of the group's contributions to this national website. A regular newsletter also carries historical articles on particular gardens. The group's interests illustrate yet again the enormous interest in many aspects of a locality.

Visit us at: <http://gglt.org>

The leader of the garden history researchers provides a scale for a very large and old tree in Rendcomb Park, one of the sites which has been recorded for the Parks and Gardens website and the Gloucestershire Gardens and Landscape Trust.

Gotherington and Area Local History Society

Radio Gloucestershire paid a visit to Gotherington at the end of May as part of their series looking at the role of local history societies within the county. Three committee members were persuaded to take part in the broadcast, two of whom had formed part of the original committee way back in 1982. We were able to show off our Roman finds gathered during field walking excursions as well as share our inspirations for getting involved in local history in the first place. Being interviewed by Claire Carter was far from the nerve-racking experience we all expected. Claire showed genuine interest and took considerable time to ensure we all shone. So, if you're also approached by the BBC, then go for it and create another layer of history for your society.

In 2010 one of our members, Geoff Newsum, decided to create a series of four pamphlets outlining historic walks around the village. It was a project (and this will seem familiar to many) which he had thought about for years before finally getting around to it. The result, with the help of our knowledgeable, dedicated IT specialist, was four beautifully illustrated pamphlets, each of which

appears to have been hand written. Using these as a foundation, we were able to lead a group from the Friends of the Gloucestershire Archives on a tour of the village, sharing not only some of our local history, but also the publications and documentation that we have built up over the years.



From left to right: Geoff Newsum, Claire Carter, Claire Newsum and Jacquie Waine.

Please take a moment to look at our website pages. We try to ensure a real mix of programme and evening class details, publications past and present, as well as a selection of vintage photographs taken of our local area. You can find us at: <http://www.gotherington.org.uk/historysociety.asp>.

Maisemore Local History Society

Our 2012-2013 season started with the AGM on 27th September, followed by Michael Boyes giving an illustrated talk on 'A Victorian Rector and Nine Old Maids'. We had visitors from New Brunswick Canada attending this talk!

The October meeting saw Eileen Fry talking on the War Poets, and in November Ron Lane showed his slides of Old Gloucester in 1887.

Our December meeting brought Mark Harris, Archivist to Pathe News, showing some wonderful archive film of Gloucestershire. This included some three minutes of an interview with the father of

one of our members, Ken Cole, recorded in 1947. How wonderful was that for Ken sitting in the audience. Hot punch and mince pies were served at the end of the meeting.

In January we celebrated the Maisemore Wassail in Jeremy Chamberlayne's orchard and a lovely supper was served in the Village Hall. Eric Freeman, Bill Taylor and Albert Paish, along with musicians, produced a lovely evening to continue this tradition. Later in January John Putley gave a rather gruesome talk on the Barber Surgeons.

In February John Dixon gave an excellent talk on Barbara Cartland and her life around Tewkesbury and Mr Thompstone from Worcestershire gave a very good illustrated talk on the Churches of the North Cotswolds in March.

April saw Phil Moss give an excellent talk on the Old Inns of Gloucester. This included some photographs showing a bygone Gloucester City with wonderful stories that Phil has collected over the years about characters that have long gone.

In May David Aldred gave an illustrated talk on the lost railway journeys of Gloucestershire, showing that the taking of photographs will over the years become precious and priceless, being a record of that "moment in time".

Our outings were to the Pin Museum in Redditch and lunch to the Jenny Ring. We had an evening guided walk around Ledbury Town given by Elizabeth Galvin, and a wonderful all day outing by coach to Dore Abbey, Kilpeck, Hoarwithy and Brockhampton Churches.

In 2014 we will commemorate the 100 years anniversary of the start of the First World War with an evening event at Maisemore Church. This will include readings of poems of the War Poets, biographies of the fallen of Maisemore, an exhibition and a supper to which the whole village will be invited. A few days later we will have a discussion on the topic - "Was war justified?"

Prestbury Local History Society

The society had its first meeting in January 2011. We meet each month except August and December and have now built up to a membership of nearly 50 with attendances usually between 40 and 75.

The numbers at some meetings are such that we face having to move our regular venue at Prestbury Library to another venue in the village. We have created a website (prestburyhistory.btck.co.uk) where our programme can be found. We have started a Newsletter which is distributed online three times each year. (If you wish to receive a copy please let the secretary, Norman Baker, (njb123@talktalk.net) have your email address.)

We agreed from the beginning that we wanted to concentrate on Prestbury Parish history. This means that all of our meetings are focused on local matters. So far this has worked well. We are not likely to run out of subjects but we may well find that we will exhaust our researchers. We are building 'research meetings' into the programme to support and encourage members in undertaking research.

We have completed projects to create a searchable database of the census returns and also of the Memorials and Inscriptions in the parish churchyard. There is a team engaged in transcribing the Prestbury Inventories. A new project is to research the histories of our Field and Farms. We are now looking at producing our first publication but need knowhow and an editor!

Slimbridge Local History Society

We are researching the names from our war memorial for the 1914/1918 war, as we all know we have a centenary next year. We have spent time at the Gloucestershire Archives reading up the old copies of the Dursley Gazette, we found the staff very willing to help - most appreciated. Two of us had a morning at the Gloucester Museum again which was very informative and helpful, two of our members are doing research on the air men who served and this is turning out to be very interesting. We have had some good speakers so far this year including a very interesting insight into our local mills given by Dr Ray Wilson. This July month David Smith will tell us about the last 8 earls of Berkeley which should be good. We are getting a good response from the members who are enjoying our outings. The next one will be to Acton Court, recently a TV programme.